

If Ever I Loved Thee

My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine;
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign.
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou;
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

I love Thee because Thou has first loved me,
And purchased my pardon on Calvary's tree.
I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow;
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

I'll love Thee in life, I will love Thee in death,
And praise Thee as long as Thou lendest me breath;
And say when the death dew lies cold on my brow,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

In mansions of glory and endless delight,
I'll ever adore Thee in heaven so bright;
I'll sing with the glittering crown on my brow;
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

“We love Him because He first loved us.” (1 John 4:19 NKJV)

The sentiment of this verse is repeated in the second stanza of the hymn, If Ever I Loved Thee. Therefore, the author, William R. Featherston rightly places regeneration in the hands of God. However, the real joy of this hymn is in his depth of understanding about his love for God.

I know thou art mine; for all the follies of sin, I resign. It would be good to ask ourselves if our love for God has enough fervor to pry the things of this world from our hands. God has taught us that it is impossible to serve God and mammon (Luke 16:13).

Imagine, if you can, the blessings of God were tennis balls lying on the ground, and the pleasures of this world were bowling balls. Leaving the bowling balls and taking up as many tennis balls as possible one might be able to hold several blessings at once. However, the size and weight of just one bowling ball would greatly hinder holding on to even one blessing from God.

What will be the end of a life burdened by such weight? Will you say when death's dew lies cold on your brow, if ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now? What will be your justification for such a claim? It is more likely that your trembling plea will be for mercy. However, there will be no comfort for you because you will have had no experience with mercy.

Why should God give you mercy when you have spurned a life of pleadings? How shall you be awakened when all your life you have lived with the understanding of repentance and holiness, and yet refused to yield your own life to God? What message will you hear if the truth was not enough?

“For [it is] impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put [Him] to an open shame. For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briars, [it is] rejected and near to being cursed, whose end [is] to be burned.” (Hebrews 6:4-8 NKJV)

My dear friends flee this situation at all cost. Do not allow yourself to become inoculated against truth. Many of you might ask, “Are you saying a person can lose their salvation?” The passage above does not speak to those who are saved, but to those who think they are saved, those who name the name of Christ, but live in sin. The consequence of living near the light without yielding to the light is to darken the heart almost beyond recovery. What will one say to you who have rejected the truth repeatedly? The message will always be Jesus. If He is not good enough for you now, how will you trust Him then?

Do not wait one minute more to deal with your sin. If God has put His finger on some waywardness, then do not reject His prodding. Repent now and live.

“But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. For God [is] not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, [in that] you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” (Hebrews 6:9-12 NKJV)

I'll love Thee in life; I will love Thee in death,
and praise Thee as long as Thou lendest me breath

Keep yourself from idols. Amen.