Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life

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.

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.

3 From tender childhood’s helplessness, from humbled toil, from famished souls, from sorrow’s stress, your heart has never known recoil.

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.

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;

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

Because dense populations always result in concentrated hardships, this vivid yet timeless evocation of urban need connects to our own day as well as to Jesus’ lament over Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37/Luke 13:34). This tune was the first used with this text and is now customary.

TEXT: Frank Mason North, 1903, alt.
MUSIC: Gardiner’s Sacred Melodies, 1815

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