



AND Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. ⁴ And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. ⁵ When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, *Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?* (John 6:3-5)

This missionary hymn was written by Frank Mason North in 1905, a longtime resident of New York and a pastor there. Instead of looking beyond the horizon to far-flung mission fields, he directs the lyrics inward to his own city and those like it around the world. The music is attributed to Gardiner in 1816 who, in turn, credits Beethoven with the musical score. The title of the music is variously called Germany, Gardiner, Fulda, and Melchizadek.

Where Cross the Crowded ways of Life

Where cross the crowded ways of life,
where sound the cries of race and clan,
above the noise of selfish strife,
we hear your voice, O Son of Man.

In haunts of wretchedness and need,
on shadowed thresholds fraught with fears,
from paths where hide the lures of greed,
we catch the vision of your tears.

From tender childhood's helplessness,
from human grief and burdened toil,
from famished souls, from sorrow's stress,
your heart has never known recoil.

The cup of water given for you
still holds the freshness of your grace;
yet long these multitudes to view
the sweet compassion of your face.

O Master, from the mountainside,
make haste to heal these hearts of pain;
among these restless throngs abide;
O tread the city's streets again;

Till all the world shall learn your love,
and follow where your feet have trod;
till glorious from your heaven above
shall come the city of our God.

1 Where cross the crowded ways of life, where sound the cries of race and clan, above the noise of selfish strife, we hear your voice, O Son of Man. There is an urgency of action required on the part of the Church today to purify its Body and reach out to those who are perishing daily by the millions – not all by hunger and oppression, but more greatly by the spiritual death of an eternity without salvation. There is no greater venue of selfish strife than that which emanates from the streets and back alleys of New York. Every imaginable wickedness haunts those streets most intensely with the daily fall of the curtain of night and darkness.

2 In haunts of wretchedness and need, on shadowed thresholds fraught with fears, from paths where hide the lures of greed, we catch the vision of your tears. The greedy fingers of Wall Street are oblivious and uncaring concerning the want and poverty of soul and body that inhabit the skirts of that financial district. Instead of reaching out to 'Greenland's Icy Mountains' and the lost legions on foreign shores, the Church must first remove the mote from their own eyes to view the wretched spiritual poverty pervading their own shore and even their own godless form of worship. Charity and love begins at home (or in the House of God). Why constantly ponder matters of social evil while your own family famishes in spiritual darkness? Fear rules the streets of New York as well as other major world cities. There is a Balm yet in Gilead! We must be about our Father's business in sharing the Gospel either to condemn or else convict the hearts of the dying.

3 From tender childhood's helplessness, from human grief and burdened toil, from famished souls, from sorrow's stress, your heart has never known recoil. While the absence of recoil from these horrendous miseries has never characterized the true Church of our Lord, it certainly and sadly does describe the modern church, built up with pride and sinful lusts. The sinner is very much burdened with an unbecoming yoke of sin and helplessness. As a lost child, they know not where to seek solace or a warm hand to hold. The soul of the lost is as the hunger of the lost lamb on mundane plains of the wilderness. Does your heart feel a burning burden for the young girls traded in human trafficking, or the child whose raising never included a single mention of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you feel pain and compassion for those whose lives have become prisoners of the drug dealers' art and the sorcerers' charms?

4 The cup of water given for you still holds the freshness of your grace; yet long these multitudes to view the sweet compassion of your face. We have partaken of the Water of Life, and it has diminished not a whit in its spiritual nourishment; yet full of complacent satisfaction with our own state, we turn blind eyes to the perishing multitudes. When our Lord sought, tired and weary, sought rest beyond the shores of Galilee, He saw the multitudes of lost souls following hard after Him. In spite of His weariness, He had time to receive them with love and compassion. He fed them a feast of all they could eat. Many ate of the physical blessing, but failed of the greater spiritual blessing of the Bread of Heaven. They found a love and understanding in His face that many could not comprehend, and others misconstrued. It is our duty to make known to the multitudes the promise and truth of His salvation in our own lives. He came

bearing gifts of both Bread and Wine. He provided an abundance of the best Wine at the Marriage in Cana; and He is here breaking Bread again to feed far more than five thousand (in addition, the women and children); but also Bread for you and me of which we partake in remembrance of Him.

5 O Master, from the mountainside, make haste to heal these hearts of pain; among these restless throngs abide; O tread the city's streets again; The five thousand mounted the slopes of the mountain, but did not ascend all the way to the top where our Lord prayed that night. We must begin with our Lord, and we must close the twilight of day with the Lord. We cannot begin and finish halfway up the mountain. Jesus does not pay social calls – He comes to abide in our hearts, or nothing else. He most often frequents the city streets where the masses of men and women mingle. He does not often attend fancy balls and imperial dinners.

6 Till all the world shall learn your love, and follow where your feet have trod; till glorious from your heaven above shall come the city of our God. Sadly, the greater number of human beings to see the light of the sun shall perish in darkness and guilt before that day referred to in this stanza dawns; that day will begin with the return of the Son of God when all knees shall bow and tongues confess Him as Lord! Those who follow Christ – not just along the spring-fed brooks of Mt. Hermon, or the beautiful shores of Galilee – to the end which trails beyond Bethany, the Mt. of Olives, the Roman Pontiff's Courtyard, the Way of Dolorosa, to Calvary, and then, wonderfully, to the open Tomb, shall glory in that Day of Blessing and Wonderment.

A Happy and Blessed Thanksgiving to one and all in our company of readers, friends, and family!