

Divine Love Making a Feast

(How Sweet and Aweful is the Place)

Text: Isaac Watts
Tune: DUNLAP'S CREEK



1. How sweet and aw - ful is the place
2. While all our hearts and all our songs
3. "Why was I made to hear Thy voice,
4. 'Twas the same love that spread the feast
5. Pi - ty the na - tions, O our God,
6. We long to see Thy church - es full,



with Christ wi - thin the doors,
join to ad - mire the feast,
and en - ter while there's room,
that sweet - ly drew us in;
con - strain the earth to come;
that all the cho - sen race



while e - ver - last - ing love dis - plays
each of us cries, with thank - ful tongue,
when thous - ands make a wretch - ed choice
else we had still re - fused to taste,
send Thy vic - tor - ious Word a - broad,
may with one voice and heart and soul,



the choic - est of her stores
"Lord, why was I a guest?"
and ra - ther starve than come?"
and per - ished in our sin
and bring the strang - ers home
sing Thy re - deem - ing grace

Divine Love Making a Feast and Calling in the Guests

is the full, original title Isaac Watts gave to this hymn, but in our day and age it is better known by its first line, "How Sweet and Aweful is the Place." Though it is usually set to the same tune as "The King of Love My Shepherd Is" (*St. Columba*), I found the old American folk tune *Dunlap's Creek* fits nicely for our use.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748) was an educated theologian and pastor who wrote hundreds of hymns that have left an immense and remarkable impact on English congregational worship. Though poor health limited his pastoral duties later in life, he persevered in writing beautifully poetic, theologically rich, and pastorally helpful hymns for the church.

Watts included "Divine Love Making a Feast" in a particular collection of songs for use during the Lord's Supper. His original contained a seventh verse with the lyrics, "here every bowel of our God with soft compassion rolls." (Mercifully, it has since been omitted.) The verses together reflect on the Parable of the Great Banquet in Luke 14. In that story, a man invites rich friends to a banquet, but they all deny the invitation. Angry, he then brings in "the poor and crippled and blind and lame," those who would rightly say in Watts' words, "Lord, why was I a guest?" After the servants declare there is still room for more guests, the host commands them, "Go out ...and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled."

This picture of God's rich grace and mercy to bring the sinner into the feast shows us the magnitude of his love for us in Christ. Watts' hymn compels us to humble ourselves, remember what we have received in Jesus, and live to see more guests among the nations brought in to the banquet hall. May God gather us and all of his church to this great feast!

Scripture to consider:

Psalm 36	Matthew 22:1-14	1 Cor. 11:17-34
Isaiah 25	Luke 14:12-24	Revelation 19
Isaiah 54-55	Ephesians 1:3-14	

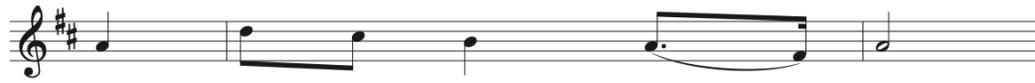
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