

The great theme of Charles Wesley, to which his lyre was consecrated, was Christ crucified. The dignity, glory, and sufficiency of the person, office, and work of the Redeemer, were the love and passion of his life. In the doctrine of a free, full, and present salvation, the Wesleyan hymns are especially rich and exhaustive. We have not only exposition but appropriation—faith and hope—the power and blessedness of Christian life rooted in the “cross and passion” of the Saviour. In many well-known hymns on the priesthood of Christ assembled worshippers unite

“To adore the all-atoning Lamb
And bless the sound of Jesus’ name.”

Since the royal bard swept his sacred harp to the noblest, sweetest and most enduring of Zion’s songs, never, in fulness and force of Scripture truth, has Wesleyan hymnody been surpassed; and in some important elements of doctrinal truth, the sacrificial merits of the Redeemer and His intercessory work, “entered the holy place above,” it rises far above the level even of the pure and impassioned strains which, by the worshippers of the ancient Church, were chanted in the presence of the Shekinah.

These hymns, full of Christ, enable us to realize the dignity and grandeur of worship. They bring us into association with the Holy Catholic Church throughout the world in the ascription of praise to the triune Jehovah. They lead us in thought and faith into communion with the rapt and ransomed worshippers before the throne:

“They sing the Lamb in hymns above,
And we in hymns below.”

The careful reading of hymns in public service is a subject to which, in passing and by way of parenthesis, attention may be turned. Between the pulpit and the pew there is a close bond of sympathy. The magnetism and thrill of the preacher in giving out these grand hymns will be felt by the audience, and will give pathos and power and life to congregational song. The effect produced at an ordination service of the British Conference, when with the consummate art and ability of a master in rhetoric, and a felt full appreciation of the grandeur of the theme, Dr. Geo. Osborne read the noble hymn, “Jesus, the name high over all,”