

Bring us, O Lord God, at our Last awakening, into the house and gate of heaven to enter into that gate and dwell in that house, where there shall be no darkness nor dazzling, but one equal Light: no noise nor silence, but one equal music; no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession; no foes nor friends, but one equal communion; no ends nor beginnings, but one equal eternity; in the habitation of the glory and dominion, world without end.
Amen.

In setting John Donne's sermon text, I was intrigued by the concept of opposing ideas resolving to a higher level, a world beyond opposition. How might it be expressed in music, this *no darkness nor dazzling, but one equal light; no noise nor silence, but one equal music; no foes nor friends, but one equal communion; no ends nor beginnings, but one equal eternity?* And what might have been Donne's state of mind as he delivered these words – perhaps a sort of spiritual exaltation? The music uses word painting to achieve a series of mounting climaxes depicting these heavenly attributes – light, music, communion, eternity – and finally, amen.

duration: c. 4:30

first performance

Harvard Glee Club, Jameson Marvin, conductor
November 22, 2002
Sanders Theater, Harvard University
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