

Charles Wesley on His Own Death¹

This file gathers three items that are associated with Charles Wesley's death. In all three cases, there is no known manuscript in Charles Wesley's hand, but the attestation by family or associates is strong. The first item is a secondary copy of two stanzas of verse that Sarah Wesley Jr. carried in her purse; the original was reported to be in Charles Wesley's hand and titled "For Myself." It is an incomplete funeral hymn. The second item is a single stanza of verse that Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley attested was repeated by Charles Wesley orally on his death bed. The final item is verse placed on Charles Wesley's tombstone (though likely written for his friend Benjamin La Trobe).

¹This document was produced by the Duke Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition under the editorial direction of Randy L. Maddox, with the diligent assistance of Aileen F. Maddox. Last updated: January 10, 2025.

For Myself²

1. 'Tis finished! O Almighty Love,
Accept our everlasting praise!
Our friend is safe arrived above,
Hath hardly won the doubtful race;
But all his toils at last are o're,
And sorrow's Son shall weep no more.
2. He is, he is at last possest
Of that for which so long he pin'd;
The happy soul hath found its Rest,
Left all its Tears and Griefs behind,
Weather'd the Storm, escaped the wave,
And dropp'd his Burden in the Grave.
3. [left incomplete]

[Lines Dictated on his Deathbed.]³

In age and feebleness Extreme,
Who shall a helpless worm redeem?
Jesus, my only hope Thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart;
O! could I catch a smile from Thee
And drop into Eternity!

²Location: MARC, DDCW 3/13. Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 3:330–31. This incomplete poem is not in CW's handwriting. An annotation says that it was copied by the mother of G. Howden from a paper in CW's hand found in the pocketbook of Sarah Wesley Jr. The transcription is provided with permission of the Librarian and Director, The John Rylands Library, The University of Manchester.

³Published posthumously in *Arminian Magazine* 13 (1790): 672 (with title given above); *Poetical Works*, 8:432; and *Representative Verse*, 376. Written in Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley's hand on the blank page (p. 25) at the end of the seventh edition of *Funeral Hymns* (MARC, MAW CW 424.10), with the preface: "The following lines I took from the Rev. Mr. Charles Wesley's repeating a few days before he departed this life." Appears also in a letter of Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley to Mary (Forrest) Jones, c. Apr. 16, 1788, held in Cardiff, Wales, Glamorgan Archives, DF/WES.

[Untitled.]⁴

With poverty of spirit bless'd,
Rest, happy saint, in Jesus rest;
A sinner saved, through grace forgiven,
Redeem'd from earth to reign in heaven!
Thy labours of unwearied love,
By thee forgot, are crown'd above;
Crown'd, through the mercy of thy Lord,
With a free, full, immense reward!

⁴Published posthumously in John Whitehead, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley* (London: 1793–96), 1:369–70; *Poetical Works*, 8:438; and *Representative Verse*, 375. These lines were put on CW's tombstone, but Whitehead says that Wesley had written them for a friend—apparently Benjamin La Trobe, who died November 29, 1786.