

# The Loving God and the Burning Hell

Let us begin by sharing an excerpt from a sermon of a bygone era. The preacher had the following to say to his audience:

*The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much in the same way as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; His wrath towards you burns like fire; He looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire; He is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in His sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in His eyes than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended Him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince; and yet, it is nothing but His hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. It is to be ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell last night; that you were allowed to awake again in this world, after you closed*

*your eyes to sleep; and there is no other reason to be given, why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given, while you have been reading this address, but His mercy; yea, no other reason can be given why you do not this very moment drop down into hell.*

*O sinner, consider the fearful danger you are in! It is a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you as against many of the damned in hell. You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it and ready every moment to singe it, and burn it asunder; and you have no interest in any Mediator, and nothing to lay hold of to save yourself, nothing to keep off the flames of wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one moment.*

Well, now, what crackpot preached that? Was it a wild-eyed fanatic on the frontier some time in the 1800's? Was it some screaming, stomping fundamentalist of the 1930's? No, it was the man widely acclaimed as the most brilliant Christian thinker ever produced on the North American continent. It was Jonathan Edwards, who would be elected president of Princeton University not very long after preaching this sermon. The sermon is "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." It was the sermon that epitomized the First Great Awakening, perhaps the most pure and powerful movement of God's Spirit in America's history. It may well be the most important sermon ever preached here. Study your history books, and you'll find that it's true. But the sermon certainly does jangle our ears, doesn't it?

The religious scene in the United States has changed profoundly since Jonathan Edwards' day. Many people are no longer willing to sit still for talk of a holy, wrathful God who casts stubborn sinners into hell as punishment for their crass recalcitrance. We expect to hear about a God who is tamer, more courteous, more jovial than Edwards' God. We resent the notion of a God who, without taking a poll of public opinion, unequivocally declares to us who He is, and unilaterally dictates to us who we must be. If Edwards were resurrected to preach a sermon today, he might well have to call it "God in the Hands of Disgruntled Sinners."

We are most particularly upset with God about hell. We frankly don't think it's acceptable. It's not reasonable. It's not politically correct. It's not at all very nice--and everything about God is supposed to be nice, isn't it? I've often heard the sentiment expressed as a question: "How could a loving God send people to a burning hell?" Hence my topic: "The Loving God and the Burning Hell." Listen to the Word of the Lord in Revelation 20:11-15:

*Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*

Those are sobering words, for those who take the Bible seriously. Surely we would avoid the topic if we could. We don't want to drive people away; we care about people, and want to touch people for Christ. But then, that's precisely why we must preach this. The subject of hell has gripped the minds and the fears of people throughout history wherever the Christian scriptures have been read. We cannot ignore it, so we will deal with it as honestly as we can, right now. I want to make three statements about hell in this sermon. They are these: hell is real; hell is right; and hell is relevant.

First of all, hell is real. It is not a notion concocted by preachers trying to scare people into shaping up. It is a scriptural doctrine, taught repeatedly and insistently in both the Old Testament and the New. It figures largely in Jesus' preaching, and in the teachings of His apostles. To deny the reality of hell is to contradict Jesus, to gut Christianity of one of its most significant tenets, and to ignore a concept which is woven into the very fabric of Western culture. I say with Jesus, His apostles, and two millennia of Christianity backing me up: hell is real.

I want to tell you specifically that hell is a real place. Jesus spoke more about hell than He did about heaven. He quoted the prophet Isaiah in calling it a place where "the worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched." Please do not be deceived. Hell is not a state of mind in the here and now. Nor is it a metaphor for the complete cessation of a soul's being. Say, for the sake of argument, we grant that hellfire may indeed be a metaphor. Yet we then must ask, a metaphor for what? Certainly not for the bearability – or even the unreality – of final judgment! Really, now! The language that Jesus and His apostles use when they speak of hell is so clear that it must be deliberately distorted, or ignored outright, to avoid the conclusion that hell is a real place, where real persons really suffer for a real eternity.

I want to tell you also that hell has a real purpose. Jesus Himself tells us about the purpose of hell in Matthew 25:41-46. He speaks there of sinners' being cast into "the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." The question is asked, For what purpose has God prepared hell? The answer is twofold. Primarily, hell has been prepared by God for the everlasting punishment of the devil and his demonic hordes. Secondly, hell has been prepared for the everlasting punishment of sinful men and women. The pattern is repeated in the book of Revelation. In Revelation 19:20, two satanic persons are thrown into the lake of fire. In 20:10, Satan himself is "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," there to be "tormented day and night forever." In 20:15, all of lost humanity is hurled into the same lake of fire. What is hell for? Hell is for the prince of darkness and people like you and me.

The average person will no doubt object strenuously to that statement, but we have already shown that it is simply what the Bible teaches. Still, it does not sit easily in the mind of natural man. It never will. Yet when the Spirit of God supernaturally convinced me of the truth of the statement, "Hell is for the prince of darkness and people like me," my whole outlook on Jesus was radically transformed. Once I understood that, apart from Jesus, hell was intended for me, and I was intended for hell, I finally began to understand what I was saying when I called Jesus "Savior."

Hell is real. It is a real place, and it has a real purpose.

Not only is hell real, it is also right. Here is where so many people get stuck. They imagine that hell somehow constitutes "cruel and unusual punishment." But seldom do we ask ourselves why we assume that hell is unusually cruel. I submit to you that almost our whole problem with the idea of hell is a problem with our own unexamined presuppositions. We base our conclusions on natural human presuppositions about things, rather than on biblical, divine presuppositions about things. And when you start with inadequate assumptions, you wind up with inaccurate opinions.

It's not usually that we assume the horrors of hell to be something much worse than they actually are. Rather, it is that we normally assume the holiness of God to be something far less than it actually is. We operate on the basis of our own personal preconceptions of God; as a consequence, we regularly conceive God unbiblically, and thus wrongly. Specifically, there are two scriptural presuppositions which may come as a shock to you, but which are nonetheless thoroughly biblical. And they are absolute essentials for understanding the startling truth that hell is right.

The first scriptural presupposition is this: God's highest concern is His own glory. In other words, God's priority commitment is to whatever demonstrates the excellence of His own power and purity, not to whatever makes us feel good. God's highest concern is His own glory.

Can I prove it? Consider Revelation 4:11, which we sing as a praise chorus: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." Why did He make us? Because He wanted to. It pleased Him. He doesn't need us; we need Him. He's not here for our good; we're here for His glory. The Lord Himself voices the same idea when He promises salvation to Israel in the thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel: Thus says the Lord God: "I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations.... And I will sanctify My great name... and the nations shall know that I am the Lord," says the Lord God, "when I am hallowed in you before their eyes."

I so need to understand this. God didn't save me primarily for my sake; he saved me in order to glorify Himself.

We find the same principle in Numbers 14. Here Moses appeals to God for mercy, not on the basis of how much God's people need His mercy, but on the basis of how much glory God could get for Himself by showing mercy. Moses understood that God's highest concern is for His own glory. I suppose one might say that Moses had a primitive, undeveloped concept of God; but to say it would require a genuinely breathtaking level of spiritual arrogance. I expect it is rather we who have primitive, underdeveloped ideas about God. Moses understood God. He understood that God's highest concern is His own glory.

Somebody else might object that if a human being thought that way, we would call it conceit, and a sin. And so we would. But then, we aren't talking about a human being, are we? We are talking about God. And God has revealed about Himself that His highest concern is for His own glory.

There is another presupposition which we need to get from the Bible. It is at least as clearly biblical as the first one, and even more foreign to our natural sensibilities. It is this: God is glorified in His wrath. God's "wrath" is His searing anger toward sinners, His seething hatred of their sin, and His settled determination to punish their sin to the fullest extent of His unbending justice. In the Bible, "wrath" can also refer to the horrific punishments which the wrathful God inflicts on unrepentant sinners. And it is this wrath in which God is glorified!

In the Numbers passage we just mentioned, God replies to Moses that He will indeed glorify Himself by showing mercy to Israel as a nation. Yet at the same time He will glorify Himself by judging the Israelites individually. You ought to look the passage up. It is startling, but unmistakable: God says that He will glorify Himself by allowing thousands of His own people to wander about aimlessly in the desert until they die.

God is glorified in His wrath. This truth is repeated countless times in both Testaments of the Bible. For our purposes here, we can just observe how the idea is expressed in the book of Revelation itself, from which our text is taken. You're about to hear plenty of prophetic-sounding language that you may not understand. Don't be concerned about not catching all of it. The crucial thing is that you get the main point: the wrath of God elicits intense, fervent worship in heaven. Listen.

*Then the seventh angel sounded: and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever!"*

*And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty... because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come. And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth." (11:15-18)*

*Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. And I saw something like a sea of glass...and those who have the victory over the beast..., having harps of God. They sing...the song of the Lamb, saying: "Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name! For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested."*

*After these things I looked, and behold, the temple...in heaven was opened. And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues.... Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed. (15:1-8)*

*Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters saying: "You are righteous, O Lord, the one who is and was and is to be, because You have judged these things. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due." And I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments." (16:4-7)*

*After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her." Again they said, "Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!" And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped, saying "Amen! Alleluia!"*

*Then a voice came from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!" And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!" (19:1-6)*

You may say, "Now wait a minute, preacher! Some of that stuff sounds vaguely familiar to me, but most of it is outrageously offensive. In fact, it's downright obnoxious." To which I reply, Of course it's offensive! It says that whether you receive Jesus and enter into joy, or reject Jesus and enter into judgment, either way God will get glory to Himself over you. It says that God is God, and you are not. And it says there's nothing you can do to change that most basic of differences. You can accept God's terms of surrender, and change the outcome of your own situation. But you cannot set the terms; God alone does that. God wins, no matter what. It does offend people not to be God, doesn't it?

Oh, and of course, those passages from Revelation are indeed quite familiar. It was from those passages that Handel took his "Hallelujah Chorus." Ponder this, my friend: the sublimest musical composition of man is an anthem of praise to God...for His wrath. Every Christmas, large groups of ultratalented unbelievers will assemble themselves into massive choirs. They will drill and practice until they are able to render technically flawless performances of the chorus. And they'll sing it with gusto, blithely unaware that they're singing their own dirge.

Let it sober you. Let it stun you. Let it frustrate you. Let it infuriate you, if it must. But don't miss this truth: God is glorified in His wrath.

What does this mean? That we are happy to think of people in hell? God forbid! The story is told of a meeting that the evangelist D. L. Moody had with some of his coworkers. When one of the men made a lighthearted jest with the word "hell" figuring somewhere in it, Moody rose imperiously, with thunder in his brow. The men hushed, and Moody spoke sternly: "Gentlemen, when you speak of hell, speak with tears in your voice."

Though I know that God will one day be glorified by pouring out His wrath on His enemies in hell, I cannot in this age fully grasp it. Nor does God want me to. Rather, He wants me to grieve when I see people, in Don Francisco's words, "rushing helter-skelter to destruction with their fingers in their ears."

Let the apostle Paul be the example. There is no more chilling expression of God's intention to be glorified in His wrath than that which is found in the ninth chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans. Yet that chapter begins with Paul weeping over those who are under God's wrath, and the next chapter opens with him praying passionately for their salvation. This is the day for the saved to weep over the lost, to pray for them, and to plead with them to flee from the wrath to come. But there is coming a day when every saved eye will be dried, when the people of God will fully understand what now we cannot: that hell is right.

There is one more statement I wish to make about hell. Not only is hell real; not only is it right; it is also relevant. It is not merely a dusty old doctrine for antiquarians to theorize about. It is relevant to the life of every citizen of this nation, indeed, every person on this planet.

Hell is relevant, first of all, because of how the average American thinks about God. Joe Average supposes that forgiveness is simply God's stock in trade. He says to himself, "Forgiveness? That's God's job, isn't it?" He has no concept of the holiness or the righteousness or the justice of God. He can't conceptualize why grace should be amazing. He believes in a kindly old half-senile deity who just oozes "unconditional positive regard" for everyone, and who has quite completely forgotten how to frown. He believes in the God that Al Mohler calls "God Lite," the Supreme Being that's less filling, and tastes great. And remember, Joe is average; that means many of us are just like him. The fact is, we routinely underestimate God and His holiness.

So you're in the woods, armed with a pellet gun, hunting squirrels. You round an outcropping of rock, and find yourself face to face with a twelve-foot grizzly bear. Well, what now? What sort of chill runs down your spine? How do you feel when you recognize how badly you have underestimated the danger of your situation, and how utterly incapable you are of doing anything to save yourself? Think, then, of the terror that an unbeliever will feel when he finds himself face to face with the Lord God Almighty, whom he has so completely underestimated!

Mark this well, good friend: you will never encounter anyone or anything even remotely as dangerous as God. You had better not underestimate Him. If you are one of those who intend just to go on ignoring Him, you had better make sure that what the Bible says is in error, and that your own degenerate concepts of God are correct. But you cannot. They are not. Therefore you had better come to Him humbly, seeking forgiveness of sins and newness of life through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, "And do not fear those who kill the body, but who cannot kill the soul. But rather, fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matthew 10:28) If God is who Jesus said He is, then hell is eminently relevant. The doctrine of eternal punish-

ment matters because God just goes on being the unspeakably pure, unimaginably powerful Being He is, despite our American ignorance of what He's really like. Hell is relevant because of how the average American thinks about God.

Hell is also relevant because of how the average American thinks about himself. Joe Average says to himself, "If there is a hell, it's sure not for good people like me." The way Joe sees it, hell is reserved for dirtbags like the guys who killed Patrick Swayze's character in the movie *Ghost*. We can handle the idea of the demons coming to drag those murderers' souls screaming down to hell; they deserved it.

And so God has become for us something like the Orkin man for human vermin. His job is to send the really bad ones to hell, so the rest of us basically good people can get along in comfort and safety. Few would be crass enough to phrase it that way, but when it all comes down, we agree with Joe Average: "If there is a hell, it's not for good people like me."

Here again, our problem is with our unspoken, never-considered, faulty presuppositions. The question we fail to ask is, Who defines what counts toward being a "good person"? If the Bible is right (and it always is), then "There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none who seeks after God. There is none who does good, no, not one." (Romans 3:10-12) We may feel pretty good about ourselves, but God feels differently. He peers right into our hearts and sees every pettiness, every spitefulness, every ounce of lust and greed and pride. He knows more about our dirty little secrets than we do. And He judges us for it. Only a right relationship with Jesus can allay that judgment.

We are sinners, desperately needing a savior. A good, hard, honest look at the morning paper – or the mirror – is all it would take to show us it's so. Yet we persist in thinking of ourselves as "good people." The doctrine of hell is so relevant because of how the average American thinks about himself.

Finally, I'd like you to note that hell is relevant because of how the average American thinks about the gospel. Our friend Joe Average supposes that the Christian message is simply an open invitation to the Great Cosmic Group Hug. In fact, it is an invitation to die with Christ, to give up your present life and receive a new one from Him. As Jesus himself said to one of the most moral and religious men of his day, "Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3) The good news is not that you can add Jesus to your private portfolio of personal religious preferences if you'd like to. The good news is that God killed His Son on a bloody, splintered block of wood as the sacrifice for your sins, so that, if you repent of your wayward, willful self-rule and trust Jesus for forgiveness and a new life, you can have those unspeakable blessings for free. It costs you nothing but your sin.

David Miller is an evangelist from Arkansas, and was for many years the Director of Missions for a local association of Southern Baptist churches. He tells of one evangelistic youth rally which he attended in one of his churches. A Christian rock band played loud and incomprehensible music for an hour, then screamed at the teenagers through the microphone: "Don't you want to go to paradise? You can go to paradise tonight! Just walk down here to the front, so you can go to paradise!" That was it: their entire message. No mention of sin. No mention of hell. No mention of the necessary connection between sin and hell. No talk of repentance. No mention even of faith. Only, "You can go to paradise." Who knew what paradise even was?

Dr. Miller said that later that week a lady in that church asked him what he thought about their "youth night." The dialogue progressed:

"Ma'am, I had not planned to say anything about that while I was here."

"Now Dr. Miller, you are our Director of Missions; I should imagine that we have a right to know what you think."

"Well then, since you insist, I thought the whole affair was a travesty."

"But, Dr. Miller, so many teenagers came to the Lord that night!"

"Sister, I pray that some of those kids who came to the front of the church building also came to Christ. But if they did, it was not because of what was said that night, but in spite of it. To my knowledge, so far as I can tell from the Bible, folks can't get saved without the gospel. And nobody came anywhere near preaching the gospel that night."

How often have those of us who are Christians heard that very same kind of shabby substitute for the Christian message? We flatter sinners. We cajole them. We try to manipulate them or hoodwink them into making some kind of "decision for Christ," whatever that means. We bribe them with empty promises of health and prosperity if they will but give themselves to Christ. We beg them to have pity on poor old brokenhearted God, who'll probably hardly make it if He can't have their wonderful selves with Him in heaven. But we seldom confront sin. And we never talk about wrath. And we never, never mention hell. We say we are trying not to offend them. Yet the fact is, if you have never been offended by the truth of God, you've probably never understood the truth of God.

No other doctrine of the Bible has such singular power to point up the holiness of God, the sinfulness of man, and the absolute necessity of repentant faith in Christ, as the doctrine of hell. Contemporary Christianity is in dire need of remembering, and reminding Americans about, the reality of eternal punishment for the unrepentant. Hell is relevant because of how the average American thinks about the gospel.

My friend, I have tried to show you from an open Bible that hell is real and that hell is right, and, with an honest look at our current situation in America, that hell is relevant. What I have not yet done is to specifically answer how it is that a loving God could send people to a burning hell.

There's one attempt at answering the question which is so feeble and cowardly that it shocks me, but which I have heard repeatedly from American Christians. They say that God never sends anybody to hell; He simply allows them to go where they choose to go. What a flimsy excuse for an answer! We don't need to make apologies for God! Beyond that, we simply ought to recall what the Bible clearly teaches, and we've already noted: God made hell, and it's at His command that the damned are cast into the flames.

Here is the answer to the question. It is precisely because God is so loving, so kind, so generous, that it is such a heinous crime for a human being to reject or neglect God's loving authority over his life. God is the giver of every good thing, the lifesource for every one of us, in whom we live and move and have our very being. We, by contrast, are a race of willful, stony-hearted, stiff-necked rebels, who flout God's love so blatantly and so persistently as to richly deserve the flames of hell.

God has lovingly revealed Himself to us in creation. But as Paul noted in the first chapter of Romans, although we knew God, we did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in our thoughts, and our foolish hearts were darkened. Professing ourselves to be wise, we became fools, and started worshiping the things that are created, rather than worshiping the Creator. That is why God has given us over to our own delusions. That's what the apostle Paul said.

God has declared his love for us in all of creation, with every breath that fills our lungs, with every throb of our fleshy hearts, with the food He gives us to eat, with the strength He gives us to work, with the skill He gives us to create, with the staggering grandeur of the Milky Way, with the simple pleasure of a Milky Way bar, with every bird's song, with every butterfly's flutter, with every baby's first wobbling toddle, with every maiden's first trembling kiss. He has declared His love to us in creation, but we have neglected it.

God has even more lovingly revealed Himself in redemption, as John declared in the third chapter of his gospel. God so loved the world, sinners though we were, that He gave the world His only Son, so that whoever entrusts himself to that Son should never face destruction in hell, but instead have eternal life. God did not send Jesus to condemn the world, but to save it. Those who trust in Jesus are not con-demned, but those who refuse are condemned already. And here is the condemna-tion: light has come into the world, and we have loved darkness rather than light, because our deeds are evil. In and of ourselves we hate the light that Jesus sheds, and will not come to it, because we loathe to admit how wicked we are. That's what the apostle John said.

God has demonstrated His love for us through redemption, in the person of Jesus Christ. He taught us truth. He showed us righteousness. He held and blessed our little children and sharply rebuked those who tried to shoo them away. He healed our sick. He raised our dead. He embraced the untouchable and loved the unlovely. He forgave the worst among us freely and gladly when they came to Him repentant. He satisfied the souls of sinners thirsty for some hope of redemption, and sent the self-righteous away hungry. At the end of the day, we responded by nailing Him to a tree. Look at it honestly, and you will see: God has demonstrated His love for us, but we have rejected it.

This is how a loving God can send human beings to a burning hell: we well deserve it. If we had not so heartily rejected God's love, if we had not so scurrilously neglected His mercy, perhaps an argument might be made that hell is too severe a punishment for us. But we have. And it's not.

And yet He still cries out to us. He pleads with us to forsake our foolish waywardness and repent. He commands us to turn from sin and turn to Him. He adjures us to flee from the wrath to come, save ourselves, and run to the shelter of Jesus' merciful arms. Those who will, He will freely receive.

A songwriter from Jonathan Edwards' day expressed it all most beautifully. Listen as he puts sinners like us in our proper places – not doing God any favors by coming to Christ, but desperately casting ourselves on His mercy, begging alms from His treasury of grace. The song is entitled, "Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy." Hear it well.

Come, ye sinners, poor and needy, weak and wounded, sick and sore;  
Jesus ready stands to save you, full of pity, grace, and power.  
I will arise and go to Jesus; He will embrace me in His arms!  
In the arms of my dear Savior, oh! there are ten thousand charms.

Come, ye thirsty, come, and welcome, God's free bounty glorify:  
True belief and true repentance--every grace that draws you nigh.  
I will arise and go to Jesus; He will embrace me in His arms!  
In the arms of my dear Savior, oh! there are ten thousand charms.

Come, ye weary, heavy laden, lost and ruined by the Fall;  
If you tarry till you're better, you will never come at all.  
I will arise and go to Jesus; He will embrace me in His arms!  
In the arms of my dear Savior, oh! there are ten thousand charms.

Let not conscience make you linger, nor of fitness fondly dream;  
All the fitness He requireth is to feel your need of Him.  
I will arise and go to Jesus; He will embrace me in His arms!  
In the arms of my dear Savior, oh! there are ten thousand charms.

If you want more information about finding forgiveness and new life in Christ, or if you have just now chosen to turn from your sin and entrust yourself to Jesus, please contact us soon. We'd love to talk with you further about this most important decision – and its marvelous consequences in your life.