

PERSPECTIVES

THE hurts of a grim, weary world, the greeds of an all-selfish race,
The barbs fueled with malice and hurled by men void of vision and grace;
The children who die without food, still others ripped out from the womb,
Cheap culture defended as good near ghettos of filth, rats and gloom;
Armed missiles with power to melt the shiny new toys that we buy,
The alien fear that is felt by people too guilty to die;
The endless, vain idols of men, the worship of fleeting applause,
The dollar, the Deutschemark, the yen, as bases of wisdom and laws;
Religion that pampers to self, and cares not a whit for the damned,
The elderly put on the shelf, and truth manufactured and canned —
O Christ! these are ugly, deep stains and festering sores. This decay
Conspires to call forth refrains of defeat, gross self-pity, delay.

Responses by men seem so frail, and freighted with motives quite mixed.
Solutions of promise soon fail; the cries of Cassandra now fixed
In mem'ries that once thought she lied prompt fear and despair in the few;
But new generations, untried, can scoff at her warnings anew.
We'll build a new world, they proclaim: and new despots come to the throne.
The wearisome cycle again. The new god is yesterday's clone.

The vision we need to transcend this cyclical pattern of wrong
Looks back in the history of men, and forward to time's setting sun.
To gaze at Golgotha provides unshakable vantage of view:
Creator of time in its tides; the Judge standing under review;
The incarnate Lover, alone; bright Glory enshrouded in gray;
Perfection that wills to atone; and Grace by rejection repaid.

Yet forward our gaze is drawn, too. Spectacular vistas are spread:
The Living One whom we once slew now speaks, and his voice wakes the dead.
And him we scorned sits to receive the worship that is but his due;
And him we thought false, we perceive to be titled The Faithful and True.
The Crucified now stands as Judge; his justice no man can gainsay;
And only his death can expunge the multiplied sins of our way.
The earth and its heav'n cannot stand before his pure, unshaded light;
But these are remade by his hand, evoking unbounded delight.
The dark shades are no longer seen, and untainted purity reigns;
And gracing the whole is a stream of unbroken, unrestrained praise.

Grant, gracious Saviour, we pray, perspectives as seen from your throne:
Our world and our deep, wicked way, yet cherished and not left alone;
Between the glad grief of the Cross, and cosmic renewal to come,
To serve you afresh at all cost, to sing now eternity's song.

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