

## You Ain't Nothin' But a Hound Dog?

*The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. (Luke 19:10)*

It may not sound flattering to compare God to a hound dog, but think again. Blood hounds are noted for their ability to follow a scent for long distances. Once on the trail, they are famous for their tenacity. They just don't give up. In one of the great poems of English literature, Francis Thompson imagines God as *The Hound of Heaven*. The poem is autobiographical because Thompson sees himself as the prey! Desperately trying to avoid God, Thompson's life spiraled out of control, leading to homelessness, destitution and opium addiction. But though he ran as hard and as fast as he could, God had Thompson's scent, and the Hound of Heaven just wouldn't give up!

*I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;  
I fled Him down the arches of the years;  
I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways  
Of my own mind; and in the midst of tears  
I hid from Him and under running laughter.  
Up vistaed hopes I sped;  
And shot, precipitated  
Adown titanic glooms of chasmèd fears,  
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.  
But with unhurrying chase  
And unperturbèd pace,  
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy  
They beat – and a Voice beat  
More instant than the Feet –  
“All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.”*

The day finally came when Thompson realized the futility of running from God. Not only were such efforts ultimately useless, they were insane. Why run from the only One who truly loves us and desires our ultimate happiness?

*Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee  
Save Me, save only Me?  
All which I took from thee, I did but take  
Not for thy harms,  
But just that thou mightst seek it in My arms.  
All which thy child's mistake  
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:  
Rise, clasp My hand and come!”*

Friend, if God has *your* scent this morning, stop running. How can you escape the Hound of Heaven? Why would you even want to?