

## Poems3

### **He Loves me So!**

He does strange things; sending a lightning storm just for me  
that disables the web and my foolish wanderings.  
Are you so interested in me or is it my imaginings?  
Are you proving that you love me with evidence I need?

Such biblical behavior. Now that's quite something;  
to go out of your usual reticent way for me.  
Am I worth a lightning storm, practically  
on my very house, thunder, lightning, everything?

How much longer this looking after me your foolish child?  
How much longer will you a Father be?  
I'll always wonder, am I worth a friend's repose to see,  
to end a compromise; a legal threat to end a downward spiral?

You plan to tolerate the kind of sinner I am  
who never to my dying day  
will likely change, come what may,  
who I myself would long ago just damn.

I don't know love when it stares me in the face.  
I guess you love me much more than I believed,  
much more than I realized, conceived, received,  
in every step throughout this misfit's race.

You discipline your children because you're you.  
Why should I know such love inflamed  
to have these jabbing attacks of shame?  
Your love does scare me so.

What purpose do they serve - to bring me to my knees,  
again and again, with humiliation?  
No, I think they arrive by association  
of a severe self-judging Punisher who haunts me as he please.

Why do you needle me? Oh, he said, to blame  
and wreak revenge.  
Guilt sends  
the Punisher to stab and jab at me with shame.

And occasionally paranoia. I think I'll be found out  
and the Punisher will come and get me so  
for my bad deeds of long ago.  
I was supposed to be a good boy. But I'm digressing now.

What else is there to say?  
He loves me so! He loves me so!  
Though me a foolish, failing child I know.  
This fact he proves to me each day.

I cannot endure his kind of love,  
it's more than I can bear,  
I'm so unworthy to receive such kindness, care,  
such unrepayable goodness from above.

## **Excuse me!**

Dead leaves float down upon the grass,  
Queen Ann has gone to seed,  
and all around the green is tinged  
with brown-like dried-out weeds.  
The sun is hid more of the day  
and dark clouds racing by  
make changing shadows on the lawn  
and softly speak that Fall is nigh.  
I take a ride to the thrifty store  
which is always such a treat  
to find inexpensive books to read.  
I found three which I don't need.  
Five ladies say "excuse me"  
as they squeezed in the isle by me,  
going to the restroom with lots  
of happy talk;  
all mentally wounded.  
Three were teens, one was older,  
and one was very old.

I looked at each of them briefly  
with their squinty Asian eyes  
Gentle, simple, each a smile.  
It was then I thought what  
different lives, what different  
journeys we have had.  
What would it have been like  
to exchange our lives  
if I worked in a thrifty store  
and squeezed by and simply smiled  
and said "excuse me?"

## **Seeing things now**

I don't live in the real world  
where people fight and argue,  
where ends don't meet and fears  
defeat all hope of living well.  
Where things don't  
work out in the end  
and get better with time.  
Where evil men do evil things  
to others, sometimes very young.  
I don't know soldier life  
or military men with stripes  
who fight and bloody up  
their noses and break a jaw  
because it's what tough guys do.  
Where people cheat on wives  
and end up in divorce.  
I don't care much for budget  
things and bank accounts and such.  
With adding and dividing  
I'm mostly out of touch.  
I don't like swearing,  
vulgar words, loud laughter,  
barking dogs, crying babies,  
hurting people's feelings,  
offending them with telling lies  
or holding grudges long.

I only know I'm getting by  
on poet words and  
crafting thoughts that some  
may think too much.  
I'm only trying to say  
that I'm not fully there  
where most have been,  
and somehow this feels sad  
to me to see these things  
just now.

## **Joy**

Joy bounds forth from love  
Joy holds nothing back  
Joy is the freedom to love and be loved  
Joy is so secure there is no fear  
Joy exuberates within  
Joy wants to sing and spin.  
Joy is a bride and a groom  
looking into each other's eyes.  
Joy is a new born baby.  
Joy is finding a treasure  
in your own heart  
and knowing you will keep it  
forever.  
Joy is trusting God in all things.  
Joy is knowing all things  
are working together for your good.

## **Trininme**

I've lost myself,  
I'm not myself,  
a Life has captured me.  
I've left myself behind,  
another life is seizing me,  
resisting me, my own and yet not mine.  
This life that's not my own,  
this life that set me free

lives his life along with mine,  
the one who I've not known;  
and how strange it is to have  
this tingling warm-like  
presence taking over me  
like this. It's he!

The Son of God lives within  
at last, and occupies my soul,  
my heart with peace and joy,  
increasing self-control.

With him his Holy Spirit  
lives and loves and lights  
my inner self with words of fire  
which wrinkle through the cortex  
of my soul's refugium.

The Father God of all  
is known in overwhelming love  
who tickles me with intimacy,  
with intimacy I've never had  
which now is from above.

### **Simple life**

So many things in life  
are unnecessary;  
they contribute little  
to the spiritual value of our lives  
or our human improvement.  
Think of the many fabricated foods  
and especially stores or  
enterprising establishments  
like bars.

Is there any value  
to bars? I once enjoyed  
beer nuts with beer at a bar  
after a long days work every  
night for several weeks  
when I worked out of town.  
But that bar just made me more  
indulgent and wayward,

like strip clubs or  
gambling joints and casinos.  
We don't need them.  
Do we need hair salons?  
Is that more self-indulgence and pride?  
I don't know. What do you think?  
A hundred years ago we got  
along very well without any of these.  
And do we need all the guns? No! No!  
Kids shooting up their high schools.  
Do we need gourmet shops  
and gourmet clothing stores,  
and expensive weddings that last a year?  
Haven't we gone quite astray these days?  
Hyper fans at super sports  
instead of backyard dirt lot baseball,  
players earning more money than they  
ever need or deserve. Do you agree?  
Is anyone anymore leading  
a simple life?  
Tell me of what that would consist?  
I don't know, but I'd like to see!

### **Autumn Fruit**

Autumn has much to teach me!  
The most colorful season of the year  
is here, with its golden fields  
and peach-laden harvesting orchards,  
rustic charms, and rusty-colored countryside.  
With reapers laboring in groves of bending boughs  
picking fruit; ripe, reddened, delightful to the eye,  
sweet to taste, fragrant fruit.  
What spiritual lessons are here to ponder,  
as Micah said: *My soul desired the first ripe fruit,*  
and Galatians' list of nine.  
If picked too soon before O Sole mio has penetrated  
deep within, the fruit is hard and goldenless.  
So too the soul which lives in shade and not  
in the Sun of God's bright tenderness.  
So too is he without the fruit of kindness and love,  
but tart and bitter, not sugared with

the Lord's own sweetness, not clinging close  
enough to him, he lacks his love and mercy,  
instead is hard with judgment and critique.

He is not tender to the touch  
like the tenderness of Jesus with the woman  
of adultery, or with prickly Peter proud,  
whereas ripe fruit hang downward with humility  
and contrition, knowing I'm a sinner  
in need of mercy;  
not boasting, stiff-necked contempt,  
no harsh judging thoughts within.  
Ripe fruit have a loose hold to the tree  
as the disciple has to the world.  
He is easily shaken and falls to the ground  
at the Master's feet seeking his embrace  
of love and compassion.  
Ah Autumn has much to teach me Lord!

### **The Waiting Room**

A room to wait,  
a waiting room.  
A room to contemplate,  
before you're weighed  
and pressured on your arm,  
and fingered saturate.  
A woman paces anxiously  
for what I'm not aware.  
A fat man sits alone,  
conspicuous but there  
behind the big leafy plant,  
ashamed he weighs so much  
he sits on double chairs.  
The doctor's blond receptionist  
is busy with smiles and stress,  
and I stare and stare at her  
because she treats me nice,  
wanting to see the outcome  
of her effort to be kind  
to the pacing anxious woman.  
I'm waiting, waiting

for my precious time  
to see the internist  
who's youngish handsome  
and oh so very earnest.  
The fat man goes within,  
squeezes through the door  
to desecrate the scales.  
The anxious woman pacing,  
makes a squeaking on the floor,  
and stuffs her mouth with  
chewing, grinding gum.  
Come in says the nurse,  
I step upon the scale device.  
She moves the slider from  
four to two hundred,  
and I feel so healthy and so thin  
and nice.

### **I-it, I-thou**

This disconcerting thought  
invades me once too often;  
that I don't really know  
those closest to me,  
and of course I should.  
Of course I know she's my  
daughter and my wife  
and I've lived with them all my life,  
but I don't know who they really are,  
I don't know if they exist in me  
or intimately.  
I have not engaged them deeply  
where attachment and love  
form a bond of emotionality  
and real familiarity.  
I'm grappling with Buber  
who described the I-it and the I-thou  
relationships. I've had too few  
of the latter and too many of the former.  
I-it are object people separate  
from my inner emotional attachment to them.



I-thou are those I form a bond with,  
feel personal love and attachment toward,  
those who it hurts  
to be apart from, at odds, or detached,  
whom it matters if I hurt them.  
This detachment kind deprives  
me of life and love and  
the abundant life I ought to know,  
really know.  
And it's worse if I live with  
I-It people who should be I-thou,  
and God who should be  
I-Thou taken inside and  
made a part of me if not  
all of me myself.

### **The Voice at Night**

We can hear the unmistakably voice of God  
in those undistracted mindful moments  
when we are just falling asleep,  
when our minds are free of chatter.  
Tonight the Spirit stirred my heart  
with an unexpected rush of love  
for the Father, as I was falling asleep.  
It was a powerful testimony  
that the Spirit can only act this way  
because I was in Christ and he in me,  
for the Spirit is the presence of Christ  
and Christ is the presence of the Father.  
Where one is, so are the others.  
The Father wanted me to be convinced  
that Christ lives in me,  
since I had been desiring that assurance,  
and they give conviction of each others'  
presence in our lives.  
I also had a strong desire to open  
the New Testament just then;  
another conviction that what was  
spoken in my heart by the Spirit  
was the voice of God,  
the same voice which is in the  
written Word of God,

and I wanted more of  
that warming, soul-filling voice.  
Altogether this bedtime experience  
was a comforting, reassuring  
moment of communion with  
the Triune God,  
a reinforcement of the spiritual union  
between the persons of the Trinity,  
the Word and their communion  
with me as my eyes closed in sleep.

As it says:

*God speaks again and again,  
in dreams, in visions of the night  
when deep sleep falls on men  
as they lie on their beds.  
He opens their ears in times like that  
and gives them wisdom and instruction.*  
Job 33:14-16 (Living Bible)

## **Birth and Birthdays**

Never thought much about birth, birthdays  
and birthday parties.

Why do we humans celebrate them?

It begins with the birth of a child.

A birth is something to celebrate.

A child coming out of a mother's  
womb and beginning an independent  
life of it's own is a miraculous event.

A new person like ourselves has been born.

Throughout the animal kingdom;  
horses, kangaroos, elephants, lions,  
dogs, cats, pigs, mice,

all cherish their newborn babies  
and care for them instinctively.

Then we humans seeing that little miracle  
grow each year is the reason we start  
celebrating her birthday.

So we start at age one, then two and three  
when a child doesn't even know  
what a birthday means and why  
his parents are so excited, faces full

of smiles and laughter, this sweet-tasting  
thing called a cake  
and these bright lights long called candles  
which people blow out, make smoke,  
and sing a happy song.  
What does this mean to the young child?  
How old are you sweetie?  
I'm twee years old!  
See that word 'old' tucked in there?  
That's another reason we celebrate birthdays  
with parties and presents and songs and cakes.  
Picture a bell-shaped curve with a flat top.  
Birthdays from age one to sixteen are  
on the rising side of the curve.  
Birthdays from that age to about forty  
are on the flat surface of the bell.  
That's when birthdays are somewhat  
less important and less celebrated  
the same way they had been before.  
But from about forty forward  
on the downside of the curve,  
they start becoming very important again.  
Getting older is exciting when you're young,  
then they don't matter for some years,  
but become very important once again.  
Coming-to-life birthdays,  
living-life birthdays,  
coming-to-the-end-of-life birthdays.  
We humans are amazing!

### **Two Thirds of Me**

Hidden in each one of us  
is a secret person,  
often unknown even to ourselves.  
I wish I knew its name,  
'cause then I'd tell him a thing or two.  
This inner person is able to control  
and alter the whole course of our lives  
by it's unseen momentum,  
its insistent will and impulsive glands.

It's this person inside who really lives  
my life and who we  
try to get to know all our life,  
and never quite do,  
so always feel incomplete  
and unknown to ourselves.  
Let's call it the **false self**.  
We may think we are the person  
who is walking and talking,  
sleeping and eating,  
but it's that false self  
who makes life happen  
and makes life hurt.  
That's where my impulsive passions  
emerge, my fears and my  
false thinking arises,  
where all of my troubles begin,  
from where I mess up my life.  
It's my false self that deceives me  
in loving and hating  
and striving to make me important  
to myself.  
Who are you anyway?  
But then there's my **true self**  
even deeper within,  
who I know even less.  
Have you met him or her?  
It's the one who aspires and inspires  
and seeks to bring me higher.  
And out of the struggles  
between these two selves  
emerges my **real self**,  
the real me I'm beginning to see  
and trying to accept.  
He's a complicated,  
crazy dude, dudess.  
He's the compromise,  
trade off, reconciliation,  
and appeasement  
I live with all the time.  
He's the one I'm left with,

the one I must manage and cope with.  
I better get used to him,  
I better get to like him  
because he's what I got.  
Two-thirds of me mostly  
unknown, two-thirds of me  
mostly not shown.  
No wonder I'm a muddle,  
and a mess.

### **Come and Go**

Oak leaves from their trees are falling fast  
and tapestry in reds the ground  
and yellows, golden browns  
from the wind whirling by,  
by rain lightly slipping down  
in intermittent showers,  
then sun returns and all is well  
for it's Autumn,  
but we like little ants upon the earth,  
helpless little ants  
run around, we run around  
in grooves we think are swell,  
but they don't know, they can't see  
that they are doomed to sudden  
oblivion to some nameless hell,  
crawling over rotting leafy twines,  
acorns, twigs and muddy rocks,  
that's just how I feel sometimes.  
One year later  
how different will it be,  
different from these present woes  
and taught anxiety;  
then look back, what will I learn  
that feelings come and go,  
these feelings come and go.  
Why make my life such  
tragedy so  
when feelings come and go.

## **New Year's Eve**

An early October morn  
awakened by the winds and rain,  
another day, as we say,  
and I'll be saying  
the same tomorrow at this time again.  
How each moment has  
become so precious and so fleeting now,  
each minute folding into hours quickly,  
then day and weeks and years somehow.  
I try to hold and slow them down,  
but no,  
they keep flying swiftly by  
because the end is in sight  
when I must leave this lie.  
Oh how I grieve  
another New Year's Eve,  
when I must hold back  
the tears of many years  
that mark the people and the past  
gone even longer now.  
Gone forever.  
Oh how I grieve  
another New Year's Eve.

## **Seeing for the First Time**

We are an integral part of a system of all things,  
which transcends our powers and baffles  
our understanding.  
Do we know our place in this universe?  
There is so much we little know.  
In the presence of the midnight skies,  
the cosmic planetary movements in space,  
the geological and biological processes of the globe,  
and the evolution of different nations and race,  
does not our religious mythology  
seem foolish and childish sometimes,

yet is it not apparently needed and fine?  
Our creeds slowly evolved pietistic  
over many centuries, becoming  
more and more humanly realistic.  
Why does not our common sense  
and experiential knowledge  
apply to religious beliefs?  
Or does it?

The religious and metaphysical  
to mankind seems very real,  
no doubt about it, it's like steel.  
Every age of man has presumed a  
spirit being or presence which  
explains all the unknowable events of life.  
The unknowable mysteries of death  
we try to penetrate with a bloodied knife.  
So much of art and literature tells us so.

Is there a great Goodness  
who will help us all things to know,  
or a great unknown Momentum of evil  
who will finally destroy all things?  
Ask the black women's choir,  
try to shake what for them does inspire.  
When oxygen and hydrogen result in  
a substance as different as water  
from the chemicals which compose it,  
is that not a wonder to see?  
And turning that water into wine  
a jaw-dropping mystery;  
then turning that wine into his blood  
and that bread to his body?

( from John Burroughs)

## **Gay**

Gay I say is a conundrum  
to penetrate for some.  
Homosexual,  
I will not denigrate,  
so close to every home.

To be emotionally  
and sexually attracted  
to one's same gender.  
It is as is!  
Unnatural you say?  
A truth or a judgment?  
For to love another is natural  
and necessary.  
To be erotic is natural  
and necessary.  
To love the same gender  
is natural and necessary  
as we witness with our friends.  
To eroticise the same gender  
is thought abnormal and perverse.  
Yet unchosen and unchangeable.  
How does this contradiction come about,  
this predicament?  
How would a God allow such a sore lament?  
It has nothing to do with God!  
It is unnatural, so some believe,  
because the natural law  
of sexual attraction  
says opposites attract,  
opposites procreate,  
opposites find true fulfillment.  
This is the norm all about us.  
Yet same-sex attraction is  
there and will always be there.  
Was there some genetic mutation  
or social causation?  
Some say it is unnatural and changeable  
by religious conviction,  
or psychotherapy,  
or behavior modification.  
Behavior can be managed  
though attractions remain the same.  
It is natural and there's no need for change,  
it is natural and therefore unchangeable.  
The mystery deepens!



Let's say that it is natural  
for a small percentage of people,  
an exception to the natural law,  
not a deviation but a variation  
or mutation.  
Then there's no need for change.  
It simply is!  
The mystery solved!  
The mystery solved?

### **The changing of the gods**

What we know of god,  
how we view god now  
throws much light upon  
our view of Old Testament  
people and events.  
Was their view of god sound?  
It surely was of another time  
more primitive, archaic  
and culture bound.  
This angry god,  
this strange warrior god,  
this miracle-making god,  
this god of fear and trembling,  
unkind,  
like the god of Islam,  
the no god of the Hindu  
and the Buddha.  
Real god did not arrive  
in the mind of mankind  
Till Jesus called him Father.  
The former god inhabited  
only the Hebrew minds  
with myth and legend,  
phantasmagoria.  
Who and what is  
the Christian god?  
He is Father, we his children.

He is King, we his jolly servants.  
He is Spirit, we his happy spirits.  
He is Light, we his reflection.  
He is Love, we his love.

### **The Window View**

This prison grim stood tall with walls  
of brick and mortar all about;  
no plant of green or growing thing,  
not even such a growing sprout.

All was dark, chromatic brown  
where Marcus in his lonely cell  
near towers standing all around,  
endured the sounds and rancid smell.

But in this gaol there was one cell  
where senior inmates went;  
a privileged place for one to dwell  
with a window view extravagant,  
so was said.

For from this window sight  
were apple trees and flower fields,  
blue skies and mountain heights,  
such beauty to the eye's appeal.

The senior inmate then rotates  
this room for one who's next in line,  
and he would tell his eager mates  
of the window view he left behind.

They listened with such keen delight;  
their minds imagined everything.  
For them it was a pleasure sight,  
to see the trees all greening.

Now Marcus was the next in line  
to share this privileged cell.

He quickly went within to find  
the window view's great spell.

But all he saw was just a wall,  
a wall of gray and brown,  
a prison wall that was so tall  
which made him sad with frown.

When he returned to his own cell  
he planned to tell the truth,  
there is no window with a spell,  
no mountains, greening earth.

It was his time to now deny,  
as he gathered all his mates,  
to break the spell and end the lie,  
the window view deflate.

But when he saw their eagerness  
to hear of the window view,  
he could not tell with truthfulness  
no mountains green, or skies of blue.

"Oh what scenes my friends I saw,  
of children playing, meadows tall,  
trees and mountains with such awe,  
running brooks and waterfall."

And so the legend lie lives on,  
brings hope and expectation;  
and told again by everyone,  
when comes the next rotation.

### **My All in All**

With Paul myself I find,  
divided and disputing,  
two sides of me combine,  
in continuous refuting.

One spirit side there is the "I"

who loves to do the good,  
the other is a slave to sin  
and won't do what "it" should.

The Spirit in me always seeks  
to keep me good as God.  
My stubborn so rebelling flesh,  
it makes me quite a fraud.

In my heart "I" seeks what is good,  
delights in what is right;  
but selfish "me" goes fast ahead  
and overwhelms what's right.

It seems that "I" has not the strength  
to check that selfish "me";  
so "me" makes me a slave to sin  
in warfare constantly.

What are you saying Lord?  
Why have you shown these words?  
Is it you understand the pain  
of this sharp two-edged sword?

This passage agitates me now,  
for the Spirit has spoken so,  
to show this tug-o-war,  
to show what I must do.

For Paul, the battle ends  
when Christ succeeds my "I",  
gives the strength by embracing "me",  
and then with the law comply.

To Christ I run,  
to him I call,  
that he might be  
my all in all.

(Romans 7:14-25)

**The Long Awaited One**

Reading with new eyes  
in John Four to fourteen,  
like words I have grasped  
the first time have seen.  
How he rests at a well,  
to win a soul, this is his mark.  
He uses every 'coincidence'  
the Spirit to impart.  
The Spirit in him engages  
and invites the spirit in us  
to pursue it's deeper longings and desires,  
for the Spirit of Christ like a two-edged knife  
in us will cause a burning fire  
for more of that abundant life.  
While he a man speaks to her a woman  
his Spirit is speaking to her spirit inside,  
just as this living scripture  
speaks in us of life to abide.  
The outward conversation is  
an inward invitation  
to her, to you, and to me now.  
She asks about the water,  
he speaks of living, flowing,  
bubbling water in the heart,  
which is the Holy Spirit,  
eternal life impart.  
His very own Spirit, his life,  
he seeks to give her whole,  
which never makes her thirsty,  
which satisfies her soul.  
But she must come to know  
that he's not just a Jew,  
one greater than Jacob,  
or even a holy prophet.  
He who speaks to you now  
is he Yeshua Hamashiach,  
God's only Son,  
the long-awaited one.

**Stymied**

Words like leaves of green  
still adhere - in early fall - to trees,  
refusing to depart from mind  
and heart, but slowly ripen  
out of sight; cling to branch,  
the trunk, the spirit-root,  
though wind, great Wind shakes them,  
breaks them from the hardened tree  
to rotten on the fertile ground,  
where reds and browns abound  
to form a sentence or a phrase,  
perhaps a blaze of poetry.

### **Ever Present**

Psalm 46:1

We live  
the present tense  
of God,  
who is and always is,  
yesterday, today, tomorrow.  
There is no other time,  
for both the past and future  
are present tense to Him,  
all gathered into one,  
we live therein,  
beheld as here and now.  
Past mistakes, future sin  
converging into one within,  
for him a whole,  
a single soul,  
embraced by wings of love.  
For love does not hold fast the past  
nor what the future faults might bring,  
no partiality, but prodigality  
in the present everlasting.

### **The Linnet**

One joy that I would cull  
from this murky morning dull,  
balanced beautiful,  
see,  
contending with the breeze  
inserted there with ease  
within the old oak trees;  
it's  
to him I owe a debt  
though he is sodden wet,  
the reddish-headed linnet.  
(inspired by J.G. Whittier)

### **An Owl**

One crisp midnight out I went  
into an autumn discontent  
harboring a sad lament  
when underneath the starlit tent  
an owl did the stillness rent  
hooting at the moon without relent  
and breached my mournful sentiment  
till I in tears and sobbing underwent  
reversed the bitter malcontent  
which held my soul till I was spent  
of self-inflicted pity vent.  
Oh lonesome bird your healing sent  
a lasting peace and sweet content.

### **Sursum Corda**

What's in my soul I cannot hide,  
this blighted heart, this wanting zeal.  
I must to you this truth confide,  
unless I flee from what is real.  
No joy, no laughter, no delight  
escapes my soul spontaneously;  
sedate, remote, as if in flight,  
engaging life unconsciously.  
This mental state I wonder now  
might soon deteriorate.

In ten more years this mind of mine,  
this mind will soon evaporate.

### **Two Simple Men**

Two simple men I often see  
walk round my town quite casually.  
They live within a simple world,  
never troubled or disturbed,  
for both do suffer mentally.

The one is nearly blind in sight,  
thick glasses wears which magnify the light  
to read the news or travel signs  
which walking by they meet sometimes.

The other is more simple still,  
mostly silent and tranquil.  
He always takes along you see,  
two blankets from his infancy.  
In summer or in winter days  
these blankets go with him always.

Now to these men I sometimes speak  
for they enjoy whom e'er they meet.  
For neither work nor love in life,  
their friendship only does suffice.

So drawn am I to these two men  
by others they're ignored have been.  
Yet I within their simple brain  
can find myself and there remain.

### **Hallows Night**

This rainy wet-leaf Hallows night  
I ventured out with such delight  
to watch the little children sight



with costumed bodies, faces bright  
walking to the scenes with fright  
around the hollow pumpkin's light  
tall or small of different height  
gath'ring goodies so they might  
with bags so overladen quite  
go home to eat all they might.

### **O Father God the thought of You**

O Father God  
the thought of you  
which entered in my heart  
so suddenly,  
your Spirit fire flared up in me  
with wild intense desire.

Your name alone  
stirred longing deep within  
for missing you,  
dismissing you,  
forgetting you  
these days I was apart.

O Father God  
the thought of you  
which entered in my heart  
made loving you  
and wanting you  
and from you ne'er depart.

### **Souls**

October 31 2019

I looked upon the faded hills,  
I saw the rough and rotting rills  
all spattered with the fallen leaves,  
and thought of all the long dead lives  
both close to me and far away

remembered on this All Souls Day.  
Midst the ground a single bud  
was hidden in the darkened wood.  
Though all is dying in the frost, yet  
one emerging life is set  
to show that though the ground so fallow  
still there grows a single seed  
which trumpets there one lasting creed  
of rising life both green and yellow.  
So I, if buried to this ground  
as all on earth must some day be,  
beside an old and craggy tree  
when Christ shall call I'll there be found.  
(inspired by JG Whittier)

## **O Jesus Christ**

O Jesus Christ, good son of God,  
if we could see you right,  
you came to rescue all mankind  
from mind of darkened night.  
Caught within a dreadful state  
that's sick with selfishness,  
a blight upon the human race,  
an epidemic illness.  
If we are left to our own ways  
we would destroy us all,  
for every he and she  
descended from the fall.  
What's troubling you?  
What's troubling you?  
You never are content.  
There's always many after-thoughts,  
there's always foul intent.  
Unsettled, homeless feelings;  
sharp and stinging thoughts  
which always drive my life  
to dust, my heart to wanton lust.  
O Jesus Christ, good son of God,  
come to my aid this day.  
Comfort, heal, deliver me,  
and with you let me stay.

## **Men Love Going to War**

Men love going to war.  
They love the kill,  
some blood to spill,  
the foe to beat,  
to fight, defeat.

Men love going to war.  
The challenge of the fight,  
the flaunting of their might,  
the thrill of victory great,  
the strong hug of a mate.

Men love going to war.  
The feelings now expressed  
when the chest is hard pressed  
to a comrade close,  
latent love's disclosed.

Men love going to war.  
The campaign to complete,  
the flush from the compete,  
the climax of the gun,  
the foe who's on the run.

Men love going to war.  
the sacred ground defend  
for the golden crown contend,  
with might to dominate,  
the delight to celebrate,  
when the odds are overcome,  
and the victory is won.  
Men love going to war.

## **Please just go away!**

I have no poem today,  
a closed sign's on the door.  
I cannot write - no more!

No poems for sale today.

This poet went to rest  
in bed to close my eyes,  
which I consider wise;  
thinking it's the best.

No words will come to mind.  
I looked around my flat,  
the cupboards and the mat,  
could not one word I find.

I wrote no poem today,  
there's no articulation,  
in final desperation,  
I say, please go away!

### **Other Shoes**

Lately I've been stepping in  
the shoes of people I see.

The bent old man caught in the rain,  
the teenage jogger with a foot he sprained.

The old bag lady with her crowded cart,  
the suit and tie man at the bus stop mart.

The patient shaking in the waiting room,  
the cleaning lady with her mop and broom.

The black man giving me an ultrasound,  
the Syrian man who was tied and bound.  
The holiday Santa with his freezing feet,  
the little blond boy who was shy to greet.

The TV host without the most,  
the sweatered girl who seems so lost.

The cafe man who got up early,  
his wife who made my eggs so surly.  
My daughters who must hold two jobs,  
my wife with pain that makes her sob.

The Pharmacist with the uncombed hair,  
the assistant with the lonesome stare.  
The worn-out woman at the voting place,  
the squatting man with the frowning face.  
I've never known people at all this way,  
till I stepped into their shoes today.

### **Where Poems Come From**

You ask me where do poems come from.  
From people that I meet.  
From books and stories that I read,  
from beggars on the street.  
You ask me how I make them rhyme.  
From words I've stored within my brain.  
From singing songs most all the time,  
when I am pleased or in disdain.  
You ask me why I write the poem,  
why I love poetry.  
I tell you that it's like shorthand  
for what you hear and see.  
They swirl and curl within my mind  
like winds that will not cease.  
They fly about and often shout  
to me like cackling geese.  
If I ignore, they pound the floor,  
with louder voice insist.  
They haunt me till they're finished,  
untill the end persist.  
Like this!  
Like this!

**Christmas, Humbug!**

I think there must have been some Scrooge  
in the real Dickens man. They say an author  
writes from his own experience or  
imagination as he can. Dickens fashioned  
characters who were clearly quite cynical,  
and like old Scrooge I find myself inimical  
to every Christmas time.

When December comes around each year.

I up-heave the secular plague imposing everywhere.  
I can't endure the merriment with anything  
religious, I become so pessimistic  
and even quite antagonistic,  
oppressed, depressed this season brings.

My little Scrooge comes out each year and doesn't end as his so well.

I guess I need a Tiny Tim to help me break the spell.

'Humbug' suits me fine if I wasn't ashamed to say it.

Advent used to be alright but I can hardly pray it.

Church for me most all year round is like a preset message;  
like going through the presage motions empty of emotions.

Christmas lost its great appeal many years ago.

The candles and the crib, the snowman and the snow.

The angel song, the gathered throng around the glitter tree.  
Alas it all has lost it's former charm for me.

For most I know the season is for family and kids,  
the Christmas birth, the Christ child God in many homes forbid.

The truth be told, I know these thoughts are only mine.

So I'll have to say, Christmas? Humbug! Humbug! every time.

**Your Name**

**Father Jesus Holy Ghost,  
we say your name so carelessly,  
when we should honor you the most  
and worship you attentively.**

**Jesus Father Spirit Holy,  
words above the rest,  
intently spoken oh so slowly,  
see how often you are blest.**

**Spirit Father Jesus Lord,  
whenever these words exclaimed,  
each one a treasure cherished word,  
forever must proclaim.**

**He will baptize you  
with the Holy Spirit and fire.**

### **Sad Mad Bad**

When I'm sad  
I get mad  
then get bad.  
If you see me bad,  
understand my mad  
is just because I'm sad.

or,

When I'm sad  
I get mad at myself  
then I'm bad to myself.  
If you see me bad to myself,  
understand my mad at myself  
is because I'm sad in myself.

## **Chuck Noon**

Sacred Bridge across the water  
leading to Arial's farm.  
Porter Sans walked  
about the Amadeust nearby  
when **Jenny Sue's Honey** looked like

an **Angel Face** until  
Augustus appeared  
before the **Fairies**.

**Chuck Noon** is not my favorite font.

## HOME

When I come home from being out  
in the flurried snowy night,  
I slip into my fleecy shoes  
and sit by the dim lamp's light.  
I love to go to my favorite nest  
where the books are piled high,  
and sink into my big soft chair  
neath the hanging pothos by.  
This little nest with my cherished chair,  
Oh how I love to be just there.  
The coffee cup so fresh and hot,  
the nutmeg cookies hit the spot.  
A movie on the internet,  
the antiques lined in the cabinet.  
My calico cat named Bumblebee  
who curls upon my bended knee.  
The burning oak in the fire place,  
gives warmth that fills up all the space.  
Unfold I then some ancient book  
entranced to see its date and look.  
Many dreamlike thoughts arise  
before this evening's swift demise.  
More than being anywhere  
Oh, how I long to be just there.

## Preacher

The preacher reads his sermon now  
without sincere or holy fire.  
The same old routine words again  
like a borrowed shepherd hired.  
His words slide over all our heads,



his voice puts us to sleep.  
There is no hunger satisfied,  
no meaning there to keep.  
His jowly face hangs o'er his neck,  
his hands they rise and fall.  
His monotone and worn cliches  
benumbs the one and all.  
O now he is about to end,  
but wait, I am mistaken.  
Another point he has to make,  
will this one me awaken?  
Once more he changes his direction  
to go yet farther yon.  
So I admit this poem I've penned  
while he was droning on.

### **Risen**

If Christ has risen from the dead  
one day now long ago,  
let's tell this news everywhere,  
everywhere we go.

What better news than  
one arose, then I surely know  
that some day on my own one day  
I with rise also.

For there was Adam number one  
who led us all in sin.  
And sin does separate from God,  
nor heaven let us in.

But Christ was Adam number two;  
a new mankind begun.  
Now all who come to him in faith  
must to him swiftly run.

Then rise one day up in the clouds  
when all mankind is one.  
No matter what our color, race,

all differences undone.

We do not know what bodies are  
which come to life again.  
More beautiful and holy be,  
and full of health we gain.

For there will be no sorrow,  
no weeping, sadness, tears.  
No longer strife and conflict,  
and then all end to wars.

O Jesus Christ I cling to you  
now and at my end.  
For you and I will be as one  
and so I say, Amen.  
Amen, again Amen!

### **No and or the**

December colds descending  
penetrates through bones  
stiffing painful joints  
hardening spirit  
maybe even heart  
preparation for  
hibernation  
less activity  
cool tranquility  
wrapping green in white  
animals to sleep  
tubors silent still  
waiting for spring  
chilled or shivering  
within your earth  
where worms small beetles  
move about their food to scout  
when all above our sun  
still glows  
through flurried falling snows.

## **Accept Yourself!**

Accept yourself!  
Accept yourself!  
no matter who you are.  
No matter who you've been before  
or see yourself bizarre.  
There is no one that I have known  
with perfect self-esteem.  
No one I've ever known  
whose life is squeaky clean.  
Accept yourself!  
Accept yourself!  
no matter what you've been.  
A sinner, saint, a knave, a fool,  
defrauding charlatan.  
If there is something wrong with you  
let others tell you so,  
accept yourself!  
accept yourself!  
and let this help you grow.  
Accept your life!  
Accept your life  
as it is today,  
your life with imperfections,  
your life with all its faults,  
in thirty years will matter not,  
this life with all its taunts.  
Come on! Come on!  
Stop beating up yourself.  
Stop bruising or berating,  
wounding and deflating.  
Be yourself!  
Be yourself!  
Be transparency.  
End the way you've viewed yourself,  
stop complacency.  
Let others know the truth.  
Then settle down  
with your best friend,

and have some dry vermouth.

## **Two Seminarians**

Two seminarians, all dressed in black, with chimney collars white,  
enter now the doctor's suite, and to me was such a sight.

When at first I saw them I thought no accident;  
this serendipitous sight for me was surely something meant.

With heads so full of God, these two pale young men,  
like some sixty years ago when I was a seminarian.

My thoughts returned to me  
of that skinny one with dreamy eyes,  
so holy heavenly, so innocent, naive,  
with sham simplicity, whose blackness was disguise.

The feelings that arose from the memories I then had,  
cause a mixture of emotion, of nostalgia sweet and sad.

Two unsuspecting ones now so irreproachable,  
don't know themselves and think  
they'll ever be unbroachable.

But give them twenty, thirty years,  
and see what life will bring;  
how greed and pride, ambition, lust and loneliness will sting.

I wish them well and pray, and sure that they will be  
forever under the watchful care of the blessed Trinity.

## **Little Lost Horsie**

The snow lay rutted on the ground,  
cold and clear was the windy sound  
as the walkers came from home and car  
to the candlelight service from near and far.  
The organ was heard from the choir loft  
and the singing voices dulcet soft.

Then a little girl came from the pew  
leaving her family who were only two.  
She walked slow down the festive isle  
to join the visitors in a file  
before the manger and the family  
of Joseph, Mary and the wee baby.  
She knelt before the manger's light  
as people sang O Holy Night.  
Speaking in the baby's ear  
she whispered soft for him to hear.  
*"Little Jesus, you are small,  
but very good to one and all.  
Please help me find my tiny horse,  
if it be your will, of course.  
I lost him somewhere I don't know,  
I think outside beneath the snow.  
I loved my horse since I was three,  
O Jesus won't you please help me?"*  
Then the baby spoke as a child to child,  
in a tender voice so gentle, mild:  
*"Dearest one, your toy horsie  
is safe below your Christmas tree."  
Did she imagine what she heard?  
Did tiny Jesus speak that word?*  
When she returned to her family's pew,  
her mom and dad were sure they knew  
their child had seen some sacred sight,  
for her face just glowed with a heavn'ly light,  
and then the choir sang Silent Night.  
*"I no longer here can stay  
for Jesus spoke to me today.  
I must go home to the Christmas tree,  
it's there I'll find my lost horsie."  
And sure enough she found it there,  
kneeling down she said a prayer.  
She heard the tiny baby say  
"Don't forget this special day.  
I took your horsie from the snow,  
where it was buried far below.  
I dried it off and cleaned it well  
to give it back on this noel.  
I sanded it where it was worn,*

*till it shown bright like a new French horn.  
I painted it to make it new  
to show how much I have loved you.  
This was quite a joy for me,  
you see I know a bit of carpentry."  
Was this a dream, was this quite true,  
was her horsie really bright and new?  
Yes, every gift comes from above,  
from the Father, Son and the Holy Dove.*

## **I'm happy to be me**

Give me birth in a different year,  
a different day and rearing.  
Who knows how different I might be,  
a different personality,  
less laden with my current cares,  
my curs't complexity.  
A wrestler's strength with a body build  
that's six foot three and brawny,  
rather than this emotional one,  
full of feelings and so scrawny.  
A cop with a badge and gun,  
a plumber with a big mustache,  
a sailor on an aircraft ship,  
a thief who's on the run.  
Perhaps a famous theater star  
or a salesman who's deceptive;  
anything but this bookworm nerd  
so annoyingly perceptive.  
I imagine myself in a combat zone  
with a rifle in my hand,  
shooting at someone I don't know  
in a far off distant land.  
A butcher in a bloody shop  
splitting carcasses for sale,  
a fisherman on a schooner boat  
cutting heads off with a chop.  
A fireman entering a flaming home  
to rescue a little lad,  
or an entrepreneur who's very rich

with a son who's down syndrome.  
Give me birth differently?  
In a different day and time?  
No thank you, I'll take what I've got.  
I'm happy to be me.

## **Troubling Twenties**

It's twenty year old men  
who do all the work  
and most of the turmoil in this world.  
If early teens could jump  
into their thirties  
there would be less trouble everywhere,  
for who are all the terrorists,  
protesters and malcontents  
but twenty something men?  
Most mental health caused  
homicides and suicides  
are in this decade also.  
They are 'failure to launch'  
and 'boomerang kids' who sometimes never leave home.  
After they get their PhD they may end up in a factory.  
But there are many who  
excel much more than any other group,  
high achievers, successful business men,  
inventing what is new.  
Hats off to our twenties guys  
and twenties women too,  
In sports and politics,  
hat's off, and let's thank you.

## **Heal me from afar**

(Luke 7:1-10)

Jesus never meets this good man,  
this Roman officer.  
It all takes place from afar.  
By a word in his heart.  
The officer has a gravely ill servant  
whom he loves very much.

Now this is quite unusual in the first place.  
This ruler loved his servants.  
He didn't abuse them  
or treat them as impersonal bodies  
whom he could just order about.  
Nor did he rule the Jews in his care  
as subjects to be treated with impunity.  
He was fair and just and respectful to all people.  
He was a man with high moral standards.  
He loved the Jews whom he governed.  
He even built them a synagogue.  
Perhaps he worshiped with them  
and shared their belief in one God  
rather than the Roman many gods.  
He was a good man and loved by all.  
Now he asks Jesus to heal his gravely ill servant.

A servant!

But knowing what it is to be under authority  
and to have authority over others as an officer,  
he sends a message by his friends  
- and he had many friends among the Jews -  
that Jesus simply say a word of command  
and the servant would be healed.  
Jesus was now thoroughly impressed  
by this man's goodness and faith  
- and so am I -

which he said was greater than he found in all Israel.

The servant is healed  
by a word of command from Jesus, from afar.

A word from afar!

This story is holding on to me.  
The Father is holding on to me.  
I'm captured by this silent word of Christ.  
How healing comes by just a word,  
a word from the heart of God.  
I don't have to see Jesus to be healed.

God has said...

"So shall My word that goes forth from My mouth.  
It shall not return to Me void.  
But it shall accomplish what I please,  
and it shall prosper the thing for which I sent it."  
Man shall live by every word  
that comes from the heart and mouth of God.



*"Jesus! I wish I could impress you  
with my moral standards, my goodness, and my faith,  
but I know I don't. I certainly don't impress myself.  
I fall far short of this man who was a pagan.  
I don't have his goodness and respect  
for store clerks who serve me daily.  
The check-out person I seldom talk to at all.  
I deservedly am not worthy that you should come  
into my life. Much less heal me.  
So all I can do is beg of you  
that you come to me by your word,  
that you heal me from afar."*

### **It takes a lifetime**

(composed by Bill and Linda  
November 18-19)

It takes a lifetime to know yourself  
and all that fills our globe.  
The thoughts that hold the minds of men,  
which they study and they probe.  
The way that people speak  
to others that we meet;  
the way we think and feel and talk  
with caring or deceit.  
The salesman or the grocer,  
the woman who tends our hair,  
the butcher at the deli,  
the preacher who says a prayer.  
The way I feel when I hold my pet,  
the way I jump when I'm afraid  
or how I feel to see our flag,  
or cry when I stand at my town's parade.  
The love that I often failed to give  
to the closest ones nearby,  
the love that never speaks a word,  
and my need for love denied.  
I write these words to my worthy wife  
who always cares for me,  
to show my love she's been denied  
for half a century.  
I give this poem to my daughters too  
who may have thought me strange.

Forgive me, please forgive me!  
Is it now too late to change?  
Love, dad.

## **I'll Skip November**

I'd like to skip November  
when it comes around each year,  
it often makes me leary  
and causes me some fear.  
November's my unhealthy month  
for each time it comes around  
some medical condition  
will doubtlessly be found.  
A heart attack in '99,  
a back thrown out of joint,  
a cyst upon my liver,  
a wart upon my groin.  
A fever running wild,  
arthritis in my hands,  
my feet full of neuropathy  
and wayward thyroid glans.  
An ingrown toenail on my foot,  
an ear with a loud murmur,

If you don't mind I'll just skip by  
this month of November.  
It will be the death of me!

### My Body

My body is a curious thing,  
the way it acts and works,  
the way it's changing every day,  
it's oddities and quirks.  
From top to bottom let me describe  
the changes going on;  
the curious little changes  
that have come and mostly gone.  
My hair is falling rapidly  
which once was on my head,  
and more hair's growing places  
I never thought instead.  
My scalp can be quite itchy,  
and even my eyebrows too;  
each day I need to keep them clean  
with my favorite soft shampoo.  
My eyes have cataracts,  
my nose drips all the time,  
my teeth are being all replaced,  
hardly any are still mine.  
My cheeks are getting jowly,  
my neck is creasing more;  
my wrinkles form a city map  
I've never had before.  
My chest conceals a heart  
which beats less rapidly,  
and formed its own bypasses  
out of sheer necessity.  
The fingers on my aging hands  
have learned to do the twist;  
arthritis is the culprit  
and the likely cause of this.  
My back is hurting more these days,  
I know the reason why;  
my stomach's shifting all my weight,  
it's too big, and that's no lie.  
My intestines are not nice,  
my liver is perverse,

my urinary tract is very slow,  
working sometimes in reverse.  
My genitals have also changed,  
they all have seemed to shrink,  
they once were like a healthy red,  
now they're a faded pink.  
My legs are very flabby,  
with corrugated creases;  
my buttocks have become so flat,  
each day it more decreases.  
My feet have hot neuropathy,  
my toenails horny shapes;  
If I bend over to trim my nails,  
flatulence escapes.  
To see my body change  
is something to behold;  
I hardly can keep up with it,  
this thing called getting old.

## **Tsunami**

Once I traveled to a summer bay  
where I could find some sun and repose;  
it happened on a certain day,  
oh, let me tell how it arose.  
The ocean left the sandy coast,  
deep out to sea it went,  
exposing all the firmament,  
returning with a wall-high wedge,  
devouring land like a mighty dredge.  
This tsunami swept all over the town  
bringing many houses down.  
Great cries were heard and pitied wails,  
no place of safety could be sought,  
no solace could at all prevail,  
a refuge there was not.  
And I...and I washed up on shore,  
bedraggled, limp and water-sunk,  
till breath in me was hardly more,  
engulfed within a large green trunk  
which might have been my final tomb,  
but carried by the kind lagoon  
upon a rocky beach.  
Bruised and bleeding all about,

my limbs were weak, my head was light,  
I couldn't move, I tried to shout,  
but no one seemed to heed my plight.  
Within the locker I was enclosed,  
the lock held strong and fast.  
I tried myself to be composed  
but panic gripped me then at last.  
At least an hour must have past  
and there I was within the cask.  
It's then I heard a cheerful sound  
of children dancing all around.  
They pounded all about with sticks  
which thundered in my ears;  
with playful feet they gave me kicks,  
I shouted loud, they could not hear.  
When at last the lock was sprung,  
I appeared with seaweed head  
and bloodied face which made them run  
for they had looked upon the dead.  
Oh how I thank the children so  
for on that day they made me blest,  
and God for leading them to know  
to play a game upon that chest.  
(inspired by Coventry Patmore)

## **Can't Stop Time**

What ever happened to that reel-to-reel  
I recorded in '55?  
The one I played at the Soc Hop dance  
when we were so alive  
with crew cut tops dancing at the hop  
to "Autumn Leaves" and "Only You".  
"I Like Ike" was the president  
the McGuire Sisters sang so "Sincerely"  
that hit the number one charts for 10 weeks,  
Wow!  
Elvis Presley wiggled Rock and Roll  
so sure we were all going to hell  
when he sang "Heartbreak Hotel"  
with his "Blue Suede Shoes."

Loretta Young before her sunburst clock  
with the latest frock,  
Barney Fife and Desi and Lucy  
made us all feel loosey-goosey.  
I had just turned a ripe sixteen,  
No way!  
that's like 65 years ago!  
Tempus Fugit!  
Can't stop time.

### **Four Words**

Fatuous  
Avuncular  
Provincial  
and Prosaic;  
four words  
that when I looked them up  
composed a  
strange mosaic.  
Foolish  
Kindly  
Unsophisticated  
Dull;  
four words I now have learned  
tucked neatly  
in my skull.

### **Ex Tenebris**

Oscar Wilde whom I've always admired  
once called on the Lord for his hand,  
for his life like a boat in a storm at sea  
was tossed as on Lake Galilee.  
Spilled out was his life like wine in the sand,  
his heart starved for a more fruitful land,  
since everything good was gone utterly.

In his prison of hell he did lie,  
when before God's judgment stand,  
he was sentenced as one not so chaste,

who had thoroughly dishonored his name.  
Once at the top of his height  
he plummeted one ignominious night,  
for his passions so filled and aflame,  
made him fall full force on his face.  
(from Oscar Wilde "E Tenebris")

## Called

Simon and Andrew, James and John,  
were fishing in Lake Galilee.  
Throwing their nets to catch some fish  
when a stranger called, "Come follow me!"

Simon and Andrew, James and John,  
always so searching had been,  
heard in their hearts, "This is he!"  
when he said "Let's go fishing for men!"

"We will come!" Simon spoke for them all,  
"lads, lay down your nets on the shore."  
"Come brothers!" Simon called out,  
"We fish for lost souls evermore."

Am I ready O Lord to be called  
like these four who heard your brief voice?  
Will I leave whatever I have  
to make you my one only choice?

*"You I have already called,  
if you but only examine your heart.  
For I am in you every day  
calling others through you, 'Come apart!'"*

## Ultrasound Blessing

**Three days before Thanksgiving  
I went for an ultrasound exam  
to explore the cyst on my liver.**

**A kindly woman technician**

**performed the exam as we spoke  
to each other, and she such a gentle caregiver.**

**It is a captured audience for both, so  
I told her how we were getting new carpeting  
just before the holiday.**

**All our furniture was piled about,  
as she probed with her wand here and there,  
shared that her mother had recently died, by the way.**

**And her elderly father  
-a year young than I- was not doing very well.  
So she was moving him into her home.**

**It was then I felt urged by the Spirit of God  
to encourage her in some way,  
so I shared Romans 8:28, thinking it would be unknown**

**"This verse is a favorite of my wife and me", I said.  
"All things work together for good...."  
was as far as I got when her eyes**

**filled with tears as she fanned her face  
and wiping her eyes  
she thanked me for such a surprise.**

**I told her to look for 8:28 on her digital clock  
twice a day.**

**She hugged me in the ultrasound room.  
Then I said,  
"He'll taken care of you on the whole way."**

## **What Jesus means to me**

Life  
Pardon  
Peace  
Spirit



Power  
Provision  
Companionship  
Hope  
Trust  
Assurance  
Joy  
Heaven  
Father  
Love

## **The Very First Psalm**

**1 You will be so blessed if you stop listening to the faithless talk you hear on TV, Facebook and Youtube. Avoid all this foolish chatter and those who mock God our Father and Jesus.**

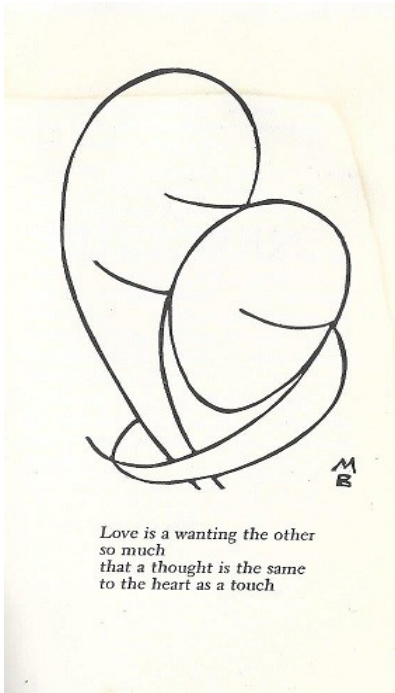
**2 Instead, find inspiration in the Lord's scriptures. Meditate on them throughout the day and into the evening.**

**3 You know what? If you do, you'll be like an apple tree that grows along the side of a river, getting plenty of moisture, and bearing lots of fruit every season; remaining ever healthy. You will bear so much good fruit in everything you do.**

**4 If you don't believe me, just look at the lost people around you. Their lives come and go so fast and amount to nothing.**

**5 There is coming a day when they will be judged and separated from the true believers in heaven.**

**6 You see, the Father watches over the lives of godly people, but lets the foolish unbelievers follow their own path to destruction.**



## My Chapel

There's music in my chapel  
Where I go each Sunday morn,  
Each bird is loudly singing  
Just glad that he was born.  
No church was ever built by man  
With carpets half so deep  
As the green one in my chapel  
Over which the clovers creep.  
The ceiling is of many hues  
Each changing with the day;  
There isn't any special time  
At which to go and pray.  
The decorations live and have  
An incense all their own;  
And best of all, my chapel  
Is right outside my home.  
Yes, my garden is my chapel  
And I'm sure you will agree  
That in it I'm as close to God  
As I can ever be.

(Martin Buxbaum)

## Full of Emptiness

I must believe you are there  
Here, now  
Even when I don't think or feel you are.  
But I know you are.  
Today and lately I've been floating and floundering  
and you are absent,  
but I know I am wrong,  
For you are never disinterested in me, you never dislike me,  
even when I dislike myself.  
You never withdraw your love,  
Your care, your provision and protection.  
My thinking that you are not there,  
Not here and now,  
Not knowing, listening, not caring,  
is my distance from myself,  
My depression  
or my emptiness -  
my own absence from myself.  
But you are always here.  
You never slumber or sleep;  
You have a loving insomnia for us.  
When I am absent from myself and empty  
You are waiting, loving, watching over me..  
Can I believe that you have always  
Waited and watched over me in love?  
There is no where I can go from your sight  
or your love.  
Even now, you wait  
And lovingly watch me!  
Now! Always! Unceasingly!  
Nunc! Semper! Sine intermissione!  
You and I in loving communion!  
Bathed in loving absence!  
Naked faith in darkness!  
A silent stirring!  
A beckoning silence!  
I'm shut down, remote from myself,  
Unable to feel, remote from you..  
All I can do is be,

Like Thee.  
Because I am absent from myself, You alone  
Are present.  
I am passing.  
You alone are permanent.

## **Name One Thing**

Name one thing  
that's turned out  
the way you thought it would be!  
Nothing  
lives up to the ideal  
you had in mind.  
That's why we're  
always disappointed.  
That's why we're  
always hopeful.  
That's why we keep trying  
every time.

## **His Time**

If nothing happens during the time  
you set aside for prayer,  
then let the time itself  
be your prayer.  
Let yourself be there  
in wordless longing.  
Try to tolerate being wordless,  
but real, sincere and spiritually attentive.  
Let your time with the Father  
be thoughtless trust and love.  
Let it be his time not yours.  
Let it be his time to move in the Spirit  
in you the way he wants to

instead of the way you want to,  
instead of you doing anything.

Let him do by his Spirit  
whatever he desires to do,  
however he makes his presence known,  
apparent, revealed.

Just wait!

*Father, this is your time to be in me,  
with me just as you desire.*

God is real, not because I say so,  
or have discovered him so  
by my thinking or feeling,  
but because he is;  
he's real without me.

He doesn't need or want me to stir him up  
or get his attention.

If that's how I think about God,  
then I don't really know him at all.

He is already here and now!

The purpose of my time with God  
my Father,

is not to be rewarded with some  
sensation or experience  
of his presence. My time

is set aside to approach him  
already here and now and within,  
waiting for me being drawn by his love,  
because he wants loving communion with me  
now, here, within.

But even moreso:

I am only here in prayer time  
because he first called to me  
in a whisper of love to be with him.

I have not chosen to be here  
with him, he has chosen me to be  
attentive to him, and to respond to

his attention to me.  
Why does he call me to a time of prayer?  
Because he cannot withhold his love  
for me.

His love touches me, heals me,  
comforts me, communes with us each,  
each one personally, specifically, uniquely.

Why do I respond to his call?

Because the Father is my Father  
and I am his child, his son, his daughter.  
Because his Son and Spirit dwell in me.  
I love because Jesus in me loves  
the Father.

*"For all who are led by the Spirit of God  
are children of God.*

*So you have not received a spirit  
that makes you fearful slaves.*

*Instead, you received God's Spirit  
when he adopted you as his own children.*

*Now we call him, "Abba, Father."*

(Romans 8:14-16)

So , I make a commitment of thirty minutes  
"to be" with the Father.

I simply "be" there in that prayer time.

"Being" there is all I have to do.

But what do I "do" - nothing!

Or minimally say "Abba Father".

Say it with longing and desire,  
with restful anticipation,  
lovingly, that's all.

Whether I get anything out of  
those thirty minutes, my willful choice  
to seek and "be" with God  
is a sign of my love.

Love is always sacrificial,

costly, without reward,  
simply for the love of the other.  
**Morning Prayer**

As day enfolds the earth in light,  
You draw me from above.  
I come in humble prayer and see You,  
Father God of of love.  
You call me and You hear me,  
You make my heart aflame.  
You dwell in me, my Living God,  
O holy blessed Name.  
And even though my heart is held  
And led by worldly powers,  
I dare to raise my voice in praise,  
And seek You at this hour.  
Drive from me all darkness,  
All evil from my mind,  
Forever stay and dwell in me,  
O Lover of Mankind.  
The Father, Son and Spirit  
I worship, love and praise.  
O Holy Three, stay with me  
In faith for all my days.  
Eternal God my Father,  
To You I humbly draw,  
To worship You in reverence,  
In deep and quiet awe.  
Once again I ask You  
To come like gentle rain  
Upon this growing seed in me,  
You planted and sustain.  
This hour I would retreat with You  
Into my secret part,  
And find You there a cleansing spring  
Refreshment to my heart.  
Your Spirit source within me is  
The spring of my desires,  
Of all that liberates and lifts,  
To which my soul aspires.  
I come to You to worship,  
To speak the truth sincere.  
Your silent, caring, guiding voice  
I pray You let me hear.  
Stir my faith to see You.  
Rouse my feelings too!  
Let Your Spirit fill me,

Transform my life in You.  
My love turn toward the Real,  
My hope be in Your will.  
This heart of mine is made for You,  
To dwell in it and fill.  
Eternal Spirit, Living God  
Receive me as a child,  
Though I pretend I'm something more,  
You know me all the while.  
Housed within this cosmic space  
With mysteries so deep,  
I'm filled with many questions,  
With problems very steep.  
I am a simple person,  
A life so very small,  
Innocent, naive and longing,  
Believing, hoping all.  
I know so little of myself  
Yet try to be so sure.  
I am so very certain,  
Pretending I'm secure.  
Rouse me from my self-deceit,  
Put penitence in me.  
Let me see my hidden faults,  
Not self-complacency.  
O Stir me so that I will see  
Though hardly realized,  
How I am caught in evil ways,  
So subtle and disguised.  
Lead me in that narrow way  
And not what fills my view.  
Through many doors You would come in,  
In countless ways pursue.  
You know my heart is grateful  
When I realize the truth.  
You've led me, loved me, chosen me,  
And called me from my youth.  
O Spirit of the Universe  
I'm a child of just a day.  
I come and go so quickly,  
Yet eternally You stay.  
Come to me O Spirit,  
The Father's love impart.  
Let Your Christ-sent presence  
Overflow into my heart.  
You came to give abundant life,  
O Lord, help me to see  
How I can grow this wondrous gift



I humbly pray to Thee.  
To Father Son and Spirit  
Who dwell within my frame.  
All glory, praise my life will show,  
To each one and the same. Amen