

That thee is sent, receyve in buxumnesse; 15
The wrastlyng for this worlde axeth a fal.
Here is non hoom, here nis but wildernesse:
Forth, pilgrim, forth! Forth, beste, out of thy stal!
Know thy contree, look up, thank God of al;
Hold the heye wey and lat thy gost thee lede, 20
And trouthe thee shal delivere, it is no drede.

Translation:

Flee from the crowd (at court) and dwell with truthfulness;
Be satisfied with what you have, though it be little,
For hoarding begets jealousy, and climbing instability,
The crowd breeds envy, and everywhere wealth deceives.
Savor no more than is proper for you to have,
Rule yourself, who counsels others, well,
And truth shall deliver you, have no fear.

Do not trouble yourself to fix everything that is crooked
As if you can trust her (Fortune) who constantly turns like a ball;
Great peace of mind resides in little anxiety.
Beware, therefore, to kick against the pricks (against an awl),
Strive not, like the crook against the wall.
Rule yourself, who dictates the deeds of others,
And truth shall deliver you, have no fear.

Obediently receive whatever is sent you;
Wrestling for this world invites a fall.
Here is no home, here is nothing but wilderness:
Forth, pilgrim, forth! Forth, beast, out of your stall!
Know your country, look up, thank God of all;
Hold to the high way and let your spirit lead you,
And truth shall deliver you, have no fear.



Monday, April 14 (lines 1-5): Am I content with what I have, or do I always want more? If I want more, is it because I really don't have enough, or because I'm jealous of my neighbor? Have I forgotten your blessings, dear Lord, who have given me all good things? Have I forgotten that the last are first in your kingdom? Help me to be humble, lord.

Tuesday, April 15 (line 6): Have I told other people how they should live their lives, even judging them, but not followed my own advice? Do I criticize others—individuals, institutions, the government, all my favorite targets—while ignoring my own shortcomings? Dear lord, how can I be a person who walks the walk of faith, who masters myself before telling others how to live their lives, who can be measured by the measure with which I judge others?

Wednesday, April 16 (lines 8-12): Dear Jesus, you have told me not to worry. As you feed the birds of the air and clothe the flowers of the field, so much more have you given me in your splendor. Why, then, do I worry? Why do I refuse to accept myself? Why do I see only what I am not, what I do not have, and miss your grace when it is right here, when it is right now, in the present moment?

Holy Thursday, April 17 (lines 13-14): My beloved, you washed the feet of our apostles today to show that even the highest must serve others. Do I get caught up in trying to get more things, to get to the top of Fortune's spinning wheel, and forget that the only thing that will last is love, what I have done for others?

Good Friday, April 18 (lines 15-16): My sweet lord, you did not wrestle with the world in order to conquer it. On this day, you surrendered yourself to the world in order to save it. Help me to be more like you, to die to self in order to live fully in your love.

Holy Saturday, April 19 (lines 17-20): My God, you are so far away. Why can't you be here with me? But "here" is only a moment in time. There is another world, a greater truth, where I will see you face to face. I am on a journey to find you. You call me. Do I listen? Do I stray? Please show me the way.

Easter Sunday, April 20 (refrain): You are the truth, the way, and the life, dear lord. I wish always to walk in your light. I know you will redeem me, as you saved Daniel, as you raised Lazarus, as you showed the woman at the well how to find living water. Be with me always, at the center of my life, in my inmost being. Thank you, dear lord, for your gift of love.

Chaucer's prayer to end *Troilus and Criseyde*, his great courtly romance written in the early 1380s:

Thow oon, and two, and thre, eterne on lyve,
That regnest ay in thre, and two, and oon,
Uncircumscript, and al maist circumscribe,
Us from visible and invisible foon
Defende, and to thy mercy, everichon,
So make us, Jesus, for this mercy, digne,
For love of mayde and moder thyn benigne.
Amen.

Thou one, and two, and three, eternally living,
That reigns ever in three, and two, and one,
Unbounded, who all may bound,
Defend us from visible and invisible foes,
And, Jesus, make us, everyone,
Fitting for your mercy,
Out of love of your kind maid and mother.
Amen.

From the Parson's portrait in the *General Prologue to The Canterbury Tales* (1386):

This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf,
That first he wroghte, and afterward he taughte.
Out of the gospel he tho wordes caughte,
And this figure he added eek therto,
That if gold ruste, what shal iren do?
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;
And shame it is, if a preest take keep,
A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep.
Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive,
By his clenness, how that his sheep sholde lyve.

This noble example he gave to his sheep (flock, congregation),
That first he wrought, and afterward he taught.
He took those words from the gospel (Matt. 5:19),
And he added also this expression thereto,
That if gold rusts, what shall iron do?
For if a priest, on whom we trust, be foul,
It is no wonder that an unlearned man rusts;
And a shame it is, if a priest takes heed,
To have a dirty shepherd and a clean sheep.
Well should a priest give example
By his cleanness, as to how his sheep should live.