

Dying Christian

As sung by
Charlie Spencer
07-27-1941 Crandon, WI

The Dying Christian

My soul's full of glo-ry, in - spir - ing my tongue. Could
I meet with an - gels, I'd sing them a song. I'd sing of my
Je - sus, and tell of His charms, And beg them to guide me to
His lov - ing arms.

The image shows a handwritten musical score on aged paper. The title 'The Dying Christian' is written at the top. The music is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes. The words 'in - spir - ing' are highlighted in yellow. The score ends with a double bar line.

Verse 1.

My soul's full of glory, inspiring my tongue.
Could I meet with angels, I'd sing them a song.
I'd sing of my Jesus, and tell of His charms,
And beg them to guide me to His loving arms.

Verse 2.

Methinks they're descending to hear while I sing,
Well-pleased to hear mortals a-praising their King.
Oh angels, oh angels, my soul's in a flame;
I faint in sweet raptures at Jesus' name.

Verse 3.

Oh Jesus, oh Jesus, Thou balm of my soul,
Was Thou, my dear Jesus, that made my heart whole.
Oh bring me to Judah, thou precious sweet King,
In oceans of glory, Thy praises to sing.

Verses 4.

Oh Heaven, sweet Heaven, I long to be there,
To meet all my brethren, and Jesus, my dear.
Come angels, come angels, I'm ready to fly;
Come quickly, come bade me to God in the sky.

Verse 5.

Ye spirits, attend me, till Jesus shall come;
Protect and defend me till I am called home.
Though worms my poor body may claim as their prey,
'Twill out-shine, when rising, the(y) sun at noon-day.

Verse 6.

The(y) sun shall be darkness, the(y) moon turned to blood,
The(y) mountains all melt at the presence of God.
Red lightnings may flash and loud thunders may roar;
All this cannot daunt me on Canaan's blessed shore.

Verse 7.

A glimpse of bright glory surprises my soul;
I sink in sweet raptures, to view this bright goal.
My soul, while I'm singing, is leaping to go;
This moment for Heaven I'd leave all below.

Verse 8.

Farewell, my dear brethren, my Lord bids me come;
Farewell, my dear sisters, I'm now going home.
Bright angels now whisp'ring so sweet in my ear,
Away to my Saviour my spirit draws near.

Verse 9.

I'm going, I'm going but what do I see,
Till Jesus in glory appears unto me.
I'm going, I'm going, I'm going, I'm gone;
Oh glory, oh glory, 'tis done, it is done.

Transcription and lyrics from the Helene Stratman-Thomas Collection.

Critical Commentary

Transcriptions by Peters, p. 65, and HST.

HST notes:

In the Professional Papers series:

Sung by Charlie Spencer, age 68, Crandon, 1941.

Mr. Spencer learned this song as a schoolboy in Kentucky. He reminisced "But the old school on my father's plantation, when I was a barefoot boy – a clapboard roof – no loft – a big open fireplace. The seats that I sat on when I was attending school was made out of split logs with the rounding side down. And I remember that they did have rough carpenters at that time because they left so many splinters in them there benches they'd get you in bad."

"One reason why I kept the old time songs is because they became part of my mind when I was a boy. You're lucky to run on these two ballads (Dying Christian and Crucifixion of

Christ). I can say that. I'm proud that you have these. You'll not find anyone around here that knows them except a Kentuckian, a southern person."

*Mr. Spencer understood that *The Dying Christian* had been written by a man on his deathbed and had been handed down in the Primitive Baptist church for about two hundred years.*

Sources:

Peters, Harry B., ed. *Folk Songs out of Wisconsin: An Illustrated Compendium of Words and Music*. Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1977.

K.G.