

As surely as I live, God said

Jeremiah Clarke, c 1674-1707

St. Luke
L.M.

As surely as I live, God said,
I would not see the sinner dead.
I want him turned from error's ways,
Repentant, living endless days.

And so our Lord gave command:
"Go forth and preach in every land;
Bestow on all my pardoning grace
Who will repent and mend their ways.

"All those whose sins you thus remit
I truly pardon and acquit,
And those whose sins you will retain
Condemned and guilty shall remain.

"What you will bind, that bound shall be;
What you will loose, that shall be free;
To my dear Church the keys are given
To open, close the gates of heaven."

The words which absolution give
Are his who died that we might live;
The minister whom Christ has sent
Is but his humble instrument.

When ministers lay on their hands,
Absolved by Christ the sinner stands;
He who by grace the Word believes
The purchase of his blood receives.

All praise to you, O Christ, shall be
For absolution full and free,
In which you show your richest grace;
From false indulgence guard our race.

Praise God the Father and the Son
And Holy Spirit, Three in One,
As was, is now, and so shall be
World without end, eternally!

Nicolaus Herman