

fuzzy reflections
of
The Bridge
in the stream



of Jerry Johnson

Second Edition

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by Gerald T. Johnson

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Kiss The Father's Measuring Rod

How far better to humble myself
Than be humbled by the mighty hand of God!
Why think I it better for my health
To live in denial, shame and stealth
Than to kiss the Father's measuring rod?

Oh! far better to trust His Chastening Grace,
Receive His crushing Will with full embrace,
Than believe the Deceiver's winking nod!
For satan pumps me full of sweet affirmation
As long as I'm given to prideful reservation
And thumbing my nose at God!

Is "chance" the only help we get?
Is "success" just a better bet?
Can I honestly concede no regret?
If not, am I really learning yet?
For the Truth's not foggy, it is set:
Mercy and Truth - on the Cross in me - have met.

The ear that hears the reproof of life abides among the wise. He that refuses instruction despises his own soul: but he that hears reproof gets understanding. The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honor is humility. The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD. All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weighs the spirits. Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established. The LORD has made all things for Himself: yes, even the wicked for the day of evil. Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished. By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil. (Proverbs 15:31-16:6)

Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. (Psalm 85:10)



Teach me Lord to Let

Let love be genuine. (Romans 12:9 ESV)

*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,
and glorify your Father Who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)*

*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus....
(Philippians 2:5)*

Lord, teach me what it means to "let!"
What it means to allow what's inside to get
To the surface for others to see...
To see the love You give so free
By Your Spirit living in me.

Teach me what it means to "let!"
Without the legalistic strain and sweat,
What it means to allow Thy light to shine;
May it glow, this little Light of mine,
Not for my glory, for all is Thine!

Teach me what it means to "let!"
Free to release Your selfless mindset
Over my thoughts to rule and reign
That the humble Cross I might gain
Never minding the sorrow or the pain.
Teach me, Lord, to Let!



As Hard As I Scrub Myself

Take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin. For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. (Exodus 12:21-23)

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. (Psalm 51:7)

And His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. (Mark 9:3)

Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 1:5b-6)

There is no merit in this house
That would stay Your hand from striking!
I know I only fool myself
To hope MY good's to Your liking.

Only guilt and condemnation
Are companions to my fate
If I'm depending on myself
The time already is too late!

I can wash and scrape and polish
Trying all my wrongs to right them,
But as hard as I scrub myself,
No fuller on earth can white them!

I tape my mouth, I close my eyes
I tie my hands behind my back,
I chain my feet, I stifle myself:
Somehow my sins still find some slack!

See the handwriting on the wall!
I must quit my foolish striving!
Surrender! I must deny myself!
I must let You do the driving!

Purify my heart with hyssop
Dipped in Your pure blood sacrifice.
I will invite Your washing hand
It's Your Love's work that pays the price.

Oh, Yes! To You be the glory!
May You rule in my life alway!
Let me not forget The Blood
That washed my hopelessness away!

Amen.



We Come Boldly

Though deafened by doubting
Though blinded by lies
Though frozen with fear
Though brazen our skies

Though dumbfound in darkness
Though chained to our will
Though tainted with sins
Though born for the kill

Though doomed for destruction
Though stinking with pride
Though driven by lust
Though longing to hide

You still came to save us!
You still paid the price!
You still took the whip:
Willing sacrifice!

We're Father adopted
And Brother beloved
Spirit instructed
Indwelt from above!

Though we're still only infants
Though our better deeds too few
Your arms remain wide open!
And We come boldly to You!



Agonies of a Pauper and a Whelp

Your Word, Lord, says, "Be anxious for nothing."
I assume You believe that it's possible to be.
Your Word says, "I can do all things through Christ."
and You simply say You strengthen ME.

Your Word says, "All things work together for good..."
at least for those who love You, Lord.
Your Word says, whosoever believes in You
Will not die but live forevermore.

Your Word says that everybody You set free
No matter what, is really free indeed.
Your Word says, "...all things, that we ask in prayer,
BELIEVING, we shall receive."

It goes on and on, Lord: all of these absolutes.
How can I experience these things
With so few degrees from higher learning institutes?
What wise old sage can I sit under?
What book can I read that will help?
For You know, in faith, I'm a pauper,
In courage, I'm just a whelp.

I believe You know what You're talking about
But to apply it all...Dear Father, I really need Your help!!!

Amen.



Think Carefully About This Jesus

May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in Whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent. For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross.

And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, He has now reconciled in His body of flesh by His death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before Him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard. (Colossians 1:11-23a ESV)

When we pray to Him we are not wasting our faith.
When we long to see Him we are not wasting our hope.
When we love Him we are not wasting our affections.
When we wait on Him we are not wasting our time.
When we praise Him we are not wasting our breath.
When we serve Him we are not wasting our strength.
When we follow Him we are not wasting our allegiance.
When we learn from Him we are not wasting our intelligence.
When we cry to Him we are not wasting our tears.
When we invite Him into our hearts and our homes we are not wasting our hospitality.
When we live for Him we are not wasting our life.
When we believe Him we are not wasting our trust.
When we adore Him we are not wasting our worship.
When we obey Him we are not wasting our discipline.
When we dream of Him we are not wasting our imagination.

When we drink from His fountain we are not wasting our thirst.
When we eat from His table we are not wasting our hunger.
When we pursue His will we are not wasting our ambitions.
When we give Him our loved ones we are not wasting our family.
When we suffer for Him we are not wasting our pain.
When we sing to Him we are not wasting our song.
When we are inspired by Him we are not wasting our creativity.
When we die for Him we are not wasting our chances.
When we surrender to Him we are not wasting our humility.
When we fight for Him we are not wasting our courage.
When we are demeaned in the eyes of the world for Him we are not
wasting our integrity.
When we are persecuted for Him we are not wasting our reputation.
When we company with His children we are not wasting our
friendship.
When we witness for Him we are not wasting our self-respect.
When we give to His work we are not wasting our money.
When we befriend His needy ones we are not wasting our religion.
When we depend on Him to guide our thinking we are not wasting our
minds.
When we depend on Him to show us what to do we are not wasting
our deeds.
When we confess our sins to Him we are not wasting our redemption.
When we know Him we are not wasting our eternity.

*And so, dear brothers and sisters who belong to God and are partners
with those who are called to heaven, think carefully about this Jesus
Whom we declare to be God's Messenger and High Priest.*

(Hebrews 3:1 NLT)



As Faithful As the Sonrise

Through the early morning mist
I can see His lovely light.
My soul exalts: heaven kissed
As my mind absorbs the Sight.

Whatever mood or fancy
Tries to crowd into my view
His eyes, with love a-dancin',
Firmly grip my heart anew.

As faithful as the Sonrise
Ev'ry morning He is here.
Cloudy day or clearing skies,
Ev'ry moment He makes dear.

He's not an apparition
Of lingering dream's deceit,
More solid recognition
Than the earth beneath my feet.

Christ is the wholesome power
For ev'ry new dawning day.
Thru ev'ry trial, ev'ry hour,
He always knows the right way.



Jesus At the Playground

Tootlin' in his mighty caddy
Headin' for the battle of important work,
The wholly man slammed on brakes
And gave the wheel a jerk:
Was that really Jesus
Back at the school playground?
As he threw the car door open
His crusty heart began to pound.
He ran up to the Savior thinking,
"What is He doin' here?"

"Good Master, can I ask you. . ."
He blurted without fear,
"Why in this everlovin' world
would YOU, of all, be found
Leaning on this chainlink fence
By this vacant school playground?"

"Shhhhhhh," He whispered,
And with a gentle motion of His calloused hand,
He gestured, authoritatively, to the man
Beside Him there to stand.

"I looked all over town for You.
After a while I just plain quit!
You know all the church work I do.
I figured You'd show when You saw fit.
Who'd of ever guessed You'd be leaning
On this empty playground fence?
I'm running my fool head off for You,
But You're not even tense!"

"Shhhhhhh," again, He whispered,
Taking the wholly man's hand,
"Quietly wait here beside Me.
In a moment you'll understand."

Wait!?! You say? Wait? Man . . . !
Who is going to save the hoards out there lost?
"I've got all Your nagging sheep to feed!
And fund raising to cover YOUR costs!

A lingering gaze from the Master's eyes,
A squeeze upon his anxious hand,
And the wholly man got the point:
Not suggesting, Christ was giving a command.

So . . . they stood there, One, patient;
The other stewing over wasted time.

Then it happened without warning:
The recess bell began to chime!

With a CRASH! the school doors opened
Freeing streams of laughter and joy,
A swarm of balls of energy:
Freedom! for ev'ry girl and boy.

As He watched the playing children
Jesus' face beamed with pure delight.

Amazement turning to disgust,
The wholly man gawked at the sight:
Here was Lord Jesus all intense
Watching these foolish children play.
Not a soul being witnessed to;
None of these kids knew how to pray!

"Jesus, young'uns don't understand
About hard work or sin or hate;
The tithes would amount to nothing
If we passed the offering plate!
No great church buildings would get built
If we left it for them to do!
And rather than an improvement
The place'll be worse off when they're thru!"

Jesus looked down on the wholly man.
"Would you please listen to yourself?!"
My children aren't commodities
For you to count sitting on the shelf!
My work's not just about new buildings
Or talks on the psychology of hate.
Consider your religiosity!
Stand quiet there, Wholly Man! Watch . . . and wait."

The preacher knew that Christ just might be right.
He accepted he'd been put in his place.
The Master's eyes turned back to the children,
Love was now beaming from His joyful face.

Then, looking up, the wholly man saw her:
A small girl, sitting on motionless swing:
Today children's games did not amuse her,
Longing for more than the fun those things bring.
The girl looked over where they were standing.
In a moment, time joined eternity:
When she saw Jesus, she called out to Him:
"Daddy, please, will you come now and swing me?"

His whole body beaming with pure joy,
Over the school-yard fence He bound:
The Master ran to swing his child!
What He'd been looking for. . . He'd found!

The wholly man stood there in shock
Gasped at stark reality grim:
Christ would rather swing His young child
Than toil and jerk and fight with him!

The Light rushed in: old Crusty Heart began to melt;
And he ran, clerical garb flailing in the wind,
Joyfully took a swing beside the little girl,
His Wholly War was over, fighting at an end.



The Paradox of Power

Eternity, that endless sunny day, awaits
With all the potential of God's Infinite Grace
For any who hold dear His timeless promise:
For all, from proud Peter to doubting Thomas,
He Is with you through the end of your story!
Your lamp flickers but His Light is your Glory,
Identified by Incorruptible Worth
Thru His gift of strainless, painless, laborless birth!
...POWER

This world decays; its enduring gift is death;
The End we're chasing with ev'ry fleeting breath;
But the Call's from the other side of death's door:
"Honey for the bitter! Money for the poor!
Hold Forever in your hand - Gold of great Price!
Chains of pain are broken by His Sacrifice"
Gaze in His all seeing, ever-loving eyes
Whose most lighthearted moment confounds the wise.
...POWER

The Rich young ruler - dejected, walked away;
Nicodemus at night - blind to Light of Day;
Pharisees - guilty of all that they condemn;
Temple priest - peddling ashes, trashes The Gem.
Pilate washed bloody hands - deaf to Truth's clear sound.
Judas' silver's worth in death is never found!
Mighty men kissing the manger Baby's hand!
Rock of Ages in a sea of shifting sand!
...POWER

Taking stock of all the good we can muster,
The best is found wanting: diamonds lose luster..
...gold's for fools. Children's glee are the Craftsman's tools.
His knife carves jewels. His fire the raging heart cools.
The path to His workshop the path to life anew;
He's the Perfect Chef and you're the brunswick stew;
Let Him work, see what He can change you into;
His Spirit woos for Him to live His Life in you!
...POWER



Where Your Pardon Starts

Flames of Love licking at our hardened hearts:
The curse of sin ends where Your Pardon starts!

Bright Hope streaming into our darkest night,
Brilliant gleaming Holy Merciful Light:
Take up residence in my run down house,
Run out ev'ry snake, roach, spider and louse.

Flames of Love licking at our hardened hearts:
The curse of sin ends where Your Pardon starts!

Wake us up! Take our empty cup! Fill it!
Shake us up! Fake-life's guilt built up - kill it!
Make Life from the vain strife of "wished to be,"
Show my shallow heart why You fished for me!

Flames of Love licking at our hardened hearts:
The curse of sin ends where Your Pardon starts!

What mind can't choose 'tween The Rock or straw?
The kind that chooses satan's "shock and awe."
He who refuses the chaff foregoes the strife!
Oh, set our sandy feet on the Gold of Life!

Flames of Love licking at our hardened hearts:
The curse of sin ends where Your Pardon starts!



The Wilderness

O My Father, how You tower over me!
I, like a dingy wafting on a raging sea,
Look into Your boundless strength and love
And wonder how from You came me!

I cannot deny the difference that I see:
You in Your perfection and all the fault in me.
How here below to reflect the life from up above?
It is more a foggy fiction than solid reality!

And so I wonder in this wilderness of I, myself, and me.
Who can find the murderer in this self-wrought mystery?
How long will I stumble through this ego-centric waste?
UP! Be off! Away from ME and into HIM with haste!

Abide in Me...for apart from Me you can do nothing.
(John 15:4-5).

*The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous man runs
into it and is safe. (Proverbs 18:10)*



All Fall

We know what we do
That we shouldn't do:
We run at the wall;
We start just to stall.
We know what we do...

...All fall.

Be good. Do the right.
Don't lie. Tell it right.
Don't dare drop the ball.
When hurting stand tall.
When we've got it right...

...All fall.

Never surrender.
We can't surrender.
Act big though we're small.
No honor? Use gall.
Rather than surrender...

...All fall.

Lying pretenders,
Crying pretenders:
Dead to the real call,
We bear our own pall.
Dying pretenders...

...All fall.

Grace destroys our throne,
The hopeless self-throne.
Some humbled by His love-maul,
Some refusing His love-call:
Prostrate at His Throne...

...All fall.

Every knee shall bow
Every tongue shall vow:
"Jesus Christ is Lord!"
Some to their own disgrace;
Some before their Lord of all:
Proud or humble, in either case...

...All fall.



Friend of the Promise

Uphold me according to your promise, that I may live, and let me not be put to shame in my hope! (Psalms 119:116)

*But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.
(Galatians 3:22)*

And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 3:29)

But according to His promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2Peter 3:13)

And this is the promise that he made to us - eternal life. (1John 2:25)

[Jesus] lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son that the Son may glorify You, since You have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom You have given Him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom You have sent. (John 17: 1b-3)

...the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:26-27)

*In the same way, after the supper He took the cup saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."
(Luke 22:20 ESV)*

Dear Friend of the Promise,

Look up, through your doubt and fear,
Your discouraged, forlorn heart
Face streaked with despairing tear
Your dearest dreams blown apart
By unforeseen circumstance
And ripped relations 'round you.
Disregarding nat'ral chance
Look up, it's all you can do.

Luke 21:28

And when these things come.....to pass,
Then look up, He's standing by.
Lift your head up, free at last:
For your redemption draws nigh.

Colossians 3:1-4

If...you have been raised with Christ,
Seek the things that are above,
Where He is.....He paid the price!.....
Now crowned at the right hand of Love.
Set your mind on things above,
Not on things that are on earth.
You died with the Turtle Dove,
With Christ in God find life's worth.
When at last you see the King,
Bringing you eternal life,
On True Life's gift you will wing
No guilt, no tears, no more strife.

In "Now's" raging tempest - STAND!
Gird your soul with His power!
You know Truth - He holds your hand!
Every context, every hour...
The Coming King lives in you!
Ruling Heaven...and your heart.
In both realms is worship due.
Trust Him, He will not depart.

But now He [Jesus] has obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord; I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord': for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Hebrews 8:6, 10-12)



Fail to See the Wisdom

"Life is short," we're so nonchalantly told;
How fast the seasons pass to winter's cold!
The lessons we heard, yet unlearned, chide and scold:
We wasted so much on trash Vanity sold!
Where's that new suit that time did fade and fold?
We expect to be pressed, but not steamrolled!
Life's lessons are shallow if Youth is polled,
And age often numbed by time's finite mold.
We shirk with fear and fight the potter's hold
And fail to see the wisdom of God in our getting old!



Soar In Jesus

There you perch on Hemlock limb
Lovely, little, sweet song bird,
Strug'ling in your trusting Him:
Was your last prayer really heard?
Your feet firmly clutch that twig
Of anxiety and doubt.
Faith, gripping that nat'ral sprig,
Faces flesh's fearsome shout!
The way of flight you can't see
With natural, earth-bound eyes;
We join prayer with reality
When His love we realize.
Soar in Jesus, let the limb go!
Faith without flying is dead.
Your heart the True Way does know:
Always better than your head.



Dear Lost lamb of Holy Love

Love like yourself your neighbor!
Get off the self-saving fence,
Cease legalistic labor,
Stop the self-righteous pretense.

He knows the fear deep inside,
He hears every secret thought.
It's foolish trying to hide
Or steal what's already bought!!!

You're free from the prison cell.
Satan drools over you for naught.
Christ died, sheep to free from hell:
Not just wanted...you are sought!

"Love your neighbor as yourself!"
We shun the lesson He taught.
Hide on the back of the shelf?
We're freest when we are caught!

The Spirit's presence is real;
Christ in you: hope of glory!
No matter what you may feel,
Not self,
Let His love write your story.



Abiding in the Vine?

If the branch is not attached
Drawing Life Flow from the Vine,
What fruit will it fabricate
Then to duplicate Divine?

Can we spurn the Sap of Life
And appreciate Life's worth?
Not straining out spurts of "good,"
Enjoying Love's natural birth!

If the branch is firm attached,
Communion never ceasing,
Then the nature of the fruit
Will ever be increasing.

In Knowledge of God growing,
Transformation of the mind,
Character reformation,
Humbly giving, patient, kind.

Strong impact in our witness,
Having power over sin,
Secure in hope of heaven,
Holy Spirit full - within!



Call It What It Is!

We wonder in the wilderness of I, myself, and me.
Who can find the murderer in this self-wrought mystery?
How long will we proudly stumble through this ego-centric waste?
Self-tortured, self-trapped in chains
of smell, sight, sound, touch and taste.
With a mask of "self-justified" we hide the filth within.
Call our mess anything you like...but just don't call it sin!



Mary

You look down upon the glaring reality:
Your mortal flesh has birthed Immortality
Proving God's Word can do anything He wants Him to.
And you're still not sure what you're supposed to do.
Should you bow and cry or stand and shout?
Poor Joseph certainly hasn't figured it out.
But, there He lays, wrapped in cloth and mystery:
A feeding trough cupping monumental history!
Do you feel a crisis now? Do you question your worth?
Gazing at pure Miracle, stained with His afterbirth?
How will you raise God's Child in a way that pleases Him?
How can you rear Perfection when you are stained with sin?
Fear not dear Mary, from your worries you can cease!
For you have given birth to your Savior - Yeshua, Prince of Peace!



A Prayer for Only the Lord Knows Who

Dad,

Please accept my paltry praise:
You are so very kind and patient
It is extremely easy for me to take You for granted
To take advantage of Your provisions

and

Waste the life You have given me
On petty pleasures and mental laziness.

I thank You with all I can muster
For not abandoning me
In favor of more productive children...

...and more obedient children.

You are so merciful!
You are so tender!
You are so affectionate!
You are so forgiving!
You are so generous!
You are so faithful!
You are so understanding!
You are so wise!
You are so kind!
You are so patient!
You are so lowly!
You are so gentle!
You are so humble!
You are so honest!
You are so holy!
You are so just!
You are so strong!
You are so self-controlled!

You are so loving!
You are so creative!
You are so meek!
You are so pure!
You are so morally excellent!

Daddy...
I want to be like You!

Love,
[Your Name Here]

Amen.



You Say I Have No Choices?

A few years ago I attended a meeting related to care facility work, and the young speaker made the comment that she had no intention of ever living in a nursing home. Her reasoning was that all of a person's choices are taken away when they go through the doors of the facility.

At that moment, a vision burst into my mind of so many of the nursing home residents whom I have come to know and love in the course of the ministry God has allowed me to share in. They feel all of their losses deeply, but they maintain their high character and grace, even in the worst of circumstances. Invariably, I find that their strength lies in the many years they have labored faithfully for the Lord.

As the speaker made her point, the first few lines of this poem began to flow in my mind. While she continued her speech, I quickly penned this poem to honor these sweet, faithful Christians.

It is the cry of my heart to see many more from the Christian community take up this opportunity and do their part to encourage and strengthen the hands of these precious saints now living in care facilities, often forgotten by the religious public.

I don't set my own alarm clock,
Haven't seen it for many days.
The open curtain at my window
Lets in unwanted rays.
I guess my roommate is a sweetie
But she sure does have her ways.
I've forgotten my dear home address:
Good memories now a haze.
A lotta neat people pop in to visit
But no one ever stays.
No need to fuss about the noise at night,
I found it never pays;
And the rigmarole to get my prune juice
Is a daily, tangled maze.

Oh yes! I let go of many things:
Choices...and control of my own fate!
But there's choices I won't surrender
In this lonely, forgotten state:

I'll pray for the crying souls at night:
While nurses struggle I can do my part.
What I lack in bodily strength now,
I'll make up in prayers from my heart.
When my children call, I'll make small talk
When they don't have much to say;
I'll make them laugh and giggle;
I'll understand when they cannot stay.
I'll choose to keep my patience
When the shower is too cold.
I'll not complain or grumble
When the burger's three days old.
I'll talk to poor Miss Sally in the hall
Though she never talks to me.
I'll wait with a real sweet smile for that nurse
Who comes so grudgingly.

And, so don't you see.....?

I still have my choices!
This power you cannot take.
My attitude is still mine to mold...
And I'll mold it for Heaven's Sake!



Only in the Sweet Abyss

All the past,
With all it's conglomeration of memories and experiences
Like enmeshed vapor trails in the sky,
Like sand castles washing away in the surf,
Like scars marking memories of a lot of bloody pain and danger,
Like a breathless dog exhausted chasing his just-out-of-reach tail,
Like recurring dreams about passing the point of no return....

I mean ALL of the past:
What we think is good,
What we think is bad,
What we think is important,
What we think is insignificant;

and

All the future,
With all it's jumbled expectations
Like buckets of sweet morsels in the candy store nagging at our
insatiable appetite,
Like proposing to tight-rope over Niagara on a wet noodle,
Like volunteering for first flute but not knowing which end to blow,
Like buying a pair of very expensive shoes that we can't try on first,
Like planning to go to a bully's birthday party without a present....

I mean ALL of the future:
What we look forward to,
What we dread,
What we think we can control,
What we know we have no control over;

All of it has meaning, worth, and good fruit

RIGHT NOW

ONLY in the Sweet Abyss
Of the endless
love of God.



A Willing Sacrifice

"Whenever the Holy Ghost sees a chance of glorifying Jesus, He will take your heart, your nerves, your whole personality, and simply make you blaze and glow with devotion to Jesus Christ." [Oswald Chambers, **My Utmost for His Highest**, July 2nd selection.]

Precious, loving Intimacy of Life
Flood me with your Peace!
Wash me of my foolish strife;
Cause my screaming lusts to cease.

Take me, drag me thru the tomb of Your correction;
Let me see the price you paid.
Bring me to the gleaming hope - The Resurrection:
A new creation You have made!

Fill me with the New Life of Your Sweet Affection!
Let my being, on Your altar, lovingly laid,
Be a service of glad, constant, willing action:
In labor - diligent, in trials - staid.

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be
acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer.
(Psalms 19:14)

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you
present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is
your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1)



Calling Falling on Leavened Ears

"My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?"
Hear my cry, oh God. Attend unto my plea!
He was wounded for OUR sin, you see!
He was bruised for OUR iniquity!

On the edge of the crowd at the Cross we stand quietly
And way off in the far, far distance, you and me,
Can barely hear His still, small prophecy:
"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisee!"

hear our prayer Oh Lord
even rote and mundane mumblings
of the frivolous and bored
hear our prayer Oh Lord
even selfish ego rumblings
of the fatly over-stored
hear our prayer Oh Lord
even childish fitful stumblings
of the fully immatured
hear our prayer Oh Lord
even numbness to your humblings
of the hard-to-be-restored
hear our prayer Oh Lord
even silly sing-song fumblings
of the ones in Sin Sea moored
hear our prayer Oh Lord
even dry lifeless crumblings
of the ones the beast has gored
hear our prayer Oh Lord
even foolish dumb bumblings
of the lashed by satan's sword
hear our prayer Oh Lord
even babbled pitied jumblings
of the drunken bottle poured
hear our prayer Oh Lord
even meteoric grumblings
of the walled in and undoored

hear our prayer Oh Lord
even incoherent tumblings
of the parachuteless cord
hear our prayer Oh Lord
even ethered coma numblings
of the windless sail unoared
Hear our Prayer Oh Lord
even gatherings of the dumblings
of the crowd wholly unaccord

God loved the world this way: He gave His Son for YOU!
"Father forgive them for they know not what they do!"
Who hath believed our report? Pray, tell me, WHO?
"Love Me in word AND by the deeds you do."
"Traditions of men, make the Word of God of no effect." 'Tis True!
Nominalism and Materialism are nasty earplugs, too.
Beware of the leaven of the religionists...in you!



He Did Not

He did not ignore our debt
He did not condemn us for our debt
He did not lie to Himself about our debt
He did not desert us because we owed Him a debt
He did not require us to pay anything to cover our debt
He did not consider our debt to be too expensive for Him to pay it
He did not consider what we deserve to outweigh His interest in us
He saved us
He forgave us
He died for us
He justified us
He sanctified us
He did not forget us.

The only One
Good enough
Perfect enough
Pure enough
Righteous enough
To point a finger at us
and condemn us
Did not condemn us

He died for us!



All Who Truly Know Thee

Your joys bubble in the heart
Like stars sparkling in the sky;
Your peace gently rolls o'er us
Like white clouds billowing by;

Your hope gives strength in weakness
Like the sun gives light to day;
Your life quickens our spirit
Like mother's milk to her stray;

Your precious presence comforts
Like fire on a frozen night;
Your gentleness astounds us
Like the blind receiving sight;

Your love revives our parched soul
Like rain to drought stricken tree:
These are heavenly riches
To all who truly know Thee.



A Note From the Author

The pilgrimage of my life with Christ began some 70 years ago. I met Jesus personally about three weeks prior to my seventh birthday. My memories of the next 22 years are a mixture of very bright but brief moments and very dark days. Trying to make my own way in life without consideration for God's will left me eventually with a wall of confusion, fear, doubt, guilt and regret separating me from my Savior. I think I had two big handicaps. The first was pride - seems I was born with a chronic case of "TIA" (teenager's ignorant arrogance). The second was a lack of appreciation for God's Grace - both in terms of the price He paid for my redemption and the fruits of communion with the Spirit that He so freely offered for me to enjoy.

In August of 1978, at the age of 29, I was crushed to "discover" that He still loved me and He never left me despite my "running away" from Him. Essentially, in many, many ways, I had to start all over again - like someone waking up from years in a coma.

These poems are one way that I found helpful in putting the lessons of love and life that He teaches in the perspective of the here and now. To me, it is very exciting to go through the process of writing and come out with some lines that kind of hit the nail (even if not exactly on the head)! In fact, many times, my goal in writing is just to see if I can stumble on what it is I'm trying to hit in the first place.

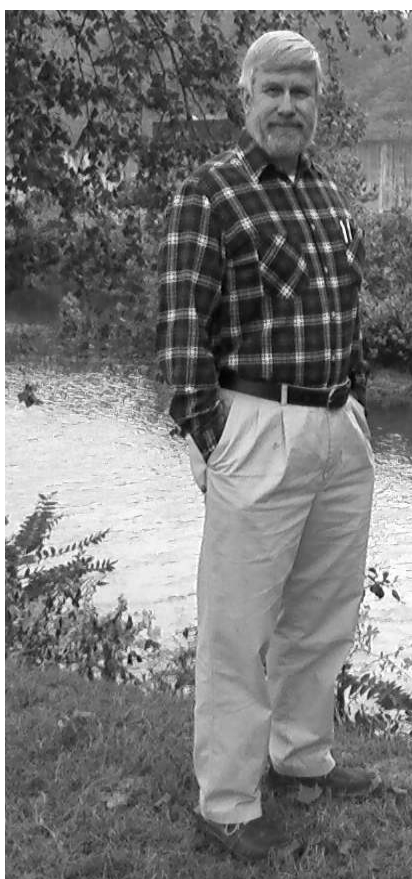
These poems are called "fuzzy reflections" because my understanding of God and His Word, and my discernment of what I hear and see in my spirit are not perfect, to say the least. But I have learned this, the One who gave me ears and eyes (and the inclination to write things down) is most perfect. So, knowing I must lean totally on Father God to make something good come of my efforts here, I humbly ask Him to do just that.

Lastly, I welcome you to enjoy this collection of poems. If you would like more copies, contact us and we will do what we are able. When you have read it, feel free to give it to someone who you think may find it interesting. If you would do that, I would be honored.

Love In Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Gerald T. Johnson", followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

Gerald T. Johnson
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