

I Asked the Lord That I Might Grow

Words: John Newton, 1779. Music: Herbert Oakeley, 1874.

I asked the Lord that I might grow  
In faith, and love, and every grace;  
Might more of His salvation know,  
And seek, more earnestly, His face.

'Twas He who taught me thus to pray,  
And He, I trust, has answered prayer!  
But it has been in such a way,  
As almost drove me to despair.

I hoped that in some favored hour,  
At once He'd answer my request;  
And by His love's constraining pow'r,  
Subdue my sins, and give me rest.

Instead of this, He made me feel  
The hidden evils of my heart;  
And let the angry pow'rs of hell  
Assault my soul in every part.

Yea more, with His own hand He seemed  
Intent to aggravate my woe;  
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,  
Blasted my gourds, and laid me low.

Lord, why is this, I trembling cried,  
Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?  
"'Tis in this way, the Lord replied,  
I answer prayer for grace and faith.

These inward trials I employ,  
From self, and pride, to set thee free;  
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,  
That thou may'st find thy all in Me."