

COMING BACK TO GOD

Message 5 Coming back new 6269

INTRO: Our subject is coming back to God. Here is the process of coming back to God this far. First, in any matter when we have left God or we are disobedient to Him, when God sees the time is right, He initiates our coming back. He may withhold rain, send grasshoppers or allow any other pain to enter our lives in order to get our attention. Then the onus lies on us to humble ourselves before Him. That is the first principle on our part in coming back to God; humility. Until any man humbles himself, whether it be before salvation or after, something has happened. Sin has entered somewhere. Pride lies at the root of all sin, and before anything meaningful can happen between God and the sinner; whether he be saved or lost, sin must be dealt with. And for sin to be dealt with, pride must first make way for humility.

Let me give the first four beatitudes in that great sermon on the mount; Jesus first major discourse. He said:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Poor in spirit. Humility precedes all steps towards God. There is a reason for this. Either we are more important to ourselves, than God is; or God is more important to us than we are. And when we are more important to ourselves than God is, we live in pride. Whether it be in what we call low self-esteem or high self-esteem.

We have already seen where God's resting place is. It is in those who are contrite. And who is contrite? Who is poor in spirit? One who trembles at God's Word! Low or high self esteem has been removed, and God has been set up as God in the heart of the contrite; the heart of the poor in spirit, the heart of the humble. This man has seen God with his spiritual eyes, and he has said, "I lay my hand over my mouth. I am vile, and God is all in all." When this man has seen God, he sees himself as a filthy, bedraggled sinner; and all he can say is, "God be merciful to me, the sinner!".

You see, the second beatitude says, "Blessed are they that mourn." They mourn because they have seen God in His holiness, and themselves in their vileness, and they can but mourn. And when we become poor in spirit and vile in our own eyes and we begin to mourn our sinful condition, then we turn to God in a prayer of mourning and repentance. And only then can the next beatitude be fulfilled in us, for it says:

5 Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.

And when the poor in spirit mourn their own sinfulness, and they repent in prayer, and they become meek, a wonderful thing happens. They begin to hunger and thirst for righteousness. And I ask you this morning, do you hunger and thirst for after righteousness? If we do not, I propose we are not born again, or we have drifted from God. So the next beatitude is:

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

So God said, "If My people, which are called by My name humble themselves and pray..." Here is now the second principle in coming back to God: prayer!

2. Prayer

Let me now read once more our verse to see what our next point is. God said, *13 "When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, 14 "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

Let me briefly show the progression I see this far. A Christian or a church, or maybe even many in a land, have come to God. It is a time of rejoicing. And then as time goes by, subtly sin slips in and grows, and pride tightens its snare around that person, church or land. Then, after some time, God sets about to bring that person or church or land back to Himself. Then, when that person, or church or land realizes the drift that has taken place, God calls them to humble

themselves before Him, and that is where we left off last time.

Now, before we consider the second step in returning to God, the matter of prayer, let me bring our attention to a very important matter. It is the matter of the distinction between humanism and theism.

Let me explain these two, for I think it will help us to understand the heart of the matter in these verses. We'll begin with humanism. Here is a dictionary definition. Humanism is: *an outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or supernatural matters. Humanist beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of human beings, emphasize common human needs, and seek solely rational ways of solving human problems.*

What we have here is a man centered view of life. I believe that one of the major problems of the modern Gospel is that it is largely humanistic. It is centered around the needs and desires and welfare of man. The modern Gospel seeks to use the true Gospel to meet man's needs. The benefits of salvation are primarily man-centered. If you don't want to go to hell, then get saved. Do you have marital problems? Come to the Lord, He will fix your marriage. Do you have financial problems, come to the Lord, He will fix your finances. God will fix your problems if you only get saved. Would I be correct in summing up the modern Gospel like that? If so, it is salvation for man's benefit, and that is a humanistic Gospel.

Consider then, a theistic view of life. We can tell that the word *humanistic* comes from *human*, so it speaks of a man centered view of life. The word 'theistic' comes from the Greek word for God, which is *theos*. You see, *atheistic*, means no God. *Theistic* has to do with God. So if you have a theistic view of life, it is a God centered view of life.

Now we must come back to a most basic question. It is this: Why do I exist? Why did God make man? Why am I

here? Some time ago I did some messages called, "Answers To Life's Most Basic Questions." Question 1: Who am I? Question 2: Why am I here? Question 3: What is wrong with the World? Question 4: How can what is wrong be made right? You can get those on our church site: www.sermonaudio.com/mec1. Also, you can listen to our teaching on the Catechism, in the lessons on the Catechism. There, what we will briefly look at here has been covered in greater detail.

I have had the privilege of teaching through the Catechism many times. I always enjoyed starting over and beginning with question number 1. It says, "What should be our chief aim in life?" We might ask it like this: Why am I here? Why do I exist? And the answer given in our catechism is, "To live in God's fellowship, enjoy His favor, and obtain eternal happiness hereafter".

Now let me ask you, is that answer humanistic or theistic? Does it center around man's interests or does it center on God's interests? Here it is again: "I exist to live in God's fellowship, enjoy His favor, and obtain eternal happiness hereafter". I think it is rather humanistic. It does say that I am here to live in God's fellowship, but even that may be interpreted as being in man's interest. Second, I am here to enjoy His favor. Whose benefit is that for? Mine. And I exist to obtain eternal happiness hereafter. Whose benefit is that for? Mine. All in all, that is a rather humanistic answer.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism gives this answer to the question why we exist as: Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever. I believe that is a better answer. Notice it has a primary and secondary purpose for man's existence. It is first that man is to glorify God, and second, to enjoy Him forever. If you consider that answer, it is God centered. The secondary purpose then is given as to enjoy Him forever. God did not create us that there

would be no benefit to us, but He did not create us primarily for our own benefit.

Now the catechism gives as a reference to its answer, Matthew 6:33, which says: "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." Notice now that there is a primary and a secondary matter in this verse as well. The primary is God first. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. It is God first and me or man second. If we seek God first, He will see to all our needs. This text fits the Westminster Shorter Catechism answer.

But, if we exist primarily for God's glory, we must ask, what does that mean? Let me give the meaning of God's glory here just briefly from my catechism notes:

It is essential then that we understand what glory is. John Calvin has said, "The glory of God is when we know what He is." Another writer says that glory is the divinity manifest. Let me explain those statements. Glory is when you learn some positive quality about another person. Let us say you have just made something. It has turned out just beautiful. Now whenever someone comes to see you, you say, "Come. I want to show you something." When they admire what you have made, that is glory. The thing made reveals something positive about you. When anything reveals some positive character of God to me, that is glory. However, if I am the one who reveals some positive characteristic about God to another, now I am glorifying God. Let us say someone you work with knows you profess to be a Christian. He has no use for Christianity. But when he observes your work and realizes you do your work well because of what you profess to be, now he sees some positive characteristic of God and he will glorify God (See Matt. 5:16; 1 Cor. 10:31).

That is glory. God's glory is when I learn something good about Him, and all there is to learn about Him is good. There is nothing bad to learn about God. He is

all good, every last part of Him. And I believe it is correct to say that we exist for one primary purpose; it is to glorify God. We glorify God when we live according to His Word.

But when we need to come back to God, this means we have left Him in some matter, or maybe many matters. When we sin, we are leaving Him. And again, sin is man's major problem. So could someone quote Romans 3:23 for us? It says: *For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.* You see, sin causes us to come short of the very purpose for which God created us, which is His glory. My daughter has been trying to teach the children here what sin is. Sin is missing the mark. And what mark does sin miss? It misses the mark of God's perfect will and character! It brings the exact opposite of glory, which is shame. Sin shames God.

So, when we live right, we hit the mark. When we sin, we miss the mark. And if the Westminster Catechism answer is right, our purpose in life is to hit the mark every time. When the things we do and say and think are right, we are glorifying God. This affects every area of life.

Now you may have to do a lot of pondering over what I am about to say. You see, I think we may easily be humanistic without realizing it. When we grieve because the lost are going to hell, we can easily be humanistic. You see, the most horrible thing is not that they are going to hell. The most horrible thing is that they have failed of the very purpose for which God made them and have succumbed to the voice of the devil and sinned against God and shamed Him and violated His holy and righteous character.

Let me illustrate this point. The Sabbath before last, a family of four gathered in Israel for their weekly Shabat meal. They were also celebrating the birth of a grandchild. The table was loaded with food and they were waiting for other guests, when a terrorist entered wielding a big knife and literally slaughtered the father and two sons. The mother was able to hide some

children and lock the door to the room and call the police. A soldier next door heard the commotion and was able to stop the terrorist. The pictures of that place are too horrific to describe.

Some in Israel are calling for the death sentence. But let us just say the courts decide to give him a one week jail term. And let us say while this Jewish family's relatives and friends are mourning the horror of the death of these three, others think nothing of that, but sit by and mourn that this vicious killer will have to sit in jail for one week. I propose that that is how we are when we mourn over one who has gone to hell, IF we give no thought to what this sinner has done to God. The violation against God's glory mostly does not even enter our picture, when we think of someone going to hell.

Now you will probably say, "What? Should we not be concerned about those going to hell?" Yes, of course! But for a different reason than the one we usually have. You see, we give very little, if any thought to what sin does to God. Let me remind you of another illustration I have sometimes used. I hope I don't bore some of you. Let us say your neighbor's son sets a match to your house while you were in church. You come home and all that is left is some smoke. Would that make you angry? Would you be able to sit down and have a friendly chat with the boy about the weather and his school grades? No! He has sinned against you.

But let me ask you, is there a price that would satisfy you? Yes there is. So now let us say rich uncle hears about this and he offers to rebuild and refurnish your home within three months. To tide you over he gives you an extra \$100,000.00. And he says the boy will come over and confess his wrong and work off his crime. Would that satisfy you? Well, as I have said, one might consider asking the kid to burn our shed too! You see, some things can be paid for.

But let us say he comes at night when you are away, and he burns your house and your entire family too! Now I

ask you what price will satisfy you? And like any caring parent, you would say, "There is no price! Nothing can ever pay for this!" No rich uncle has enough to appease me of my loss. The only thing that could bring any sense of justice would be the immediate death of the one who burned your family. And that is the best I can do to describe what sin does to God!

But, and here is the amazing thing, God found a price even when sin is so very horribly bad! The devil had not reckoned on it. Everyone of us is like this boy who burned that home with someone's family in it. And in the horror of such sin, God sent the second Person of the Triune God into the world, and He allowed sinful man to crucify Him to take the death that we should have died. And to be justified from our, such horrible sins against God, He requires that we confess our sins and repent of them and put our trust in Christ who died our death.

You see, we have become very humanistic. We show pictures in church of starving people in other parts of the world, and we are moved to do mission work among them because we feel sorry for them, but we don't give a thought about what their sins are doing to God. Our concern should be that they would be converted because of their continual crimes against a holy and righteous God!

It is true and Scripture is clear, God did send His Son into the world that we should not perish. John 3:16 says so. But think now with me, with the idea of being humanistic and being theistic, why does God not want man to perish? Well, you say, that is obvious; He wants to save man from hell! And I ask you, is that humanistic or theistic?

Let me propose that it is because if man perishes, man will never be able to accomplish that for which God made him. He will never be able to bring glory to God and God will never be able to fulfill him in his existence! In the next message I want to give a little further understanding on the word *perish*.

Now let me draw another picture for you. I ask, who was man made for; for God or for man? Well, if he was made for God's glory, then man was made for God. And when man does what he was created to do, he will bring glory to God. And when man brings glory to God, man will not perish, and God will provide for his needs. So Matthew 6:33 says: "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." When man brings glory to God, God adds to him those things that are fitting, and God knows best what is fitting. But not only that, after man dies he goes to spend eternity with God. And for all eternity saved man will glorify God, the very purpose for which God made him, and man will finally be fully fulfilled forever!

We might illustrate this truth from marriage. Turn to 1 Corinthians 11. The man was not made for the woman. She was made for him. Verses 8-9 say, *For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.* Now the man is commanded to love the woman, and the woman is commanded to respect the man. When either the man or the woman violates those commands, the marriage suffers. When both keep up their end, the man is fulfilled and the woman is fulfilled too. It is mutual.

So it is with God and the Christian. But with God, it is never His fault if things go wrong. Man has failed to glorify Him. And when that happens, the relationship suffers. But when man glorifies God, the very thing for which he was made, then both receive that for which man's creation was intended.

And now we come to our text with all this in mind. We have spoken of man leaving God and are now considering man coming back to God after leaving. So verse 14 said, *"if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves...* Humility was our last point, and it is the first principle in coming back to God. And here is our point for this morning, and the second principle in coming back to God, because the LORD adds to humility,

prayer. It says, *"if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray..."*

-Why humility before prayer?

So let me ask, and then seek to answer several questions with regard to prayer, and then come to the point why I gave you all of what was said this far. Why humility before prayer? Why would humility precede prayer? Because there is no use praying as long as humility is not there. Pride and prayer are incompatible. You see, when we leave God, we set ourselves up as more important than God. When man humbles himself before God, he puts himself back under God. Man cannot exalt himself and pray and be heard by God. When man leaves God he becomes humanistic and exalts himself. So the Psalmist says if we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us.

-Why prayer after humility?

The second question is, why prayer after humility? Well, let's begin with the question, why prayer at all? Why does God want us to pray to Him? Does He not know what we need? Why should we pray to an omniscient God? The facts are He knows far better than we do, what we need. But before we pray, we have to recognize our need. We cannot pray and confess to God that we have been proud if we do not even recognize that we are proud. We cannot confess to leaving Him when we do not know we have left Him. We must first know our needy condition before we pray.

Another reason is that after we have left God, our eyes must come off ourselves and be turned onto God again. When we pray, prayer turns our attention to God. You see, when God turns off the rain and sends the grasshoppers, man has left God. He has forgotten God, or there is some area in which he has failed God, and he must be brought to know he needs God. I propose our greatest problem is knowing our needs. We may not pray much about pride because we do not recognize much about it in ourselves.

I have told you about the elderly woman who was informed she had terminal cancer. And she was told something like this: "There is nothing more we can do for you. All you can do is trust the Lord." And she said, "Oh my. Has it come to that!" You see, when life gets tough enough, sometimes we come to where all we have left is prayer. It has come to that! If we had been doing it all along, it would not have needed to come to that. But now we need to get our eyes on God. When the twin towers in New York went down, of a sudden the churches were filled. It had come to that! But a short while later we got over it, and life went on as usual.

Now, why prayer after humility? 1 Peter 3:12 says, *For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.* Humility opens the ears of God to our prayers. A righteous man is a humble man. I was asked after the previous message if we can ever know if we are humble. Good question isn't it? Someone said the moment we know we are humble, we just lost it.

Why prayer? When we pray we first of all have turned our attention back to the One who is more important than all else. Prayer takes us back to this One with whom we should be consumed. It is God, the Creator of the universe!

Let me quote here once more from Andrew Murray. He writes, "Is it any wonder that the Christian life is so often feeble and fruitless, when the very root of the Christ life (i.e. humility) is neglected or unknown? Is it any wonder that the joy of salvation is so little felt, when that in which Christ found it and brings it, is so little sought? Until a humility which will rest in nothing less than the end and death of self; which give up all honor of men as Jesus did, to seek the honor that comes from God alone; which absolutely makes and counts itself nothing, (Now listen to the reason why) that God may be all, that the Lord alone may be

exalted, until such a humility be what we seek in Christ above our chief joy, and welcome at any price, there is little hope of a religion that will conquer the world" (10).

Now we come to the chief reason for prayer. Here is why we looked first at humanism and theism. A preacher my wife and I listened to a while ago said, God's purposes are not achieved until our delight is in Him. When we have left God, we do not delight in Him. May I ask you, do you delight in God? When you can't sleep or you are idle, do you delight in Him? But this speaker also said that R. A. Torrey had given this as the main purpose of prayer. Listen to it carefully: *The chief purpose of prayer is that God may be glorified in the answer to that prayer.* That answer falls right in line with man's main purpose of existence being to glorify God. So Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:31, *Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

Turn to John 9. Sometimes we are taught that Christians should not be poor and they should never be sick. But who are we to choose what will glorify God? We have the account here of a certain man who was born blind. And we begin in verse 1:

1 And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

Like some of our day, the conclusion is that somebody sinned, and this man was born blind. But Jesus said this was not related to sin, but to God's glory. When the works of God are manifested in anybody, God is glorified. Sometimes we are taught that if we say in

our prayers, "if the Lord wills..." that is unbelief. We should name it and claim it. But is that humanistic or theistic thinking? Is it not much better to rest in God and let Him choose how to glorify Himself? We do not simply sit back, we learn to live by faith. There is no other way to please Him than living by faith.

So, the purpose of prayer is that God may be glorified in the answer. But Torrey said further of prayer: *It is not that you get what you want, but that He may be glorified whatever you get.* That is a revolutionizing thought on the purpose of prayer. Prayer is not chiefly for me, it is chiefly for God!

And now we ask, why prayer after humility? Let me read from verse 14 once more:

14 "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

15 "Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place.

16 "For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.

-What prayer is in view?

So I ask last, what prayer is in view here. Turn to Daniel 9. I think the most important thing in the prayer mentioned here is not that such a person prays, or how long he prays, but what such a person prays. When we have left God, the prayer to return must be a prayer of confession of sin. In Daniel 9 we have an example of such a prayer as is required when we have left God. It says:

1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans -

2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

3 Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

Now before one can come to a genuine prayer of this kind, one must come to a full realization as to one's state before God. Notice in verse 2 how Daniel came to a realization of his sins and those of the nation of Israel. He understood by books, that is the books of the Bible that they had at that time, and he notes especially the book of Jeremiah. From here he understood that the predicament they were in, having been taken captive by Babylon, was to last 70 years.

Here were the troublesome circumstances 2 Chronicles 7:13 speak of. Israel's sin had been so serious this time that God had allowed Babylon to take many of them out of the land of Israel, and among those taken was Daniel. And now, through a study of the Word of God he realizes what is happening, and it brings about this prayer of confession. Verse 4:

4 And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments,

Notice that Daniel has gotten to see the greatness of God. He says, "Oh Lord, great and awesome God..." Never will we see ourselves right until we see God right! And when we see God right, it leads to verse five. Daniel says:

5 "we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments.

6 *"Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land.*

7 *"O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day – to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.*

8 *"O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.*

9 *"To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him.*

10 *"We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets.*

11 *"Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him.*

Here we see how plain Israel's sin had become to Daniel. Their disobedience and rebellion was the cause of all this and it was plain to him now, after studying the books. Verse 12:

12 *"And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.*

13 *"As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth.*

14 *"Therefore the LORD has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the LORD our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice.*

15 *"And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as it is this day – we have sinned, we have done wickedly!*

Here is the prayer of confession. God said, "If My people which are called by My name humble themselves and pray..." That is what we have here. Verse 16:

16 *"O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us.*

17 *"Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate.*

18 *"O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies.*

19 *"O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."*

God had been silent, silent for a long time, for it took a long time to get Israel to recognize their sinfulness, and here it is yet only by one godly man. And Daniel wants God to break the silence. This kind of prayer, I believe, is in view in 2 Chronicles 7:14. You see, humility must happen before prayer can be real. Oh that God would visit our land. Today He is silent. He is waiting.

And what kinds of sins are there to turn from? We might repent of not recognizing God as the supreme One against whom sin is committed. We might repent of our humanistic views of life, our failure to recognize that the glory of God is the reason we exist. We might need to confess our lack of interest in the Word of God, studying the books. We might confess our lack of interest in prophecy. It was by prophecy that Daniel was brought to his knees.

Then we might repent of sins of commission. Lying, stealing, there are so many ways of stealing; jealousies; envy, and such huge sins as pornography, disobeying the laws of the land, adultery and so on. Oh what horrible things adultery does. Such sins as leaving one's life partner and going to another is such a huge crime against God as is almost indescribable. Until we recognize God as infinitely holy and righteous and just and good, we will never recognize the magnitude of such sins, and what they do to a holy God.

Then there are all kinds of sins of omission. We do not speak out for God, we fail to be a light in public, we fail to share the Word of God and many, such things. But before any of these things can be genuinely confessed, they must be genuinely recognized, and that is why God might allow some of the difficulties of life.

CONCL: Well, we conclude for this time. I would encourage us to ponder this coming week the subject of being humanistic or theistic. What kind of world view do I have? May we be challenged to think through, what is my main objective in life; God's glory or mine? Listen to what this song writer found:

Once it was the blessing,
Now it is the Lord;
Once it was the feeling,
Now it is His Word;
Once His gift I wanted,
Now, the Giver own;
Once I sought for healing,
Now Himself alone.
All in all forever,
Only Christ I'll sing;
Everything is in Christ,
And Christ is everything.
Once 'twas painful trying,

Now 'tis perfect trust;
Once a half salvation,
Now the uttermost;
Once 'twas ceaseless holding,
Now He holds me fast;
Once 'twas constant drifting,
Now my anchor's cast.

Once 'twas busy planning,
Now 'tis trustful prayer;
Once 'twas anxious caring,
Now He has the care;
Once 'twas what I wanted,
Now what Jesus says;
Once 'twas constant asking,
Now 'tis ceaseless praise.

Once it was my working,
His it hence shall be;
Once I tried to use Him,
Now He uses me;
Once the pow'r I wanted,
Now the Mighty One;
Once for self I labored,
Now for Him alone.

5

Once I hoped in Jesus,
Now I know He's mine;
Once my lamps were dying,
Now they brightly shine;
Once for death I waited,
Now His coming hail;
And my hopes are anchored
Safe within the veil.