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SEVENTY POEMS TO PONDER

By John F. Dorsey

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* * * * *

THE TREES

Ah! the trees the stately trees
Ought to drive us to our knees.

In the fall with colors high
Oh how gloriously they die.

Patient in death's wintry blast
Confident it cannot last.

In the spring recaptured youth
Teaches resurrection truth.

Summer with new leaves and shoot
Bringing forth abundant fruit.

Oh! Thou Maker of the trees
Help us learn these lessons please.

* * * * *

FOR ME

His hands were spiked upon that cruel tree
That my foul hands might clean and spotless be.

His feet were pierced that mad and murderous day
To bring my wandering feet back to His way.

His back dripped blood upon that rocky road
That mine so tired could find rest from its load.

His brow they bruised with cruel stinging thorn
That I His mind could have; anew be born.

His heart gushed blood to purify my own
'Twas all for me He suffered there alone.

* * * * *

HARBINGERS

I sat a little while in the woods today

And I heard the tall trees softly say
As they leaned to whisper to listening ear
"Spring is near, Spring is near."

The way the brook sang after the shower
And the sun stayed up 'til a later hour
The way the south wind made the snow disappear
Said "Spring is near, Spring is near."

The bluebird looking at his hollow post
And gray geese flying like forgotten ghosts
The woodthrush singing with his notes so clear
Said "Spring is near, Spring is near."

* * * * *

RARE REQUEST

She asked me to write her name in the sand
On the seashore of Galilee
She wrote her request with a steady hand
On her birthday at eighty-three.

She had no hopes she would travel that road
That her Savior had one time trod.
For she would ere long be released from her load.
And go home to be with her God.

She did not feel she was worthy she said.
To have her name there by the sea.
(Where Jesus had walked with a kingly tread.)
But she said she would like to be.

Her petition somehow brought tears to my eyes --
It was like the request of no other --
But why continue this useless disguise?
Since you've already guessed -- it was Mother!

* * * * *

A FRIEND OF MINE IN HIS JOURNEY

A friend of mine in his journey
Is come to me.
He comes from regions long waiting
Over the sea.

He comes from a distant desert shore
To a land of bulging abundant store
Of temporal much, of spiritual more
Can you not hear his plea?

A friend of mine in his journey
Is come to me.
And I have nothing to give him Honestly.
"But my children are sleeping, can I arise?
And take the needed sleep from their eyes?
I'm sorry and I apologize.
Oh! can't you see?"

A friend of mine in his journey
Is come to me.
"I cannot take no for an answer
Don't you see?
So come now arise from your cozy bed
And practice some self-denial instead
For I am seeking the living Bread
For eternity!"

* * * * *

TO HILDRED DURING OUR COURTSHIP

How sweet has our love been and precious
So holy and blessed from on high.
God truly to us has been gracious
How often in prayer has drawn nigh.
His leadings we've often detected
What wonder, that Jesus should care
His love in our lives He's perfected
His love let us boldly declare.
I love Him! I love Him! I love Him!
His love is begotten anew
In my heart with no other above Him
But next to Him dear, I love you.

* * * * *

THE GOINGS OF GOD

My eager eye can seldom see
A wisp of wind in trembling tree
But seeing feel and feeling see

The tenderness of Deity.

Since time began the trusting trees
Have blessed the sweet encircling breeze
And lifting leafy arms on high
Have waved and waved into the sky.

Millenniums have come and gone
Since Love in that far day's first dawn
Began to stir in hearts of trees
To crave caresses from the breeze.

And as they tremble, sway and twist
At eventide, in morning mist,
The sobbing wind so softly grieves
It can't possess such lovely leaves.

Pity the boor, so brashly blind
Whose mud-moored prejudicial mind
Cannot perceive the path of God
Through trees that tremble, bow, and nod.

* * * * *

THE SPEAKING BLOOD

Our universal altar
Upon dark Calvary
Was sanctified by blood so pure
Of One Who died for me.

The temple veil was riven
The temple offerings ceased
Because God's spotless Lamb has now
Become our great High Priest.

Upon that Easter morning
The blood the Lamb had spilt
Was sprinkled up in Heaven
To wash away our guilt.

And there on Heaven's altar
His blood still speaks today
Inviting all with heavy load
To wash their sins away.

His blood today is witness
His blood is all my plea
For through His blood I conquer
And keep the victory.

* * * * *

MY PLACE

Oh! I've found a faint likeness to Eden
On a beautiful Florida shore.
Where the flowers are flourishing gaily
And the trees bear their fruit evermore.

Here are cypress adorned with gray tresses
And the air is so friendly and warm.
Here the songbirds I've missed in the northland
Have come to find haven from storm.

Here is peace and a rest and a quiet--
A stillness that soothes the tired heart.
Oh! I dream I could dwell here forever
And of such peaceful place be a part.

But I waken from such wishful dreaming
Could I love this more than lost men.
And the cross of my calling reminds me,
God plans both my where and my when.

* * * * *

GRAFTED

In the bare winter of naked believing
There was I grafted into God's Vine.
But the warm spring of a heavenly witness
Gave me assurance that Jesus was mine.

Now I can sing that I know I am in Him
After His purging "Oh He is in me
I am the branch that was once wild by nature
Grafted by grace in the good olive tree."

Jesus my Life and the strength of my spirit
Thou art the Vine with the life-giving root
Here I'll abide in the folds of Thy bosom

Through life's sweet summer abounding with fruit.

* * * * *

THE PROMISES OF GOD

The promises of God are solid bridges,
Inviting us to take of Heaven's store.
They reach across that intervening chasm
A certain link with earth's uncertain shore.

The promises of God are firm connections
That link eternity with fleeting time;
They point from sin to grace's high perfections
And lead men to a fellowship sublime.

By these we have a past of sins forgiven
By these receive His nature so divine.
By these pass through the gates of pearl to Heaven
For these will be the Pilgrim's countersign.

The promises make saints a sure foundation;
Across the great divide a certain span;
Assuring them of uttermost salvation,
Reconciling God and sinful man.

Not one good word of these can e'er be altered,
For God Himself will see they will not fail.
No saint who stood on these has ever faltered
Against God's Word our foes can ne'er prevail.

They are the shining path that saints and sages
And prophets through the centuries have trod
The path that led men upward through the ages
And brought them face to face at last with God.

Have you a need? Then look! God has a promise!
Through it you can receive His full supply.
And live victoriously on this short journey
And cross at last to that bright home on high.

* * * * *

END OF DETOUR

When God shall erase Caesar's image

From earth's lovely silver and gold --
And miser's shall lose legal title
To all its treasures untold --

When the wise and mighty and noble
Have had their fill of life's fling
And God's omnipotent power
Has purified everything --

Then the meek the earth shall inherit
With the Holy City come down.
When the foolish and weak are exalted
Receiving a conqueror's crown.

Then God shall reign o'er the nations
And sin shall never appear.
But the earth shall be filled with His glory
With never a trial nor tear.

Then God shall call righteous Abel
Who had waited so patiently --
"As I started to say to your father
When sin interrupted me" --

"But I wanted to show him my blueprints
Of planets to populate,
Of systems in space unfathomed
Which he would help renovate."

"But now that short detour is over,
We're back on the highway again,
So let's get on with our business --
Proceed according to plan."

* * * * *

HOPE

My soul is on the homeward stretch.
My memory swallows up the passing years
With mounting swiftness
And I see the goal in view.
My eye of faith hath seen Him,
He the universal hope.
My inner ear hath clearly heard
The swelling of His victory song.

That anthem that the conqueror's
Attendants shall proclaim.
My heart exults expectantly
For the appearing presently
Of the majestic Lover of my soul.
My fellow creatures of the fowl and kine
Join in my groaning for His coming.
And He shall appear.

I saw a notice clearly posted
On His father David's throne
That He'd be back to take it later
So I'll watch and wait 'til then.

* * * * *

AFTER THE FIRE, THE FRUIT

Men once thought that fire in the forest primeval
That cindered the timber and scattered the game
Could truly be labeled the forests' prime evil
But limited knowledge pinned on it that name.

Men since have discovered that fire is a blessing
For some tree seeds germinate only when seared.
And mammals that fled after panic distressing
Find rich feeding grounds that the fire storm had cleared.

And many sad Christians who fled tribulation
Have grieved that their treasures in black cinders lay
But up from their grave like a bright new creation
Came growth for a wiser and more fruitful day.

* * * * *

TO A MOVIE "STAR"

Twinkle, twinkle, movie star,
How I wonder who you are!
With your many names by trade
And the ones by marriage made.

Passersby may call you star,
I've discovered what you are.
Make-believe and paint and dye
Sham, deception and a lie.

How I wonder what you'll do
When your make-believe is through!
Death will put you in a fix
With your husbands five or six.

If you'd go where Jesus went,
Then you surely must repent.
If in Hell you weep and pine
There no stars will ever shine.

* * * * *

WORLD CONQUEST

I saw an army of paratroops
Fully a billion strong,
Start an attack upon the earth
And kept at it all night long.

The earth fought back so valiantly
And high were the casualties
The paratroops died by the millions
And hung on the cliffs and trees.

But when the daylight came at last
The earth was a conquered foe,
And lay imprisoned, a captive
Subdued by the falling snow.

* * * * *

FATHER FORGIVE

While eyes of doubt may stare and still
Be utterly unseeing,
'Tis true, so true, in Thee we live
And move and have our being.

The hermit thrush and turtle-dove
Both sing of their Creator;
But muddled man alone would mock
His great Administrator.

While lilies grow in lovely garb
More fine than silks of scarlet,

The church disrobes -- befriends the world
And plays the hated harlot.

The storms -- the seas -- the shining suns
Obey Thy will unthinking;
But men will boast of boundless brains
While in the pit they're sinking.

O! Lord behold the multitudes
With sins yet unforgiven;
The men who hope to reach the moon --
But have no hope of heaven.

While satellites men's minds have stirred
And laymen are astounded
A strange new Babel has occurred!
And world speech is confounded!

"World peace and safety" leaders cry,
But war has still persisted.
Though men and means may multiply
God's help is not enlisted.

Amid this loud confusing din
Anointed eyes are seeing
In Thee alone O Lord, we live
And move and have our being.

* * * * *

I'D RATHER

I'd rather be God's ailing child
In pain with fevered brow,
Than be in health and live in sin
And follow Satan now.

I'd rather be God's joyous slave
Tho' labeled this or that,
Than be a slave to unjust wealth
With swank aristocrat.

I'd rather be a Christian lad
And sing while blacking boots,
Than walk among the uppercrust
With all that constitutes.

I'd rather live unheralded
Without my laurels now,
Than fellowship sophisticates
With artificial brow.

I'd rather be a bald-head saint,
Without a name so big
Than dwell with notoriety
Adorned with powdered wig.

I'd rather live with pleasant folk,
In atmosphere of prayer
Than dwell with folk fastidious
In smoke polluted air.

I'd fain my wife a widow be
And God's sweet trumpet blow
Than siren of sorority
And in the tempter's tow.

I'd rather be God's candle dim
And like a fire-fly flit;
Than Satan's flaming meteor
And fall into the pit.

I'd fain earth's palace never see
Its halls ne'er to have trod
If I am sure I'll feel at home
When I'm in Heav'n with God.

* * * * *

MOTHER DEAR

I'm sorry, Mom, for every grief
I've caused you I'm sorry too for every lonely hour.
I pray that our dear Father up in heaven,
Will comfort you and keep you by His power.

Among My richest treasures that I cherish
Are memories clear of precious moments rare
When you gave me much needed loving counsel
And somehow found the strength my load to share.

The flying years have merely enhanced your value

Comparisons far and near have proved your worth
Most blessed am I that you have been my mother
There is no other like you on this earth.

When you meet Daddy some day up in heaven
In that bright home with Christ and angels fair
Tell him I'm struggling up the shining pathway
Determined I shall see you both up there.

-- Lovingly, your seventh, John

* * * * *

THE GREATEST LOVE

A Bridegroom sought His beloved
And found her in harlotry,
But He loved her with love so majestic
It killed Him at Calvary.

A Merchantman sold His possessions
And sought a pearl highly priced --
And he found that pearl in a pawnshop
That was made to adorn the Christ.

A Creator came to His creatures
The Maker sought out His man
A Sovereign King came to His subjects
From Heaven to earth bridged the span.

The Prince of Peace came to His people
But with Him they quickly made war
His Own despised and disowned Him
Oh! the depths of the sorrow He bore!

"We'll accept no sovereign but Caesar --
We will not have this man reign."
And God's Son they led to Golgotha
To bear indescribable pain.

But He came to accomplish redemption
And for that prime objective He died.
And now He shall reign through the ages
With His ransomed and glorified bride.

* * * * *

WE HAVE SEEN THE LORD

We have touched Him --Truth Eternal
And His faith has set us free.
Now we have true hope of heaven
For the wondrous Way is He.

He amazed us on the mountain
When His face shone as the sun
We, bewildered by such brightness
Worshipped Him the radiant One.

Oh, we tried Him in the tempest
When our doom we came to dread.
But He walked upon the waters
Tamed them with a conquering tread.

Once we fled -- as in the furnace
Hateful men their Maker marred
For we cringed from Calvary's cross-tree
From our Scape-goat bruised and scarred.

Not in vain He filled our vision
On that early Easter morn
As our deadly fears departed
And our faith anew was born.

All the hosts of night not heeding
We triumphant tidings tell
For He rose -- and reigns in heaven,
Having conquered death and Hell.

To all men He is Messiah,
We are witness; He's the One,
The Rejected Rock of Ages,
Only Savior, only Son.

Written after reading "The Face of Christ," by Paul S. Rees.

* * * * *

SPIRITUAL WARFARE (Prayer)

I had a battle fierce today

Right in my place of prayer;
I went to meet and talk with God,
But I found Satan there.

He whispered "You can't really pray,
You lost out long ago.
You might say words while on your knees
But you can't pray you know."

So then I pulled my helmet tight,
Way down upon my ears,
And found it helped to still his voice,
And helped allay my fears.

I checked my other armor o'er
My feet in peace were shod
My loins with truth still girded 'round
My sword the Word of God.

My righteous breastplate still was on
My heart's love to protect
My shield of faith was all intact
His fire darts to deflect.

My courage mounted up afresh
I gripped anew my sword
"Old Satan! get behind," I cried
O! Glory! praise the Lord.

Again his darts came thick and fast
Faith quenched and put them out.
And while he raised a new attack
I raised the vict'ry shout.

I called on God in Jesus' Name
I pled the precious blood
While Satan sneaked away in shame
I met and talked with God.

* * * * *

THE GRAND SILENCE

Ah! The deep, deep delight
Of the stillness of the night.
When no drivers are awake.

And no trucks the highways take.
When no diesels wail and creep
Up their grades so long and steep.
When no jets above me zoom
With their super-sonic boom.
With the loudest noise the tock
Of the clucking lonesome clock.

Now I hear no hustling taxis
But the earth upon its axis
At a thousand miles an hour
Points me to its Maker's power.

Then the stars in silent sweep
In their course their schedules keep.
And I see the rising soon
Of the mute and soundless moon.
And in distant dim display
Shine the stars of Milky Way.
In that stillness without sound
Countless worlds go whirling 'round.
And I worship, still as they
Him Who made both night and day.
Written 2:00 A.M.

* * * * *

THE STRANGER OF GALILEE Adapted from Poe's Annabel Lee

'Twas many and many years ago,
In a kingdom down by the sea,
That a Man there lived whom you may know;
'Twas the Stranger of Galilee.
And this Man, He lived with no other thought
Than to rescue and ransom me.
I was so wild and He was so mild.
This Stranger of Galilee;
But He loved with a love so much more than man's love
That He gave His own life for me,
With such love that it drove Him from Heaven above
To the seaside of Galilee.

So that was the reason that long ago,
In this kingdom down by the sea,
Came a wonderful Child so loving and mild,

In the midst of poverty.
So He lovingly came, to the sin-sick and lame,
In this kingdom down by the sea;
Traditions revoking, the high-priests provoking
To murderous jealousy.
So that was the reason for Judas' treason,
In lonely Gethsemane;
And soon they were grilling, and then they were killing,
This stranger of Galilee.

The scoffers made light of the Stranger that night,
In this kingdom down by the sea.
Devoid of all grace, they spat in His face,
And mocked Him with devilish glee.
They entombed Him in vain, for He came forth again,
In this kingdom down by the sea;
Oh! He came from above, just to show me real love,
By saving and cleansing me.
Neither angels immortal, from Heaven's bright portal,
Nor the imps from the brimstony sea,
Can sever my heart, nor make me depart,
From the Savior of Galilee.

* * * * *

IF I HAD NEVER HEARD OF HIM

It's hard to think just how 'twould be,
In this great land of gospel light,
If I had lived beyond the sea,
In superstition's darkest night --
Imagination -- help me see
The scene. Alas! 'tis faint and dim,
Just how I'd feel or what I'd be,
If I had never heard of Him.

I know my heart doth answer yes
To all His will tho' hard it seem.
My place in Him I need not guess,
But rather on my life His gleam
Of sanction. But how vile and base
My heart would be, how dark and grim
If I had never seen His face --
If I had never heard of Him.

And then the many folks to whom,

I've brought the pentecostal light,
Who've been delivered from their gloom,
And stumbling through the darkest night.
Would they have elsewhere found the way?
Perhaps their chance had been more slim;
But where would they all be today,
If I had never heard of Him?

* * * * *

I HAD A FRIEND

Once a sinner, poor and thirsty,
Tired and hungry, near to die,
I had prayed and wept in earnest,
For the Lord to hear my cry.
When at last my burden lifted,
Someone's prayer with mine did blend,
And the Lord from Heaven heard him,
And forgave: I had a friend.

Later, though my heart was perfect,
And my motive, too, was pure,
Yet my intellect was faulty,
And my "foresight" quite obscure;
So a critic while enlarging,
On some statement I had made,
Really hurt my reputation,
And my good profession flayed.
But he met a man who knew me,
And my name he did defend;
So the story quickly faltered,
Then and there: I had a friend.

Then a man to me at midnight
Came with pitiful appeal.
And he asked in tones so earnest,
"Tell me, is salvation real?"
Can you give me bread from heaven
That would my soul-hunger end?"
I had none, but it was given,
From the Lord: I had a Friend.

Many times when trials would thicken,
'Tis my path of thrall and thorn,
Seemed like night so dark around me,

With no ray of coming morn.
When no human soul could help me,
One on Whom I could depend --
That One closer than a brother
Would appear: I had a Friend.

* * * * *

A PRAYER FOR A VISION

Lord, give us a vision of a Scriptural Hell;
A great lake of fire with a brimstone smell;
That will cause men to turn and to run pell-mell;
To a prayer-hearing Christ who alone can quell
Their doubts and their fears, and their gloom dispel;
The powers of Satan and darkness repel.
Lord, show us the torment the rich man could tell,
If he could come back from the pit where he fell.
Lord, give us a vision of Hell.

Lord, give us a vision of true Holiness;
This modern-day kind's such an ungodly mess.
I know some folks jump high, pray loud and profess,
But their fruit makes it plain that they just don't possess.
O Lord, bring us down on our knees to confess
The "Old Man" we've been trying so long to suppress,
Drag him out in the light for Thee to "express,"
That body of sin that has brought such distress.
O Lord, answer prayer and abundantly bless
Thy church with a vision of true Holiness.

Lord, give us a vision of a white harvest field;
Help us gird on God's armour with breastplate and shield;
Thy two-edged sword of the Spirit we'll wield,
Our labors for Thee will a hundredfold yield.

Lord, give us a vision, a vision we pray,
For without any vision we perish today.

* * * * *

THE GOAL OF GOD

Our God has a goal for His children,
The grace of the perfected man,

Marked high o'er the state of a sinner
In measureless, infinite span.

What is that high call of a human,
The mark of the Master above,

The end to which all things are working?
The myriad perfections of love!

So love above faith is much greater,

As ends are much greater than means,
For love is the land of perfection,

And faith as a bridge intervenes.

The things of our earthly surroundings,
Must yield to the aim of the soul,

Aligning themselves in relation
To properly perfect our goal.

The people who darken our doorway
Those who would lay claim to our time,
Must always be kept in relation,
To help us achieve the sublime.

The Spirit, the great Master Sculptor,
Must shape all our lives by His power,
If we'd be conformed to God's image,
And march t'ward our mark every hour.

So all attitudes and relations
Must keep our eyes watching above
The mark of the Master's high calling;
Majestic perfections in love.

-- Written after reading R. T. William's Attitudes and Relationships

* * * * *

MODERNISM

I walked down the gallery of arts one day,
And saw all this new-fangled art on display;
Some colorful cubes, and long, graceful tubes,

And that was the sum of it all.
I wouldn't have known just what had been shown,
Except for the plate on the wall.
A colorful splash, an ingenious dash,
Made a sunset in summer or fall.
They'd picked a location somewhere in creation,
But it took a vivid imagination,
To make any scenery at all.
Wouldn't startle my mind, one tittle to find,
That the artist who painted the picture was blind.

I walked down the aisle of a church one day,
New-fangled religion was on full display,
Just a half-hearted dab, and a haphazard stab,
And the apron of fig-leaves was all that they had,
Now, how could I know I was not in a show?
Well, there was a name on the wall.
Some upholstered pews, some gossip and news,
And that was the sum of it all;
And some upholstered forms that had stood the rough storms
Of socials and oyster stews.
No glory nor grace, not a sanctified face,
Could I notice in pulpit or pews.
Wouldn't startle my mind, one tittle to find,
That the pastor who preached to those faces was blind.

* * * * *

O, SOUL OF MINE AWAKE

O soul, of mine, awake! awake!
The Son of God is passing by!
And from thy sleeping stupor shake
Thyself, why wilt thou sleep and die?
The beggarly and weakly things,
Of this world's husks were made for swine,
But angel choirs and strumming strings,
Of harps of gold and things divine,
Were made for thee, O Soul of mine.
Repent in sackcloth, bending low,
Confess, forsake, and trust the blood
Of Him Who went to Calvary's brow,
To reconcile thee now to God.
O, soul of mine accept Him now,
As Jesus patiently waits nigh,
My heart bleeds with his bleeding brow,

O Christ! Forgive, I must not die.

O Soul of mine awake to see,
(Though I do walk with Christ today,)
Camped in my heart an enemy,
Determined that I shall not stay
Within the realms of saving grace.
But subtle and with wily mind,
Endeavors to usurp the place,
And ringing accusation find.
O, Soul of mine, do not consent,
To let this foe of law and grace;
This nature so toward sinning bent,
To longer in my heart find place.
But tarry now at Pentecost,
Within that sacred upper room,
'Til my heart meets the Holy Ghost,
And fallen Adam meets his doom.

Now, soul of mine, keep watch to see
(Tho' fierce the fray in circling night,)
My Bridegroom as He comes to me,
From heavens lit with glory bright.
As lightning flashes in the east,
And sky and earth with glory paints,
Shall Christ announce His marriage feast,
As with ten thousand of His saints
We'll rise immortal; prison bars
Of death will bend, and groan, and brea.
Then shall the ransomed shine as stars,
As all the dead in Christ awake.
Tho' oceans may have covered o'er,
They'll reign with Him forevermore.

* * * * *

I HEARD THEM SAYING THAT GOD WAS DEAD

I heard them saying that God was dead
But the sun still rose at dawn.
And the stars still twinkled o'er my head
When the last sunlight was gone.

And the moon serene smiled sweetly on
The storm clouds reared on high
The lightnings flashed; the thunders rolled

In power across the sky.

The trees still bowed to the passing wind
And the earth drank in the rain.
And deep in my heart the Spirit sang
A glad and sweet refrain.

"All things are upheld by My mighty power
I govern from shore to shore.
I hold thee in life from hour to hour
And I live forevermore.

* * * * *

IF I WERE A HEATHEN

I know there's always been a higher power
Than mine, throughout eternal ages dim.
I know He lives and from His wrath I cower
Who is He? that I might believe on Him.

Someway, too deep for me to understand,
Down in my breast a spark now glowing dim,
Recalls a time He walked and talked with man;
Who is He? that I might believe on Him.

I see in nature's face His hands' design,
So perfect and complete in leaf and limb,
Such skill and beauty speak of One divine,
Who is He? that I might believe on Him.

His breath blows up the waves on stormy seas,
His might carved out the mountains great and grim,
He grows the grass as well as towering trees,
Who is He? that I might believe on Him.

It seems I sleep but my heart wakes to hear,
His voice (each time I break the law) though dim,
That voice speaks softly to my inner ear,
Who is He? that I might believe on Him.

Someway I feel He cares just how I live,
My chance to miss His wrath seems rather slim,
Some day a strict account I'll have to give,
Who is He? that I might believe on Him.

Is there a man who knows this God so great?
Does He fill hungry hearts full to the brim?
And if He'll save me from my wrath and hate,
Who is He? that I might believe on Him.

* * * * *

COMPASSION

Compassion looks beyond the act, to see the inner motive,
It looks beyond effect to see the primal moving cause;
It looks past reputation to behold the man behind it,
And then past shady character to see the training flaws.

It looks beneath a sinner's sin, to see his soul so priceless;
It overlooks the faults of saints, beholding their desire.
It soon forgets a friend's defects, recalling countless favors,
And burns down prejudicial walls with love's consuming fire.

Compassion takes discourteous words and gives a kindly answer,
And when foes falsely persecute it offers up a prayer.
Receiving curse in fiercest wrath, returns "God bless you brother,"
Beholding him, and loving him, because a soul is there.

A treasure is the heart with love's compassion overflowing,
A treasure in the eyes of God as well as fellowmen.
So let us seek this Christ-like-ness, its graces then bestowing,
Until the Lord from Heaven calls us heavenward again.

* * * * *

CAREFREE

I saw a sparrow drinking,
From the gutter in the street.
'Twas the water from the sidewalks,
Stained with dust from human feet.

But he acted glad to get it,
And he murmured not a word,
But with head raised up t'ward heaven,
Sweetly sang "We thank thee, Lord."

No, it was not clear as crystal,
But the nearest he could get,
He kept up his cheery chirping,

And thanked God that it was wet.

As he chirped I just imagined,
He was thinking through it all,
"If it kills me; He has promised,
He would see me when I fall."

But he had another reason
For such sweet and careless bliss,
And no doubt it was because
There was no bill involved but his.

So with breakfast from the doorstep,
And with water from the street,
He forgot about tomorrow,
And praised God with chirping sweet.

So my faith increased immensely
In that sparrow's God on high,
Who would care for me while living,
And be with me when I die.

* * * * *

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

In the surety of seasons
In the diligence of dawn
In the heaping of the harvest
In the lilacs on the lawn

Just as true as gravitation
Just as bold as zenith blue
Comes the fact that God is faithful
Like the sunlight shining through.

In the orbit of Orion
In the steadfastness of stars
In the ceaseless surging beating
Of the sea on ocean bars

In the sweetness of the springtime
In the riot of the rain
In the loyalty of lovers
In the purposes of pain

In the testing of true loving
'Twixt a husband and his wife
In unchanging bonds of childbirth
Harbinger of endless life.

In the blessings of the Bible
Nor deserting in the dark
Men who willfully forsook Him
But providing them an ark.

In the writings of redemption
Covering all men's woes and weals
Giving Someone who was worthy
To unloose the seven seals.

So all earth shall be an Eden
Fruitful like a garden fair,
And all tribes of men shall praise Him
And His faithfulness declare.

* * * * *

GLORIFICATION

(The whole creation groaneth and travaileth --)
The wave mad-capped; sped along and slapped
Up the rocky shore of the sea,
To the coast of Spain and back again,
It had glided silently.
But I hear it sigh as the shore draws nigh,
"O! the dull monotony;
Of a life like this on the great abyss,
Just a mad-cap on the sea.

Just the briny deep, where the U-boats sleep,
And the wind blows fierce and free.
Now if I could change to a mountain range,
That would lend variety.
Or if I could rise to the azure skies,
Like the birds that fly so free,
Any course I'd take for a while, to break,
This gross monotony."

Thus it speeded west on the high wave's crest;
At the time of the highest tide.
And it passed the shore where the breakers roar,

For its final ocean ride.
As the wave returned and the sea-foam churned,
The mad-cap stayed behind.
For the wave fell away and let the mad-cap stay,
In a salt distiller's blind.

With the morning's gleam shone the bright sunbeam,
That soon was a withering flame,
As the day went past, the mad-cap fast
A fleecy cloud became.
How it soared away from the ocean spray,
O'er vale, and towering tree.
And it seemed to say as it sped away
"What glorious liberty."

How about the soul that has been made whole?
Yet groans to be set free.
In the binding mesh of the mortal flesh,
It has labored patiently.
How it groans and prays for that day of days,
Where ends mortality,
With the load laid down to receive a crown,
And the King of Glory see.

O! the glorious thought! What the blood has bought,
Corruption can't destroy.
When to heights unknown we shall have flown,
In an ecstasy of joy!
Yonder universe I shall then traverse,
With the speed of morning light;
To the planets far, past the evening star,
And behold the angels bright.

I would like to stay on the Milky Way,
Long enough to count the stars,
And then take trip without a ship,
To Jupiter and Mars.
Then I'd like to race to the end of space,
Just to see what I could see,
Then turn my flight to that city bright,
In its shimmering majesty.

Ear hath not heard by the spoken word;
Mortal eye is much too dim;
To have declared, what the Lord prepared,
For those who worship Him.

Then with joyous tears through the endless years,
As unnumbered ages roll,
"All glory to God, for the sin-cleansing blood,
Of the Christ who delivered my soul."

* * * * *

THE COMING PEACE

I stood on old Fort McHenry
With its statue of Francis Scott Key
With Chesapeake Bay stretched before me
In irregular course to the sea.

I paused on the huge star-shaped ramparts
Where great bristling guns met my gaze
Reminders of gallant defenses
In battles of long by-gone days.

Out there in the bay were the British
As six and ten ships flung their fire;
Behind them the ship where the poet
Looked on with such earnest desire.

All night the bombardment continued;
Bombs bursting and rockets red glare,
As he watched, eyes eager, heart pounding,
To see if our flag were still there.

But sadly I roamed past the relics
Of warfare and battle and hate;
Each gun as it gleamed in its showcase
Had its own bloody tale to relate.

"Why should men kill each other?"
I questioned, Why all of this effort in wars?
Must madness continue forever?
O, when will peace come to our shores?"

Isaiah then answered my question,
"When Christ reigns (and never before),
Shall men beat their swords into plowshares,
And never learn war anymore."

* * * * *

HE IS NOT HERE; HE IS RISEN

We walked to the grave where His body lay.
We sensed the smile of the sun that day.
And deep in our hearts we could gladly say
"He is not here; He is risen."

The palms as they swayed in the gentle breeze
The birds as they sang sweetly in the trees --
The flowers said blooming with radiant ease
"He is not here; He is risen."

Believers from many a distant land
Converged at His grave -- a reverent band
And sang through tears with uplifted hand
"He is not here; He is risen."

He is King of all kings; All power has He
He conquered our foes with His victory
The grave could not hold Him; Forever He's free
"He is not here; He is risen."

* * * * *

ACROSTIC SONNET TO EASTER

Eternal Priest in dark Gethsemane
Assumes our load of sin to bear away
Sweats drops of blood in deep humility
Triumphantly emerges from the fray
Endures to die on cruel Calvary
Reveals He lives that first glad Easter Day.

Goodbye forever to the dirge of death
Loosed from its loathsome pall by power divine.
Omnipotence has tamed its fetid breath
Rich resurrection life is yours and mine.
Into the grave and death and hell beneath.
Our Lord's great victory made His light to shine.
Unlimited the life that lies in store
So praise Him now for Easter -- evermore.

* * * * *

IN BETHELEHEM

In Bethlehem we see combine
God's heart with hearts like yours and mine
But no room waits Him at the inn
Nor palace where He should have been
This Christ, the true and living Vine.

No welcome feast where He might dine
No downy bed or fragrant wine
He becomes poor, among poor kin
In Bethlehem.

The Shepherds wend their way to win
The One Who saves all men from sin
The wise men see His bright star shine
And come to worship at His shrine
This King of heavenly origin
In Bethlehem.

* * * * *

ACROSTIC SONNET TO CHRISTMAS

Christ came to cancel our staggering debt Rev. 5:9
Holy and harmless from Heaven most high Heb.7:26
Reconciled justice and peace in Him met Psa. 85:10
Infinite Love in the finite draws nigh I Tim. 3:16
Suffering crass contradiction of foes Heb. 12:3
Tempering truth to the folks he would face Jo. 16:12
Meekness exemplified through all His woes Matt. 11:29
Angels desired to look into this grace. I Pet. 1:12
Shepherds and wise men would come to His cave Lu. 2:16

Gifts of fine gold they would gladly bestow Matt. 2:11
Incense and myrrh to Him mighty to save Is. 63:1
Faithful to cleanse and wash whiter than snow. I Jo. 1:9
These gifts are truly this season's best things. Lu. 10:42
Saints know the gift of salvation He brings. Tit. 2:11

* * * * *

SONG OF THE SEA

Today I stand by the seaside
Where sandpipers ply the foam.
Where pelicans sleep in the sunshine
And graceful gulls are at home.

Above on its friendly bosom
The porpoises feed and play,
Beneath swim the myriad millions
On many a mysterious way.

A ship hovers on the horizon
Like a friend who is lonely but free.
And the blue-green swells come surging
With a message back to me.

As whitecaps break into combers
They wrestle with all in reach.
And toss out seashells as tokens
Of triumphs along the beach.

The undertow charges the breakers
In a battle that's noisy and bold.
And I muse to the muted thunder
Of a warfare eons old.

As I rest by the restless ocean
I am silent reverent awed.
And moved by a deep emotion
At the greatness of our God.

For I see that the wind-tossed waters
In their battle-line with the land,
Are controlled by divine commandment
And guarded by gates of sand.

So I worship the One in Heaven
Who separates land from sea.
Who divides the light from the darkness
And measures His truth to me.

* * * * *

A MOMENT'S VISION

I heard a sweet voice breathe to me,
More sweet than all the birds that sing,
"Come stand here in eternity,
And I'll make clear a puzzling thing.

You're troubled by unanswered prayer

Delay and time your patience try
But look now as I look from here
You see! How time and space deny.

The old concepts of earthly men,
I see no then nor there
With Me there is no yet nor when
I'm not concerned with time in prayer.

A thousand years? One nightly watch!
The years of men? a tale long told!
I compass all the paths of men,
I never sleep, nor yet grow old.

My hands encompass time and space
As well as all eternal now.
All prayers; All answers; Trust My grace
And leave to Me, the when and how.

* * * * *

ASSURANCE

Two mockingbirds I see
Through a snowstorm in a tree.

But somehow God has let them know
That in spite of cold and falling snow
With warmth and sun they'll soon be blest
And can start to building their summer's nest.

And deep in my heart I also know
As battles of life surge to and fro
The Sun of Righteousness soon shall rise.
When our home He has finished in the skies.

* * * * *

WISDOM

(Proverbs Chapters One and Two Two sonnets)

Ho! I am wisdom and I cry without
To all the simple subtilty I'd give.
I bless and help the humble sing and shout
I long to make the dying soul to live.
In vatic vein my voice speaks o'er and o'er

I also stand within the market gates
My honest friends esteem me more and more
For I command just balances and weights.
I give deep understanding to the meek
Sound judgment justice equity and truth
Discretion I will give to those who seek
And I give guidance to the yearning youth.
Ye simple ones, your sullied life now leave
And fools, for folly do not longer grieve.

* * *

My ways are words of truth without alloy
And all my paths are ways of lasting peace
My plan will free from fear and bless with joy
I long to make your sin and folly cease.
But if I call and you will still refuse
My stretched-out hand you stubbornly disdain
Then fearful desolation you will choose
Destruction, death and misery and pain.
"But" you may ask, "Why thus our conscience prod?
Come tell us, really truly who you are!"
"Lo! I am Christ, your only way to God
I am the One True Bright and Morning Star."
So-scorners turn from all you call delight
And walk with Me in glorious noonday bright.

* * * * *

THE DAY OF LIFE

Day is dying in the west,
For someone gnarled and old and gray.
With three-score years and ten he's blessed
But now he sees life's closing day.
Life's sun long since the zenith passed,
The moon has hid her face in pain,
This night's starlight may be his last,
The clouds have vanished since the rain.
The keepers tremble 'round the wall;
The strong men bow and cramp and ache,
Death's shadows on the windows fall,
And noise, the closed doors does not shake.
Life's pitcher broken at the fount,
And silver cord severed with pain,
Arterial wheel and hardened vein,

Bespeak a steep and tiresome mount.
The golden bowl shall turn to sod,
As dust returns to mother dust;
And spirit back to Father God;
To answer for its borrowed trust.
But nothing shall his upflight bar,
If he have met God's standard test,
But he'll shine with the "Morning Star,"
When day is dying in the west.

* * * * *

TO WHAT PURPOSE?

Well, he spread a patch of rubber
As he clashed his grinding gears
And his cloud of dust and carbon
Did not ease my rising fears
And his blast from reverb mufflers
Well-nigh pulverized my ears!
As he squinted at the highway
Through his mop of hanging hair
I just could not help but wonder
What he'll do if he gets there!

And I've witnessed many a Convert
Start his race in just this way.
He would be a big sensation
And remake the earth today.
He was sure the church was fallen
And would brook no slight delay.
As he stormed and raved and ranted
Sure he's bound for Heaven fair
I just could not help but wonder
What he'd do if he got there.

* * * * *

LET US MAKE MAN

Genesis 1:26

I will make this man in My image
With boundless capacity --
He'll be both holy and righteous
With a taste for eternity.
I'll fill Him with aspirations

To walk in the light of My face --
And if he should err and stumble
I'll gird him with boundless grace.

I'll make him of such soul-stature
That mountains of this world's chaff
Could never appease his hunger
Nor ever his thirsting quaff.
Though he map all the highest mountains
And discover the deepest sea
The bread for his deep soul-hunger
Can only be found with Me.

I'll make him of giant spirit
With a thirst for infinity
With a thirst like the dusty desert
Or a drought-impooverished tree.
Though he plod to the moon and planets
And plumb the depths of the sea
The drink that will slake his thirsting
Can only be found with Me.

If he stray I will make him restless
Like a lover far from his bride.
Like a ship adrift without anchor
That is tossed by tempest and tide.
Though enamored of countless lovers
I'll cause him to fully see
He'll never find rest in his spirit
Until he will rest in Me.

* * * * *

WORLD WONDER

(Niagara)

Magnificent moving magnitude
Playful -- powerful plenitude
Turning and churning
Lashing and splashing
Lunging and plunging
Inspiring -- untiring
Seething -- surging disquietude.

Leaping rocky resistance
Powerful plunging persistence

Rushing and roaring
Danger ignoring
Dancing and prancing
Jumping and thumping
Determined and noisy insistence.

Majestic volume thunderous
Awesome -- somber -- ponderous
Sweeping and leaping
Sprawling and falling
Twisting and misting
Crashing and dashing
Wild grandeur wondrous.

As deep sends to deep somber calls
So speak these Niagara Falls.

* * * * *

ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH MILITANT

Was the service at your church
A sort of lazy, slow affair,
A sort of sluggish drowsy thing,
Like an autumn county fair,
Or a Sunday afternoon,
Or a brackish, swampy stream?
That hardly lets a person know
If things are real or just a dream.

Or was it like a mountain brook,
With hidden sources of supply
A sparkling, crystal, leaping tide,
That rushes downward from on high?
That sings and splashes as it moves;
That moves and knows the reason why.
That takes you places if you'll go,
And will not tarry while you sleep,
But makes it plain to those who'd know,
It's headed for the ocean deep.

Now, is it like a battlefield,
With songs of victory in the air,
'Til those opposing have to yield,
With glory falling everywhere.
With banners lifted to the sky,

Where people joyous praises sing,
With holy standards lifted high,
And fiery testimonies ring
And preaching rains like shot and shell
With buckshot mixed and lots of salt,
And people feel the woe of Hell,
And feel that sin is all their fault.

Like red-hot bullets comes the truth,
Straight from a heart red-hot with love,
To bless the saint or blister youth,
Who have not been born from above,
The climax is the altar call
When infantry swarm from their trench.
To capture prisoners for the Lord,
With zeal the critics cannot quench.
And soon a cloud of incense sweet
Is soaring upward to the throne
Petitions laid at Jesus' feet,
That sinners may have mercy shown.
"We came, we saw, we conquered," yes,
That is the service we were in,
"We met the foe and they are ours,"
Now slaves to love but free from sin.

* * * * *

HIS COMFORTING WORD

Your work for Me, on earth tho' unrecorded
By men in sin, unnoticed unesteemed;
Yet be assured in Heaven 'twill be rewarded
When you come Home with all of My redeemed.

The dreary days, the sighs of intercession
The sacrifices, many and unsung,
Will be revealed when into their possession
The saints awake and all the old are young.

And then for Aye! No cringing and no crying
No somber shadows on that golden shore.
No funeral dirge, no darkness and no dying
But light and life and love forevermore.

* * * * *

A HOSPITAL EXPERIENCE

On March 31st, 1964 while working on our new church building near Cincinnati, Ohio, I suffered a twisting compound fracture of the right leg about two inches above the ankle. Many friends came to call in the hospital. After the eighth day on Wednesday night, our little church group had special prayer for me. Pain shots did not relieve the pressure I felt in the broken limb and I was not taking any. Neither was I under any influence of tranquilizers, sleeping pills or fever. But Jesus came to me in answer to the prayers of his people. The following is a poor attempt to put into words what happened.

* * * * *

NIGHT OF NIGHTS

"O Lord, I'm in need of a friend,"
I cried From my bed of misery.
"What kind of a friend do you want?"
He replied "How close must that friend be?"

"You have a host of Christian friends
Who have come and stood by your bed."
It was true I knew and I loved them all
But I sadly shook my head.

"O Lord I need a friend," I said
"As close as close can be.
One who will come to my room; my bed
And into this cast with me!"

So He came to me -- the Ancient of Days
The Christ of eternal years
And in regal love He stood by my side
While I dissolved in tears.

He came to my bed with its broken bones
From His universe so vast
Laid His hand on my troubled heart
And slipped inside my cast.

And He slipped me out and we soared away
To which heaven I do not know
But I saw and heard unspeakable things
And I knew that they were so.

And He whispered to me a secret sweet

With a comfort I knew would last
"Remember my Child, you belong to me
And I'm between you and your cast."

Oh the years may be many; they may be long
As the future becomes the past,
But I'll never forget one memorable night
My King came to me in my cast.

* * * * *

HE KNOWS!

I drew the drapes this quiet dawn
And saw a robin on our lawn.

He eyed me briefly; hopped away
He has a lot to do today.

Nesting sites to be inspected --
Many worms to be collected.

What certain knowledge brought him north
This February twenty-fourth?

Who told him lawns were free from frost --
And will he feel he's double-crossed

When late snows cover everything?
No, he'll sit in a tree and sing
Inspiring concertos to spring.

* * * * *

JOHN DORSEY THE EVANGELIST

By Anna Lee Bibby

To Letitia, Kentucky there came one day,
From Winchester, Ohio, a preacher to stay.
Two weeks of revival God's story to tell
How Jesus was ransomed to save men from Hell.
The country was rough and the miles were long
E'en though he was weary, he still had a song.
His eyes and affections on Jesus were set
For he wasn't the type who would murmur or fret

He lifted his voice as he told of the cross
How Jesus had died to redeem all the lost.
Invited them then to lean on His breast
For Jesus had promised a haven of rest.
Not only would Jesus from sinning set free
But also would cleanse them from carnality.
But some folks the old man will stubbornly keep.
This fact almost causes young Dorsey to weep.

John Dorsey believed first when just a mere boy.
But Satan deceived him and stole all his joy.
He went here and yonder a-seeking for rest
And this all occurred, 'cause he stood not the test.
But there came a day when to Jesus he went,
E'en though he was young he knew how to repent.
Oh God up in Heaven have mercy I pray.
Right now on this altar my whole life I lay.

The angels in Heaven were made to rejoice,
"Oh, listen," they shouted, "That's John Dorsey's voice."
So Jesus then blotted out all of his sins
And whispered, "Now, John, make a fisher of men."
"Go out in the highways, the towns and the cities."
And as he obeys, the poor sinner he pities.
The good he has done he will not fully know
'Til Jesus shall come and the trumpet shall blow.

* * * * *

TO A CHAT

I love you, Yellow-breasted
Chat Upon my bed of pain
Throughout each long-drawn nightly watch
I hear your glad refrain.

O tell me shouting, fluttering Chat
Why do you warble so?
What keeps you happy through the night?
What secret do you know?

Could it be, Yellow-breasted Chat
As your songs nightly soar
You know the One who said to us
"Rejoice forevermore"?

Is this the secret of your song?
You raise the whole night through?
Well, He will raise me up ere long
And so I praise Him too.

He gives me songs throughout the day
Supplies my every need
And keeps me happy through the night
Oh He is Lord indeed!

* * * * *

MY POOR BEST

I find no roses
Orchids, daffodils.
As musing I meander
Through the hills
But daisies, black-eyed Susans
Queen Anne's lace.
I pick some
With a spray of sassafras.
And head for home
With pensive slowing pace.
I give them to my lovely faithful lass --
A radiant smile
Lights up her face.
She knows I've done
As well as I was able
Arranges them
They're lovely on our table.

And some day
I'll come home to Him again.
Who sent me out
To gather sheaves of men.
I'll have no nobles
Mighty genii wise
To give Him when
I meet Him in the skies.
But foolish ones
And weak of lowly place.
Yet sure am I that He
With matchless grace
Will welcome me with
Radiant smiling face.

And proffer me a place
At His Own table
He'll know I've done
As well as I was able.

* * * * *

THE ESSENTIAL THING

Now I feel one with the astronauts
The bumblebees and the birds
And I sing a new melodious song
Of sevenths, fifths and thirds.

For I've left the horse and buggy
The auto and the train
And I'm soaring thru the heavens
On an air-conditioned plane.

But to angels I'm just crawling
I know nothing yet of speed.
And I think they all would class me
With the snail or centipede.

But I know some day I'll join them
In my body new and bright,
And may soar up through the heavens
With the speed of morning light.

But even that may be too slow!
Who knows what grace has bought?
Perhaps we yet shall travel
With the speed of swiftest thought.

Whatever method God may plan
This is a deeper care,
That I shall serve Him wholly
Whether I am here or there.

* * * * *

MORTON AND I

This is a tale of two brothers
Morton and I.

Perhaps not so different from others
You may reply.
But he was a prince of a fellow.
Whose smile would make your heart mellow.
And we loved with a love far from shallow
Morton and I.

We hunted and trapped together --
Morton and I;
And tramped through all kinds of weather
From sun and sky.
We loved to hear autumn leaves rattle,
We tended the sheep and cattle;
And stood through many a battle;
Morton and I.

One year we both found the Master;
Morton and I.
Our hopes beat high and hearts faster,
Sin had to die.
Though years was I older by seven.
When Christ had our sins all forgiven
We walked in the sunlight of Heaven.
Morton and I.

And then we heard the Lord calling --
(Morton and I.)
"Wherever My footsteps are falling
Follow close by."
Now Morton made quite a young preacher
But having the Lord for our teacher
We started to tell every creature --
Morton and I.

And then one day our paths parted
Morton and I.
For different fields we had started
Under God's sky.
Although Satan's forces were raging,
I knew in God's ways he was aging,
And so a good fight we were waging
Morton and I.

Some day we shall come up before Him--
Morton and I.
With souls we have gathered -- adore Him

There in the sky.
With no more of time's separation
We'll join in the glorification
And worship with great admiration.
Morton and I.

* * * * *

A QUESTION IN BLACK AND WHITE

"Blackie" and "Whitey" were neighbors
Whose worlds joined hand in hand
Together they won a wilderness
And settled a fine fair land.

Together they fed their children
From forest and fen and farm.
Together they tamed each terror
That gave them cause for alarm.

Together they fired a furnace
And tempered the glowing steel.
With many a sledge and anvil
They curved a tremendous keel.

Together they launched a liner
With many a gear and shaft.
With vigor and bold invention
They fashioned it fore and aft.

While the world looked on in wonder
To witness this upstart's fate.
They fashioned her many fittings
And boarded their Ship of State.

With Stars and Stripes at her masthead
She sailed on a stormy sea.
Her call-port was peace and freedom
To escape from tyranny.

Her bill of rights was far-reaching
Her laws of such gracious scope,
That she startled the world's tired millions
And kindled their hearts with hope.

But her foreign foes waxed jealous

At her soaring success of late
So they plotted her total shipwreck
On the hellish reefs of hate.

With a storm of subtle suspicions
And scorning thoughtful debate
With a torrent of accusations
They assaulted our Ship of State.

With riots and angry firebombs
With violence and screaming lies,
With an orgy of mad disorder
They sullied our once fair skies.

Shall their plans be successful brother?
Shall we fight in a towering rage?
Or complement each other --
Like the black and white of this page?

* * * * *

HIS HANDS

His hands were helpful hands
That healed the multitudes
That emphasized His truth
In keeping with His moods

That broke the bread and fish
For hungry crowds that day
When thousands were all fed
Before they went away.

His hands were raised in prayer
To cleanse men from their dross
His healing helpful hands
Then took a heavy cross.

His holy hallowed hands
The hands that never fail
Now quiver on a cross
And pierced with cruel nail.

But now His Heavenly hands
Dispense salvation's gifts
To people of all lands

As heavy loads He lifts.

His hands reach o'er the earth
Wherever men may pray
To give them heavenly birth
And lead them in His way.

* * * * *

HOLINESS

Holiness comes from God's mind
To our night.
His Own thinking
Heavenly light.

Holiness comes from God's heart
Into ours.
His Own Presence
Heavenly powers.

Not traditions timeworn
By tongues and strife,
But God's Own Logos
Heavenly Life.

Holiness is God's Spirit
Hallowed Dove.
His emotions
Heavenly Love.

Holiness is God's image
Wrought in me.
Blameless Motives
Charity.

Holiness is God's nature
Moral Health
Until riches
Heavenly Wealth.

* * * * *

SAD, SAD EARTH

'Tis truly a sad, sad earth

Where rivers flow down with tears.
Where unfulfilled yearnings yawn greater
With the flight of the flying years.

A place where lilting laughter
Is often snatched from pain
Where joy appears one moment
And flees from grief in vain.

Where fragile fleeting friendships
So quickly come and go.
And memories of their moments
Increase our weight of woe.

Where holidays bring heartaches
As vacant place appears.
And emptiness seems endless
As days stretch into years.

Where burial plots grow faster
Than towns that gave them birth
Increased by death's disaster
'Tis truly a sad, sad earth.

Thank God! There is a country
A bright and deathless shore
Where pain and tears are absent
And heartaches are no more.

* * * * *

SWEET AS THE BREATH OF JESUS

Dry as a dusty desert
Dead as a fallen tree
Lonesome as kidnapped children
Sold into slavery.

Dark as a dreary dungeon
Sad as the setting sun
Black as a moonless midnight
My soul was lost undone.

Soft as an April zephyr
Welcome as gentle rain
Whispered an urgent Presence

Offering peace for pain.

Warm as the sun in springtime
Clear as the light of morn
Whispered the Spirit's witness
When I anew was born.

Sweet as the breath of Jesus
Pure as the purest love
Came His most hallowed Presence
Streaming down from above.

Jesus my soul's true Lover
Jesus my heart's Repose.
With Him my life commences
With Him my life shall close.

* * * * *

HOW DID YOU HEAR?

He heard the word with a stoic face
This man with a wayside heart
He could not conceive such matchless grace --
No place for a seed to start.

The worldly traffic of many years
Had hardened his heart too much
He had no taste for a penitent's tears
For godly sorrow and such.

He heard the word with a joyous smile
The poor shallow-hearted soul
But he walked in victory a little while
And sadly -- was not made whole.

When tribulations and trials came
And offended him by and by
He would bring the Savior to open shame
And darkly his Lord deny.

He heard the word and received it too
This bramble-hearted one.
And the word sprang up and greatly grew
A mighty deed was done.

But then came the pleasures of life and cares
With their subtle and slight deflection;
And the lust for riches soon laid its snares,
So he brought no fruit to perfection.

He heard the word the same as they
This good and honest heart
And brought all his life in line to obey
And was off to a running start.

For he understood this wondrous word
And treasured it new and old.
And brought fruit for his loving Lord.
As much as a hundred fold.

* * * * *

OF 'POSSUMS AND PERSIMMONS

Mr. 'Possom is a farmer
And his crop? Persimmon trees!
Many a woodland stocks his product
And he grows his crop with ease.

How he loves those ripe persimmons
Sweet as syrup, smooth as silk --
Like a gourmet loves his entrees
Like a baby loves his milk.

They must meet his hidden hunger
They must satisfy his needs.
But he does not eat for nothing
Sowing far and wide the seeds.

Thank you, Lord, for Mr. 'Possum!
I like ripe persimmons, too.
Kissed with sun and frost and raindrops
Washed with fog and morning dew.

* * * * *

DEATH! BE NOT PROUD!

O' Death! Be not proud!
We've heard the coarse belligerent boasts
The gory terrifying toasts

Of your fanatics long and loud;
Your army of professional slayers
Who scoff and jeer at tearful prayers
The human race you long have cowed --
But Death! Be not proud!

Death! Be not proud!
We've followed in your funeral train
And seen the tears run down like rain;
Across your battlefields there go --
Uncounted crosses row on row.
The shattered trees so gaunt and grim
Have bowed to your Satanic whim.
The ruined cities testify
That you delight to see men die.
But still our hearts remain unbowed --
O Death! Be not -- be not proud!

Death! Be not proud!
For there was One you slew one day
Who took your keys and sting away
The Lord of Life from Heaven come down.
And so you thought to take His crown.
But He in dying conquered you.
Your grisly mandate overthrew;
For He is risen again as well
And also conquered sin and Hell.
Your present conquests He's allowed;
But Death! Be not proud!

Death! Be not proud!
For He is coming back again
To take King David's throne and reign.
And He shall rule with iron rod
'Til He has conquered for our God
Each foe and immortality
Shall shine undimmed eternally.
When every foe gives up his breath
The last one He puts down is death!
Then nowhere will you be allowed!
So Death! O Death! Now be not proud!

* * * * *

EVERYONE

Every man is hungry 'til he eats the living Bread
Every man is thirsty 'til the love of God is shed
In his heart abroad and by the Spirit he is led.
Every man is guilty
Until Christ his sin forgives.
Every man is dead
Until in Christ anew he lives.
Every man is empty
Until God shall fill his soul.
Every man is broken until
Christ shall make him whole.

Every man's a seeker
Seeks of sea and sky and sod.
But whatever his role
His rest of soul
He finds alone in God.

* * * * *

WHO?

Who taught the wasp the secret
Of hypodermic's power?
Thus numbing spider victims
Preserve them to the hour
When baby wasp should hunger
For needed food to eat
And find in his mud pantry
A fresh supply of meat?

Who taught the worm the secret
Of changing leaves to silk?
And ants to pasture plant lice
And gather in the milk?
Or bees evaporation
For nectar gathered in?
Or spider his crocheting
His fragile web to spin?

Who splashed the robin's waist-coat
With cherry juice so red?
And put the scraps from red-bird,
On old woodpecker's head?
And taught the crows the secret
Of posting out a spy?

With wisdom nigh uncanny
And telescopic eye?

Who taught old mother Jersey
To hide her calf new-born?
Or fox his chicken blitz-krieg
In early hours of morn?

Who made Kilideer an artist
At playing she was hurt?
To lead you when you chased her
From young hid in the dirt?
Who painted blue the zenith,
And tinted sunset red?

And curved the perfect rainbow
Through rain-drop spectrum spread?
And springled night with starlight I ask,
"What is His name?"
The world in adoration
His glory should proclaim.

Who loved a fallen sinner,
And died upon a tree?
Thus satisfying justice
That sinners might be free.
Who sent the Holy Spirit?
Let all join to proclaim
His right to praise and honor,
For holy is His name.

Who was it built a city?
With jasper walls so clear,
And streets of gold transparent
Where sin shall not appear.
Let all join in the chorus
And all His love proclaim,
Because He is my Savior,
And Jesus is His name.

* * * * *

THE PRISONER

I saw a most pitiful prisoner
Forsaken, enfettered and jailed,

Hungry and cold and naked --
Whose protests of innocence failed.

But the governor came back from vacation
And looked on his case with a smile.
With a pardon, a shower, and a new suit of clothes,
That were cut in the latest style.

He journeyed through doors wide open,
And looked like he'd had a new birth.
The Governor? The Sun! With winter his jail
The prisoner of course was the earth.

* * * * *

SNOW AND LIGHT

Snow is not white
Where there is no light
But is just as black
As the darkest night.

It has no power
To make it bright
Its beauty comes
From borrowed light.

And so the soul so shiny bright
Can only beam with borrowed light.
He ransomed us from the deepest night.
And only in Him can we be white.

* * * * *

FOURTEEN EASY WAYS TO SPOIL YOUR CHILD

1. Discuss the problems of your church and other Christians in his presence -- especially any wrong which has been done to you. This will almost certainly enlist his sympathy to feed your self-pity and kill his confidence in others.

2. Try to intimidate him into obedience by using Jesus or the preacher as a policeman who will "get him" if he disobeys. This will surely warp his emotional attitudes toward Christ and His ministers.

3. Try to control him by making rash threats that you have no intention of carrying out. He quickly understands you are lying and your words are just so much noise.

4. Be too busy with other childrens' problems or with trying to get ahead financially to take time to read him bed-time stories, enter occasionally into his play or listen to his tales of woe.

5. Leave all discipline to the other parent. This is a subtle and selfish play to be more popular with him than your mate.

6. Be sure to intervene to stop the other parent when he or she starts to administer needed discipline. Nothing is more certain to produce an undisciplined brat, especially if he hears you quarrel about it.

7. When presents have been purchased for special occasions, allow him to discover that continuous whining will produce them ahead of time.

8. Fall in with the unscriptural theory that no tendency is to be inhibited or repressed. You will no doubt have a very interesting little demon on your hands very shortly.

9. Do anything necessary to discourage any idea of his giving himself to full-time gospel work. Almost anything pays more money.

10. Pay no attention to the type of books or pictures he enjoys. Never dream of censoring his reading material. This is a free country isn't it?

11. Never consider conquering his will. Let him be boss of the house. Nothing can make it more unlikely that he will ever submit to God.

12. Never force him to taste healthful foods. Give him all the money he wants for candy and soft drinks. They may rot his teeth, ruin his digestion, lower his resistance to childhood diseases, keep him in such a state of hypoglycemia that he will be super-irritable and uncooperative. If you need someone to constantly try your patience he will fill the bill perfectly.

13. Always take your child's part in spats with playmates. Be partial to him in arguments with brothers and sisters. It is perfectly amazing to watch a child who knows he is a privileged character.

14. If the teacher disciplines your child, never try to find out why. Just blindly and angrily take the child's part and bawl out the teacher in front of the whole class.

This is not a complete list, but if you do this much faithfully, other ways will be suggested. Use your emotions instead of your intelligence. Never be consistent. Be sure to profess more religion than you live. It is easy to make him believe that everyone else is a hypocrite also, and will considerably decrease the likelihood that he will ever take the way of repentance, discipline, self-denial and holiness.

* * * * *

A DOVE HAS ADOPTED US

After our church had voted unanimously to go the way we felt God would have us go for His glory in order to continue to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, I received three very cutting and unkind letters from people I loved which cut very deeply and caused inward pain for days.

But God Who comforteth those who are cast down sent a very unusual messenger to comfort me. As I came into the garage one day, a dove was sitting on the luggage rack of our station wagon. We stood and looked at each other for some time, then it flew out the open door and lit on a ledge under the eave of the parsonage. It had adopted us.

It stayed around all summer without a mate. Sitting by the hour on the ridge of the sanctuary it would not fly when I walked by. When snows came it did not go south. It stayed around my ground feeding station all winter with other doves and would come to the window ledge to feed when snows were deep. Other doves were wild and would fly at the slightest motion but it would often stay on the window ledge when I would walk by inside.

It stayed around for the next seven years until I gave up the pastorate. The patience, friendliness and faithfulness of this beautiful bird was a great comfort to me, and constantly reminded me that a greater Dove of which it was a type had also adopted us.

The Holy Spirit, the Heavenly Dove has also adopted us. When men separate us from their company, and speak evil of us falsely and would leave us lonely and orphaned He comes to fulfill the promise of our Lord "I will not leave you comfortless (orphans), I will come unto you." And "when he is come he will abide with you forever." How He hovered over our church and gave us blessed services, when the altar and front seats would fill up with seekers without any preaching. As I had learned to pitch my whistle down low enough to answer the mourning dove and they would answer me, so He teaches us to get low enough and quiet enough so we can hear His still small voice. And He will pray through us with groanings which cannot be uttered (articulated).

And how utterly unfailingly faithful He is. Winter and summer, seed time and harvest, through storm and calm, in sickness and in health. He cannot deny Himself. He abideth faithful. O, let us praise the Lord! What a comfort He is. What a rest He gives. What a satisfaction to be adopted by the Holy Spirit, the Heavenly Dove, Who assures us we are in the family of God.

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THE END