



And Can It Be



"And can it be that I should gain
an interest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me who caused His pain?
For me, who Him to death pursued?"

"He left His Father's throne above,
so free, so infinite His grace!
Emptied Himself of all but love,
and bled for Adam's helpless race.
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
for, O my God, it found out me.

"Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light.
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.

"No condemnation now I dread,
I am my Lord's and He is mine;
Alive in Him, my living Head,
and clothed in righteousness divine.
Bold I approach th'eternal throne
and claim the crown, thro' Christ, my own.

"Amazing love! How can it be
that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?"

"God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." - Romans 5:8

"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did; sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin ..." - Romans 8:1-3

"And Can It Be That I Should Gain?" is another great old hymn that conveys the awe and wonder of God's amazing love at Calvary. It was written by Charles Wesley in 1738 as he came to understand that love of Christ personally in a powerful way.

Although Charles had a strict religious training in his youth, education at Oxford University, as well as missionary service, he had no peace or joy in his heart and life. After a discouraging time in America, he returned to London and met with a group of Moravians where he came to realize that "salvation is by faith alone." This was a life-changing event, and from that moment on, Charles said that he had "the continual experience of His power," and that he knew that God was able to do "exceeding abundantly above" what he could ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).

Charles began to write new hymns with joyous enthusiasm, and traveled throughout Great Britain with his older brother, John - a quarter of a million miles!! This was done mostly on horseback, as they conducted mass outdoor services of 40,000 people, according to one source. That is an amazing feat, considering this all took place in the 1700s. God truly did enable these men to do far more than they could have imagined, and that is the same power that He had demonstrated in the resurrection of His Son 1700 years earlier.

The text of this hymn could give rise to many deep sermons, but one overarching truth resounds: There is no reason, apart from the grace of God, that we should have "an interest in the Savior's blood." For as Paul wrote in Titus 3:3-5, "We ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy ..."

In Ephesians 2:3-7, Paul explains our need for salvation and the reality of our position in Christ, saying,

"We too all formerly lived among them in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desire of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

"But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our sins, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

In light of these truths, may we find new joy in our salvation, and a renewed desire to live in obedience to our loving Savior: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, so that we would walk in them" (Ephesians 2:8-10)