

How Shall I Meet Thee?

Words: Paul Gerhardt, 1653

Music: English tune.

How shall I meet Thee? How my heart
 Receive her Lord aright?
 Desire of all the earth Thou art!
 My hope, my sole delight!
 Kindle the lamp, Thou Lord, alone,
 Half-dying in my breast,
 And make Thy gracious pleasure known
 How I may greet Thee best.

Her budding boughs and fairest palms
 Thy Zion strews around;
 And songs of praise and sweetest psalms
 From my glad heart shall sound.
 My desert soul breaks forth in flowers,
 Rejoicing in Thy fame;
 And puts forth all her sleeping powers,
 To honor Jesus' name.

In heavy bonds I languished long,
 Thou com'st to set me free;
 The scorn of every mocking tongue
 Thou com'st to honor me.
 A heavenly crown wilt Thou bestow,
 And gifts of priceless worth,
 That vanish not as here below
 The fading wealth of earth.

Naught, naught, dear Lord, has power to move
 Thee from Thy rightful place,
 Save that most strange and blessed love
 Wherewith Thou dost embrace
 This weary world and all her woe,
 Her load of grief and ill
 And sorrow, more than man can know
 Thy love is deeper still.

O write this promise in your hearts,
 Ye sorrowful, on whom
 Fall thickening cares, while joy departs
 And darker grows your gloom.
 Despair not, for your help is near,
 He standeth at the door
 Who best can comfort you and cheer,
 He comes, nor stayeth more.

Nor vex your souls with care, nor grieve
 And labor longer thus,
 As though your arm could ought achieve,
 And bring Him down to us.
 He comes, He comes with ready will
 By pity moved alone,
 To soothe our every grief and ill,
 For all to Him are known.

Nor ye, O sinners, shrink aside,
 Afraid to see His face,
 Your darkest sins our Lord will hide
 Beneath His pitying grace.
 He comes, He comes, to save from sin,
 And all its pangs assuage,
 And for the sons of God to win
 Their proper heritage.

Why heed ye then the craft and noise,
 The fury of His foes?
 Lo, in a breath the Lord destroys
 All who His rule oppose.
 He comes, He comes, as king to reign!

~~And earthly powers may band~~
Against Him, yet they strive in vain,
His might may none withstand.

He comes to judge the earth, and ye
Who mocked Him, feel His wrath;
But they who loved and sought Him see
His light o'er all their path.
O Sun of Righteousness! arise,
And guide us on our way
To yon fair mansion in the skies
Of joyous cloudless day.