



The Austin Stone  
COMMUNITY CHURCH

## NO GREATER AIM

BY JON DANSBY

---

*But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.  
Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of  
knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.*

*- Philippians 3:7-8*

Most Christians begin their faith captured by the truth of forgiveness. This is right and good; may we never lose the wonder of God canceling our sin's enormous debt. At the time, it seemed there could be no higher gain than being delivered from God's wrath by God Himself.

There comes a time when our eyes adjust and we see the true treasure of God's loving work in Christ. The weight shifts from what we've been saved *from* to what we've been saved *to*. We are like one who has escaped into a room from a bright but deadly explosion. At first, our eyes are blinded and we can only marvel that we are delivered. But as our eyes adjust to the new room, we delight to see that the room is filled with priceless treasure.

When the shift happens, forgiveness becomes, not less sweet, but much sweeter. Now we see that it is not an end, but a vessel that delivers us safely from destruction to a glorious location: knowing and having Jesus. This goal is what the song "No Greater Aim" is all about: a meditation about knowing and having Jesus as our greatest prize.

*Once my heart was lost, tangled deep in sin  
Wand'ring far from grace, and veiled in shame  
Yet with boundless love You have brought me home  
Now my greatest prize: to know Your Name*

*Knowing You, Jesus, only You  
There is no greater aim  
In Your presence here, my joy is found  
There is no higher gain*

We were all once far from God with no lasting hope. Alienated from Him, tangled in our sin, and darkened in our understanding because of our hard hearts. We were satisfied to seek happiness in anything but the only One who can satisfy. Because of our rebellion, Jesus was our greatest threat.

It's frequently said that the 2 greatest words in the Bible are "But God..." All these sad things were true of us, but God chose us, sought us, sent Jesus for us, brought us home, sealed us with His Spirit, and changed our hearts. Where Jesus *was* our greatest threat, *now* there is no greater aim than to have Him. He is our hope and our joy!

*Oh my soul cries out just to know You more  
To be fettered by unfailing love  
Though the fires may flash, mighty thunders roar  
Still my hope's secure in Christ above*

The greatest news of the gospel is that we get to have Jesus forever. He is our treasure that is bound up in heaven, that moth and rust cannot destroy. So we cry out now because our grasp on Him is incomplete and interrupted by our wandering and doubting hearts. And so we have a wonderfully ironic request: "fetter us, chain us, constrain us near to Your love." But even though we may waver and this life threaten us, our hope is sealed and secure in the One who conquered death!

*May my life be steeped in unceasing praise  
'Til in death we'll meet on heaven's shore  
Oh that glorious day, 'tis Your face I'll see  
And in Your arms I'll sing forevermore*

As surely as Jesus is alive right now, so we will see Him face to face. And when we see Him, He will transform us and we will be like Him. And we will have Him forever, uninterrupted by anything within us or outside of us. Death will be gain. Death is gain for the Christian because Jesus is better than anything life can give or death can steal.

*Your love is higher, Your glory brighter  
And my hope is set on You  
My greatest longing is found in knowing  
That my hope is set on You*

So, heart of mine: listen up! Don't get hung up with the gaining and losing of trivial joys in this life. Jesus' love is a higher joy. His glory is a brighter fame. All of my greatest longings will find their final satisfaction and fulfillment in Him. When I bind my hope for happiness up with His undefeatable life, my happiness becomes undefeatable and eternal as well!

O, praise the Lord for the forgiveness and the grace that delivered me into such a treasure as this!

As St. Augustine once wrote,

*"How sweet all at once it was for me to be rid of those fruitless joys which I had once feared to lose! You drove them from me and took their place... O Lord my God, my Light, my Wealth, and my Salvation."*