

(55, 153)

1. O man, what vir - tue now a - dorns Thy life, if thou look
 2. Thy heart may be like as a road Where - on if seed were
 3. For if the seed be borne a - way, Or crushed, it can - not

in thee? Is thy heart's a - cre bear - ing thorns, Or are good
 scat - tered, It soon would un - der foot be trod Or by the
 flour - ish; Thou wilt not have thy faith as stay, Nor food thy

fruits with - in thee? For by its fruits the field is known, And
 birds be gath - ered. O prove thy - self most ear - nest - ly; Should
 soul to nour - ish. For if the Word should reach thine ear, And

who up - on the field has sown—The Lord or the de - stroy - er?
 this thy heart's con - di - tion be, Then thou de - serv - est pit - y.
 yet thy heart should fail to hear, Its trace would quick - ly van - ish!

4. Or if thy heart a stone is like,
Long hardened by much sinning,
The seed its roots there cannot strike,
God's Word makes no beginning.
For stones can never give the seed
The moisture it so much doth need
To grow, spring up, and flourish.

5. Before the heart good fruit can bear
That grace and love betoken,
The law must do its own work there,
The heart be bowed and broken.
Consider this and turn to God,
In deep and true contrition bowed;
Believe, and Christ will heal you!

6. And thorns may oft fill up a heart,
By cares and worries ridden;
Oft may it live in wealth apart
By which the seed is hidden;
Yea, it is choked and caused to die,
So that it can no more supply
The fruit of godly living.

7. This is our lot, if here we cling
To earthly pride and treasures,
If joys this evil world can bring
Make up our dearest pleasures.
Where hearts still worldly joy hold dear,
God's kingdom cannot prosper there;
The seed must surely smother.

8. But fertile land may still be found,
As our Lord Jesus knoweth;
In hearts where faith and hope abound,
To whom He mercy showeth.
The seed the Savior soweth there
Of fruits an hundredfold doth bear;
These are the hearts most faithful.

9. O hear, who hearing ears possess,
And test yourselves sincerely;
Today is still the day of grace,
While God's Word warns you clearly.
Time swiftly flies; the end draws near;
Unless the seed is fruitful here,
We cannot life inherit!

10. Lord Jesus, make my heart sincere
And deep in its contrition;
Let Thy good seed be cherished there
Till it fulfill its mission.
O may its harvest follow me,
And multiplied in heaven be—
This is my constant longing!