1 O dearest Jesus, what law have you broken
2 They crown your head with thorns, they smite, they scourge you;
3 Whence come these sorrows, whence this mortal anguish?
4 What punishment so strange is suffered yonder!

That such sharp sentence should on you be spoken?
With cruel mockings to the cross they urge you;
It is my sins for which you, Lord, must languish;
The Shepherd dies for sheep that loved to wander;

Of what great crime have you to make confession—
They give you gall to drink, they still desolate your soul.
Yes, all the wrath, the woe that you incur—
The Master pays the debt his servants owe.

fession— What dark transgression?
cry you; They crucify you.
her it, This I do merit.
owe him, Who would not know him.
5 The sinless Son of God must die in sadness;  
The sinful child of man may live in gladness;  
We forfeited our lives, yet are acquitted —  
God is committed.

6 I’ll think upon your mercy without ceasing,  
That earth’s vain joys to me no more be pleasing;  
To do your will shall be my sole endeavor  
Henceforth forever.

7 And when, dear Lord, before your throne in heaven  
To me the crown of joy at last is given,  
Where sweetest hymns your saints forever raise you,  
I too shall praise you.

Text: Johann Heermann, 1585-1647, abr.; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, st. 1-4, 6-7, alt.;  
The Lutheran Hymnal, St. Louis, 1941, st. 5, alt.  
Tune: Johann Crüger, 1598-1662  
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