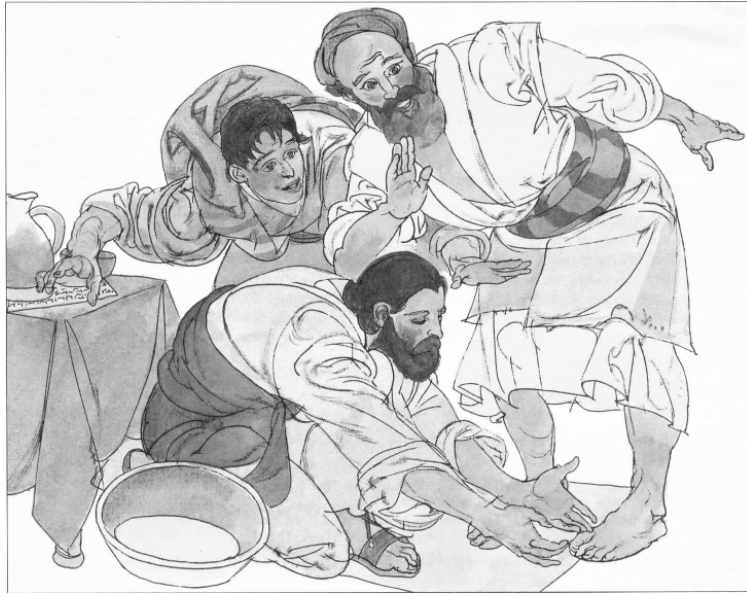


In The Upper Room



A Choral, Reader
and
Picture Presentation
for
Maundy Thursday
(Congregation participation; PPT optional)

Compiled by Mary Dorn Lippert

In The Upper Room

A Maundy Thursday Presentation

This presentation is approximately 45 minutes long, not including the Lord's Supper. It requires:

- Host Reader & Nicodemus
- Power Point setup (or DVD) & operator).
- Choral group
- Congregation participation

**Please feel free to make any changes you deem
appropriate for your congregation**

Presentation Script

This PDF is the script. The Host Reader, Nicodemus, slide show operator and the choral group will need copies.

The Host Reader and Nicodemus can be called workers, lay people, or a combination.

The choral group can be an established choir or a few volunteers gathered for this 1-time service.

Picture Script

This PDF shows what your visual presentation *might* look like if you choose to have one (pictures are not *absolutely* necessary). This sample was a Power Point saved as a JPEG file and later burned on a CD for presentation as a DVD slide show. If you can figure out how to display the PDF on a screen, more power to you! Otherwise, use it as a guide for making your own pictures. You could also:

- *Use film strips*
- *Commercial slides, or make your own by creating costumed scenes with members of your own congregation and taking photos, to be developed as slides.*
- *Tableau scenes (costumed characters in 'frozen' poses)*

Visuals, though helpful, aren't necessary- you can just use readers and choir; print song texts and congregation's portion in the worship folder.

Generally, the pictures in this script appear on the screen *before* each reading begins. Sometimes the pictures are quickly changed *within* a paragraph; sometimes they are *not changed for several paragraphs* and the same picture may even remain on the screen though different presenters. Each slide is numbered to correspond with the script, but be alert!

Songs

Choir- "Wondrous Cross" (Included)

"The Betrayal" (if you do not have this, purchase from me or substitute— your choice)

"The Bread and Wine" (purchase from me, etc.)

"Greater Love" (purchase, etc.)

NOTE: It is assumed that the Lord's Supper is celebrated *before* this presentation. A sermonette can be inserted on p.10

PP-1: (Title: “In the Upper Room”)

HOST READER

This day in Holy Week is called Maundy Thursday. Maundy means command, and refers to John 13:34—“*A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.*” This is a new command in that it speaks not of loving mankind in general, but of *Christians* loving *each other* with the same love shown to us by Christ.

In this presentation, called “In the Upper Room,” Jesus knows that soon his disciples will be greatly tested. He prepares them for spiritual leadership when he is no longer around and they are in charge. He knows that they are going to feel frightened, inadequate, and overwhelmed, so on this night he summarizes and reinforces all that he has been teaching them for more than three years.

We will visit the upper room, where Jesus and his twelve disciples met for the final Passover meal before our Savior’s death. I will read specific passages from Scripture. Another reader will portray a man called Nicodemus, and will give you historical background and personal insights.

The Bible tells us that Nicodemus was a member of the Sanhedrin and believed Jesus was sent from God. He cautiously interviewed him one night and later tried to protect him. After the death of Jesus, he, along with Joseph of Arimathea, brought spices for the burial. But that’s all the Bible says about Nicodemus and his portrayal in this presentation is fictitious. On the screen there are portions marked “Congregation,” and we invite you to participate in the reading and singing.

As modern-day disciples, we have the advantage of hindsight. And yet, in our sinful natures, we *still* desert Jesus and each other. We *still* need the words of wisdom, comfort, forgiveness, and healing given in love to those first followers who walked with God during his life on earth

PP:2-7 (follow the screen text)

CHOIR Song # One- “Wondrous Cross”

(This is an arrangement of two public domain hymns. The arrangement is at the end of the script)

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul, what wondrous love is this, O my soul! What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul, to bear the dreadful curse for my soul. When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died, my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride. **(The two songs are sung simultaneously)**

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul, what wondrous love is this, O my soul! See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down.

What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul, to bear the dreadful curse for my soul! Did e’er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown, for my soul!

PP:8 (Nicodemus)

NICODEMUS

My Name is Nicodemus. I live in Jerusalem and am a member of the Jewish Council. Although Scripture doesn't tell you, Jesus and his twelve disciples used an upper room in my house on that night when everything seemed to start falling apart. As I look back, I can see the fulfillment of many Old Testament prophecies, and God's plan becomes wonderfully clear. But at the time, it was not so.

PP: 9 (Jerusalem at Passover)

Holy Week began on a high note that year. Because of the approaching Passover Festival, Jerusalem's population had swollen from 30,000 to 300,000.

PP:10 (Lazarus is raised)

Jesus' popularity had reached an all-time high. The countryside was buzzing because he had just raised Lazarus from the dead. When he entered Jerusalem to celebrate Passover—or the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as it is sometimes called,

PP:11 (Palm Sunday)

he was greeted with a wildly cheering crowd. It was the fifth day before Passover, and on this day a lamb without blemish was chosen to be sacrificed at the temple for the sins of Israel. Jesus entered Jerusalem on that Lamb Selection Day, as the lamb whom God had chosen for sacrifice! But the people were looking for a political savior, and palm branches were a symbol of freedom and defiance. They would have made him king if they could!

PP:12-14 (follow the text)

CONGREGATION:

Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! "Hosanna in the highest!"

PP: 15 (Jerusalem mob)

NICODEMUS

Festivals were heavily patrolled by Roman soldiers. Civil unrest was common with large assemblies, and the Romans took precautions to prevent riots.

PP:16 (Sanhedrin plots)

HOST READER

The chief priests and Pharisees had given orders that if anyone found out where Jesus was, he should report it so that they might arrest him, for on account of [Lazarus], many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin." What are we accomplishing?" they asked. (*John 11:57; 12:11*)

PP: 17 (Jesus healing)

"Here is this man performing many miraculous signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." (*John 11:47-48*)

PP: 18 (Caiaphas)

Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.” He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. So from that day on they plotted to take his life. (*John 11:49-53*)

NICODEMUS

This was the religious and political situation in our country. Some people thought Jesus was a rebel, a great healer, a social reformer, or a victim of an unjust system. But not many understood he was God himself, sent to rescue us all from sin.

PP:19 (Jesus weeps)

And Jesus wept for them because they didn’t understand. *I didn’t understand!*

PP:20 (City at night)

The time to apprehend Jesus was at night, when the crowds were at home sleeping, and only his immediate followers would be with him. Jesus knew of this danger, but he had his own schedule for things to unfold in their proper time and place.

PP:21 (Events map)

So at night, he and his disciples withdrew from the city to the Mount of Olives, which was located across the Kidron Valley. Jesus planned to eat the Passover meal in Jerusalem with his disciples *before* he allowed the Jewish leaders to arrest him. Since most people lived in small, one story dwellings, he selected an upper room in a private home that belonged to someone of substantial means—me.

PP: 22 (Jesus directs disciples)

HOST READER

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus’ disciples asked him, “Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?” So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, “Go into the city and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you.

Follow him. (*Mark 14:12-13*)

PP: 23 (Road to house)

Say to the owner of the house he enters, ‘The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.” The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. (*Mark 14:14-16*)

NICODEMUS

My household was honored to have the Teacher use our upper room. It was always ready for use, but special effort was called for at Passover. The entire house was swept thoroughly so that not a trace of leavening could be found.

PP:24 (Lamb on shoulders)

A disciple selected a lamb for their meal. Late in the afternoon, he carried it on his shoulders to the temple, where the priests inspected it for blemishes and killed it,

according to ritual. The lamb was brought back to my house and roasted on a special spit, so that it did not touch the sides of the oven and become contaminated.

PP:25 (Passover preparation)

The unleavened bread was baked and bitter herbs were gathered from the garden. A vinegar sauce for dipping the herbs and bread was prepared. Wine was diluted with water. At last, everything was ready!

PP: 26 (Jerusalem at night)

HOST READER

When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love. (*Mark 14:17; John 13: 1*)

PP:27 (Original Passover)

NICODEMUS

The Passover meal isn't eaten the same way as when the children of Israel fled Egypt. They tucked their cloaks into their belts, ate standing up with their sandals on, staff in hand, ready to flee. Today, there is no reason to hurry. Once we burned the remains of the paschal lamb—now we save the leftovers!

PP: 28 (Disciples, relaxing)

We recline and dine at leisure, talk for a long time afterwards and nibble on the remains of the meal. There is still awe and reverence as the Deliverance from Egypt is recalled, but now Passover is a pleasant, congenial experience. And so I closed the door on my guests and left them to their meal. However, I later learned that *this* Passover had some perplexing and unsettling moments.

HOST READER

When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." (*Luke 22:14-16*)

PP- 29 (Jesus prepares for foot washing)

Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. (*John 13:3-4*)

PP-30 (Jesus washes feet)

After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." (*John 13:5-7*)

PP: 31 (Jesus, Peter)

"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not

every one of you.” For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean. (John 13:8-11)

PP: 32 (Jesus explains)

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. (John 13:12-16)

NICODEMUS

Now, I love my fellow Jews, but I would never have *considered* washing their feet had I not seen Jesus do it himself! What kind of love does that? It was not a love that was familiar to me. Perhaps it is to you...

PP: 33-34 (follow the screen text)

CONGREGATION

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, It is not easily angered; it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

PP: 35 (Jesus to congregation)

HOST READER

Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. (John 13:12-17)

PP: 36-37 (follow the screen text)

CONGREGATION

Although he has washed us; our thoughts are not pure. Although he has washed us, our actions are not self-less. Although he has washed us, we still sin. We need daily reminding that we are cleansed, we are forgiven, and we are holy in God’s sight because of Jesus. As he has loved us, so we should love each other.

PP: 38 (text for singing)

Lord Jesus Christ, you showed us how to treat our fellow Christians. As you have done, so we must do in genuine submission. Each burden bear, each sorrow share, our sins confess in truthfulness, then forgive one another.

Hymn melody CW # 312 (Note to Keyboardist: This tune is familiar; play only a brief introduction)

NICODEMUS

While the disciples were pondering their foot washing, something even *more* unsettling happened:

PP: 39 (Jesus troubled)

HOST READER

Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, “I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me.” (John 13:21)

PP: 40 (Who is it?)

His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, “Ask him which one he means.” Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, “Lord, who is it?” (*John 13:22-25*)

Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.” Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon. As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. (*John 13:26-27*)

[Jesus said,] “The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.” (*Matthew 26:24*)

CHOIR Song #Two- “The Betrayal”

P: 41-46 (follow the screen text)

Unto the Twelve, Jesus said “Before this night is done, someone close will betray the Son.”

Is it I, who will betray the Son of man today? Surely, not I! Is it he- the person next to me- the one it is to be? Surely, not I! It saddens me that I could be a fickle friend, untrue. Who is the soul to share the bowl and dip his bread with you? Is it I, who will betray the Son of man today? Surely, not I! Is it he, the person next to me, the one it is to be? Surely, not I! The Scriptures show that you will go, betrayed by one we knew. What was the trade, what bargain made?

Was silver paid for you? “Is it I?” said Judas to the Man who prophesied the plan, “Surely not I!”

“It is you! Now go and quickly do what you have chosen to. Judas, it’s you!” He had been warned, but Judas scorned; he was the friend untrue. He left the room; he sealed his doom; he sold his soul, and you. Unto the Twelve, Jesus said “Before this night is done, someone close will betray the Son.”

HOST READER

“What you are about to do, do quickly.”...no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him, [but] Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the Feast, or to give something to the poor. *(John 13:27-29)*

PP: 47 (Jesus glorified)

When [Judas] was gone, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.” *(John 13:31)*

NICODEMUS

I heard later that a weight seemed to lift from Jesus when Judas left— as if it marked the beginning of something very important. And indeed it did—for the glory Jesus spoke of was God’s impending redemption of mankind through his suffering, death, and resurrection. No one understood that then, but they were happy to see their Lord’s outlook had improved. He spoke to them more fervently now.

PP: 48 (Jesus & disciples)

HOST READER

“My children, I will be with you only a little longer.... Where I am going, you cannot come. “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” *(John 13: 33-35)*

NICODEMUS

Peter, known for his impulsiveness, overlooked the Lord’s words on love that were meant to unite them more closely once he had gone. He was more concerned with the Master’s latest travel plans.

PP: 49 (Jesus & Peter)

HOST READER

Simon Peter asked him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus replied, “Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.” Peter asked, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.” *(John 13:36-37)*

Then Jesus told them, “This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.” Peter replied, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.” “I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “This very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”

But Peter declared, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the other disciples said the same. *(Matthew 26:31-35)*

NICODEMUS

These were brave words for a band of believers who should have known by now that Jesus always speaks the truth! So far, this Passover evening had so many unexpected turns—who knew what else would happen?

PP: 50 (Disciples arguing)

HOST READER

Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest.

Luke 22:24

NICODEMUS

One can't help but wonder what God ever saw in these men! Can you imagine arguing at a time like this? What had he just been telling them about loving and serving each other? But I was in no position to judge them. I was a Pharisee, afraid to confess his faith for fear of being put out of the synagogue. I loved men's praise more than God's. Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner!

PP: 51 (Institution of Lord's Supper)

HOST READER (if pastor)

**PASTOR'S SERMONETTE RE THE LORD'S SUPPER IS INSERTED
HERE & IS APPROXIMATELY FIVE MINUTES LONG.
SLIDE 51 REMAINS ON SCREEN.**

**SLIDE 52 BEGINS AT THE INTRODUCTION
OF THE FOLLOWING CHOIR SONG:**

CHOIR Song #Three- "The Bread and Wine"

PP: 52-55 (follow the choral text)

Here is the bread; here is the wine. Nourishment filled with flesh divine. May it preserve, strengthen, too, Knowing the Savior has forgiven you. Body and bread, blood and wine. Come fill your faith with flesh divine. Christ in us; we are one, joined in the Feast of Love until he comes.

(Repeat as round)

Here is the bread; here is the wine. Nourishment filled with flesh divine. May it preserve, strengthen, too, Knowing the Savior has forgiven you. Body and bread, blood and wine. Come fill your faith with flesh divine. Christ in us; we are one, Showing the Savior's death until he comes.

PP: 56 (Jesus on a hillside)

NICODEMUS

Jesus talked with his disciples about many things that night. It was as if they were still in the countryside of Galilee. He gave them words of comfort and encouragement:

PP: 57-58 (follow the text)

CONGREGATION

Trust in God; trust also in me. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.

(Excerpts from John)

PP: 59 (Jesus, wheat field)

NICODEMUS

He gave them words of warning:

HOST READER

“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do *not* belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember the words I spoke to you: ‘No servant is greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. He who hates me hates my Father as well. *(John 15:18-20, 23)*

PP: 60 (Jesus by a river)

NICODEMUS

He gave them words of promise:

HOST READER

I will not leave you as orphans... I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. *(John 14:18, 16-17,27)*

PP: 61 (Jesus, disciples, upper room)

NICODEMUS

The disciples listened and asked questions, although they did not always understand the answers.

HOST READER

Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” *(John 14:5-6)*

Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. (*John 14:8-9*)

Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?” Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. (*John 14:22-24*)

PP: 62 (black)

NICODEMUS

About this time, I was summoned to an emergency meeting of the Sanhedrin. As I approached the upper room to let them know I would soon be leaving, I could hear Jesus say...

HOST READER

I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. “Come now; let us leave. When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. (*John 14:30-31; Mark 14:26*)

NICODEMUS

My house was empty. Later that night, at the high priest’s palace, I saw Jesus alive for the last time. I had once defended him to the Council, but there was nothing I could do now. Besides, Jesus was in control. He had kept the law perfectly for us and this was the time he had chosen to die for our sins. Had he not, we would all still be lost!

PP: 63-68 (show each briefly)

You know the rest of the story—how he was

(63) betrayed and arrested,

(64) tried, mocked, beaten,

(65) and crucified.

(66) How he rose from death,

(67) and ascended to his Father in heaven. True to his promise, he sent the

(68) Holy Spirit, who is still increasing God’s kingdom beyond our feeble imaginations!

The words Jesus spoke in the upper room are true for us today, for we are his disciples and he has called us friends.

HOST READER

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” *(John 16:33, 13:34-35)*

PP: 69-72 (follow song text)

CHOIR Song # Four- “Greater Love”

Greater love has no one, than this: that he lay down his life for his friends. Greater love has no one, than this: Jesus Christ gave his life for his friends. He has called us friends, for ev’ry thing he learned from God, his father, he has made known to us. We are his friends if we will follow the will of God he’s shown to us. Greater love has no one, than this: that he lay down his life for his friends. Greater love has no one, than this: Jesus Christ gave his life for his friends. No greater love!

HOST READER

Please stand for the blessing: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

♪ Amen. Amen. Amen. *(Optional for congregation)*

When I sur - vey the — won - drous cross on which the Prince of —
soul.

Glo - ry — died, my rich - est gain I — count but —

loss, and pour con - tempt on on my — pride.
What won-drous love is

See, from his head, his — hands, his —
this, O my soul, O my soul, what

feet, sor - row and love flow min - gled down.
 won-drous love is this, O my soul. What

Did e'er such love and sor - row meet,
 won-drous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to lay a - side his

or thorns com - pose so rich a crown, for my soul!
 crown for my soul, for my soul, to lay a-side his crown for my soul.