

Why Doth the Man of Riches Grow?

Words: Isaac Watts, 1719.

Music: Simon Browne, 1720.

Why doth the man of riches grow
To insolence and pride,
To see his wealth and honors flow
With every rising tide?

Why doth he treat the poor with scorn,
Made of the self-same clay,
And boast as though his flesh was born
Of better dust than they?

Not all his treasures can procure
His soul a short reprieve,
Redeem from death one guilty hour,
Or make his brother live.

Life is a blessing cant be sold,
The ransom is too high;
Justice will neer be bribed with gold,
That man may never die.

He sees the brutish and the wise,
The timorous and the brave,
Quit their possessions, close their eyes,
And hasten to the grave.

Yet tis his inward thought and pride
My house shall ever stand
And that my name may long abide,
Ill give it to my land.

Vain are his thoughts, his hopes are lost,
How soon his memory dies!
His name is written in the dust
Where his own carcass lies.

This is the folly of their way;
And yet their sons, as vain,
Approve the words their fathers say,
And act their works again.

Men void of wisdom and of grace,
If honor raise them high,
Live like the beast, a thoughtless race,
And like the beast they die.

Laid in the grave like silly sheep,
Death feeds upon them there,
Till the last trumpet break their sleep
In terror and despair.