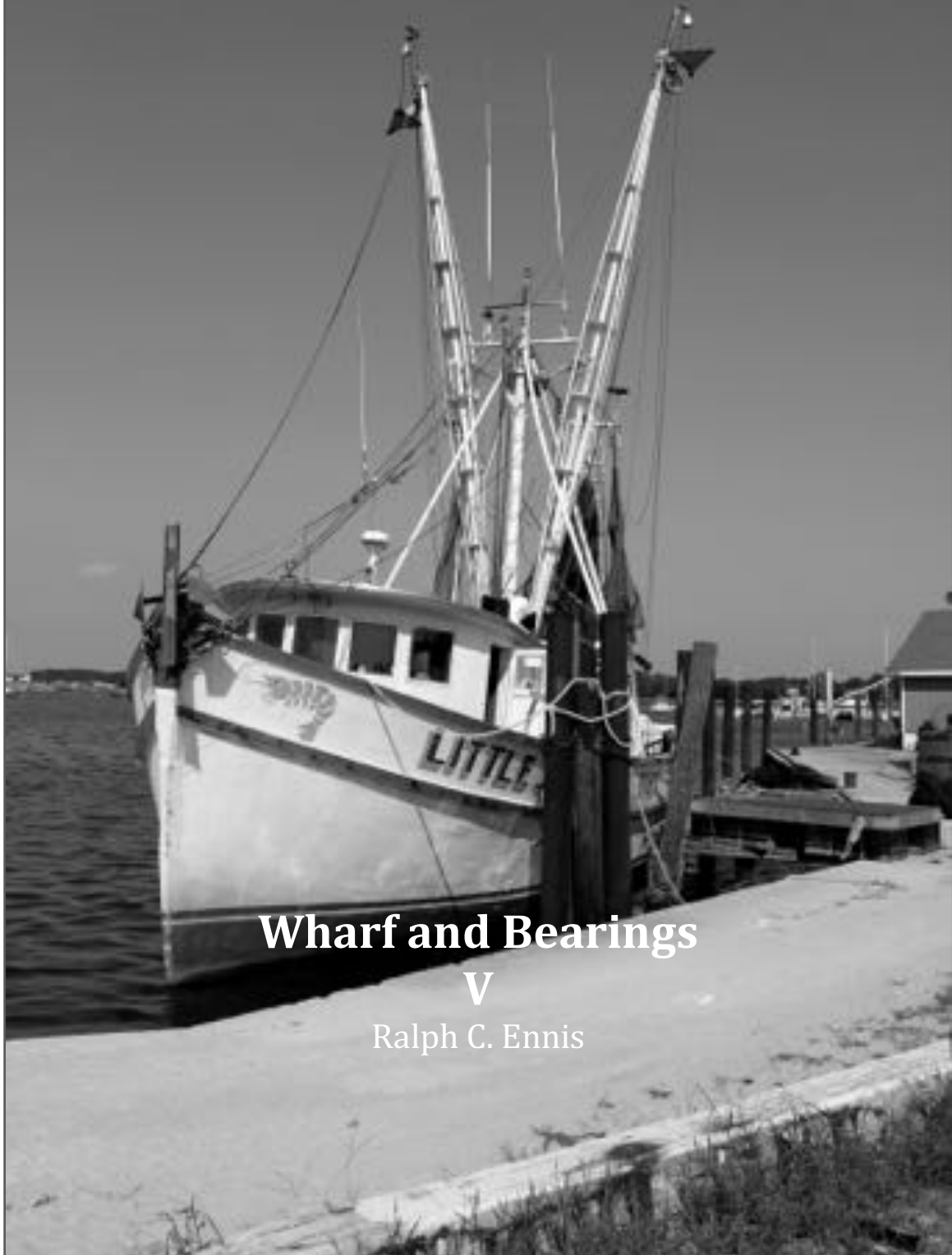


Poems from the Soul



Wharf and Bearings

V

Ralph C. Ennis

Wharf and Bearings V

Poems from the Soul

Ralph C. Ennis

Table of Contents

<u>Introduction to WB Series.....</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Poems to and regarding God.....</u>	<u>7</u>
Embrace Me.....	7
Too Much.....	7
Surrendering to the Lover of My Soul	8
Central	10
Joy	11
Within You Took Me	12
Where Are You?.....	12
Poem to My Father.....	14
Brutal Mercy.....	15
Trust Renewed.....	16
Beauty.....	17
Sovereignty	18
Papa	19
Mystery Questions	19
God in Judgment	19
Seeing Christ	21
And Jesus Wept	22
The Prodigal Father	24
With You Lord	25
Our Wants	25
Original Arrogance	26
B'lieving.....	26
Whelmed; Ratic.....	27
Somewhere	28
Below all That	28
Sacred Mysteries.....	29
<u>Poems regarding Church & Christianity</u>	<u>31</u>
Bride Poem	31
Bride Song	32
Bride Beauty.....	33
Two Brides	34
<u>Poems regarding Self.....</u>	<u>36</u>
Humble Arrogance.....	36
An Ordinary Man	38
Myself	42
Birth: 2010	43
Tempted	44
Isn't It Amazing	46
This Sadness in Me	47
My World.....	50

Soul Cry	51
An Abandoned Body	51
Shame	52
The Invalidated Pains Of A Lost Child	53
One's Peace	58
Beyond.....	60
A Place to Start.....	61
The Grooves	61
This Ugliness	62
Misunderstood.....	62
<u>Miscellaneous Poems</u>	<u>65</u>
The Hope of Hell	65
An American Lament.....	65
Words	66
Love and Hate	67
Deaths.....	67
Lament To Beauty.....	67
Why Outside.....	69
Good-Evil-Sin	70
Language of Condemnation, Mercy and Grace	71
A New Thing.....	72
Youth	75
Economic Crisis.....	75
Healing the Soul	76
Power which Deceiving.....	77
Impressions of Trauma	78
My World.....	79
On Life.....	80
Me & My TV	81
Shock Reality.....	82
Here I sit	83
The Normalcy of Why	83
dysfunctional excellence	84
Groaning with Joy	85
Dying Bodies ... Living Souls	86
Death Life Eternity.....	87
<u>Resources to Explore.....</u>	<u>88</u>
<u>About the Authors</u>	<u>89</u>

Introduction to WB Series

As land dwelling beings, when we are at sea, two thoughts are always in mind—even if in the back of our minds. Where's the wharf—a safe place to dock? What's my bearing—which direction am I going and will it in time get me to a safe wharf?

We all need safe places. Fundamentally, life is filled with uncertainties. Sometimes we feel in control or at minimal risk of danger, but that is always only temporary. Our common human experience inevitably involves risks of the unknown. And through death, not to be feared, we journey to an eternal wharf in Jesus.

We all need a bearing that will get us where we want to go while preserving the ability to plot a course to a safe place. We can play far from this wharf, but we desire home.

Wharf and Bearings Series, a collection of essays, poems and a short story, is intended to present a journey—my journey. I share it with the hope that it will give some guidance as you seek your bearings and wharf throughout your life.

At no time are these essays to be considered exhaustive, they are pathways I have taken to find wharf and bearings for me. And collectively, they represent “philosophical peace” for me.



I dedicate this series to my wife of 40 years (in 2013), our four children and their spouses and our 13+ grandchildren and the generations to follow! Here's an overview of the series:

Wharf and Bearings ONE:
Hope and Beholding the Triune God

Wharf and Bearings TWO:
Spirituality and the Triune God

Wharf and Bearings THREE:
Knowing, Beauty, Ethics and Reality

Wharf and Bearings FOUR:
Love, Longings, Success and Consequences

Wharf and Bearings FIVE:
Poems from the Soul

Wharf and Bearing SIX:
Oneness in Marriage

Wharf and Bearings SEVEN:
The Mind, Decisions and Artificial Intelligence

Wharf and Bearing EIGHT:
World View and Culture

Wharf and Bearing NINE:
Gospel Implications

Wharf and Bearing TEN:
Our Times and Futures

*"... we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power,
and the wonders He has done ..."
Psalm 78:4 -6*

Poems to and regarding God

Embrace Me

Embraced by God
 requires I trust Him
to fully experience
 His pleasure and pain in me.

Embraced by God
 Who has made me
And purchased me by
 His Son.

My heart must melt -
 it fears pain.
Trauma of loss has
 instilled a
Response of impending
 terror.

Lord free me from
 fear
This day I request.
I cannot free
 myself.

Embrace me and warm
 my numb heart
Which fears to feel
 You and all
 else.

4/11/93

Too Much

Contained within a universe
For now trapped on a tiny planet
I view my four walls with contempt.

My mind grapples for a perch
 far beyond the boundaries
 where clear sight of fluxing creation
 can be viewed.

I've tried my damnedest

I've fallen far short
I cannot comprehend the star distances
I cannot understand light
Nor can anyone of yet tell what
makes up this reality.

I must settle for peace of mind
to view life outward
Content with myself
At peace with an all-powerful God
Who defies definition and
cannot be manipulated.

Lord, I humble myself under Your Being
Exhausted by the effort to comprehend it all
I'm Yours for the doing
I trust in Your love.

Only Your Son's life and prophecy
keeps me in tact.
Now I learn You've allowed
four times the humans to be
conceived and perish before they
see light than those who
taste breathe.
Only in Your justice and love can I
sleep tonight.

11/89

Surrendering to the Lover of My Soul

God is a Person
He loves me
I must relate to Him personally
not propositionally
He is propositionally consistent
but I must not relate to Him as I
relate to a proposition
He is a Person, not a concept.

I can seek to master a concept
to understand, control and use
a concept to my advantage.

God is not a concept ... He is a Person
One to be enjoyed
One to be with
One to rely on in
This inhuman struggle with evil
which decimates every human
generation with blood and death.

God, I have not known You

I have heard of You with my ears
I have conceptualized You in my mind

But now You force me to surrender
my control of my concept of God
You force me to look at Your face
and with utter humility worship
You as the Originator of all and the
Master of all.

You are the Originator of personhood
You are uncontrollable by Your
creation.

Life is too big for me to control
And You are infinitely grandeur.

My soul is helpless and needy
And somehow it is difficult
to accept the obvious.

You love me ... You are the grand
lover of my soul
Not because I've earned love
for I haven't
Not because I've sought Your love
for I faintly have.

But because You are a Person and
the Originator of my soul
You have loved me with an
everlasting love.

I surrender my heart to You
I surrender my life to You
Forgive and heal my hesitancy
Bond me to Your Personhood.

You feel my pain
my on going disappointment
and shame in the midst
of a material and fallen world.
Heal me with the joy of Your presence.

Somehow in Your infinite wisdom You've
chosen me to live out life on
this planet. To be born with the
advantage of exposure to Your Word and
Your people.

Somehow in Your infinite love You have allowed
evil to flourish ... to exterminate
countless babies and fetuses. And
yet in Your grace and love You've loved
them and cared for them in Your grace.

Surround me with Your presence
for I am weary
Build me up by Your Spirit.

Oppose me no longer for I
surrender to Your infinite
loving Person ...

And beg forgiveness for
treating You as a bland concept.

11/89

Central

Central to life
Central to sanity
Central to hope
Central to joy
Jesus is central to all.

He is my Lord
But my culture makes
it hard to understand Lord.

God is my Father
But my childhood makes
it hard to understand father.

He is central
That I sense with my being
And my being responds
with joy.

1/3/89

Joy

Inexpressible joy
Joy in the face of immerse pain
Joy that is the stability of my soul.

"The kingdom of God is ... righteousness and
peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

"An though you have not seen Him,
you love Him, and though you
do not see Him now, but believe
in Him, you greatly rejoice with
joy inexpressible and full of glory."

So, little my soul knows of joy
I've not looked out for the
Welfare of this precious
Life flowing emotion.

I've lived with honesty in
response ... allowing my emotions
to react to the daily circumstances
of life.

I've failed to base my joy on
the unchanging circumstances of
eternity ... of God's love for me.

How little I know of His love
In the midst of pain I shame
at the thought of questioning the
desirability of His love.

And yet He keeps coming after me.
"I am my beloved's
And his desire is for me."

Far greater than my love for Him,
He desires me.
Patiently, Lord, please open my
wounded and numbed and hard heart
to receive Your desire to love me
and to embrace You with
inexpressible joy!

12/15/89

Within You Took Me

Lord have mercy
 on me
Forgive the depths of my
 sin.

You have kept my
 hand
From displaying the fullness of my
 anger,
 hatred
 greed and
 lust.

I never knew it was there.
Thanks for revealing it.

Be long-suffering to me.
Be long-suffering to my
 brothers and sisters.

Lord, You have made me
 face my deepest fears
 to see the extent of my
 utter dependency and
 helplessness.

You have forced me to
 embrace the truth
I can do nothing on my
 own - I'm totally
 dependent.

Such an obvious truth.
Such a painful truth
 to the proud and arrogant
Yet comforting for the afflicted.

Thanks for Your mercy
 delivered in pain.
Now I can live without knowing
 that which is within has and
 will be faced in deepening spirals.

Where Are You?

Where can I go from You Lord?
 Where does the Christian world
 Demonstrate to me
 that You aren't there?

If I go up to the heavens,
 You are there.
If I go into the mission field,
 You are there.
If I go to the marketplace,
 You are there in theory.
If I go to church meeting,
 You hang out there.

But I've found the place,
 to hide where You would go!
If I go into my bedroom
 and close the door
 and begin passionately embracing
 my wife with the fullness
 of our souls and bodies,
Then at best You are distant
 and condoning
At worst You are distant
 and condemning our strong lust.

Your omnipresence is in question
 in the turbulent heat of
 sexual passion.

Where are You to be found?

Are You in bed with us?
 If not, why not?
If so, what are You doing there?
Can intimacy with God and
 sexual pleasure intimacy
 with my mate blend together?

8/93

Poem to My Father

Father
I have missed the
nature of mercy-intimacy
too long.

Conceit blinded my
need for mercy.
Arrogance heightened my
Desire for grace.
Grace is needed
to live as I longed for.
Mercy was unperceived.
Grace was a blessing
bestowed on one in need
and implicitly worthy of
grace.
Mercy goes only to the unworthy -
to the condemned.
Man's mercy with implied
distance
shielded me from the pinnacle of
Your mercy offered with intimacy.
We
Christians preach
only a gospel of
grace.

When a man stands
before a human judge -
When a man stands condemned
before one judging humanly -
When a man stands
naked by the truth of his accusers -
seldom is mercy without condemnation
extended
never is mercy with intimacy offered.

No judge
No accuser
has ever offered
mercy
to the justly condemned man
and
invited him into his
home to become
friend to his
daughter and wife and himself.
That would be
mercy-intimacy.
It is unheard of.
There are no human
categories for such.

It would be
naive at the least,
down right stupid or
insane at the most -
or cruel to those within the family.

Lord,
You offer me mercy-intimacy.
I praise You
and stand in awe and humility
of such an
undeserved gift.

July 7, 1997

Brutal Mercy

God
exposes
human need for mercy
throughout the planet,
over the millenniums.

The great
gift of
sexual intimacy longings
rawly does the trick.

Honest sexuality
daily exposes
our shame,
our self-righteousness,
our powerlessness,
our condemnation.

Left with such
brutal realities
we can run
we can deny
we can blame
we can surrender
to mercy-intimacy
offered only
by Jesus
Who is in a position
to reject
to abandon
to condemn
but rather
prays for us,
extends his mercy to us,

inhabits our raw scream-spaces.

Such is
the nature of
brutal mercy -
without which
we would suffer
brutal justice
before a
holy and righteous God.

Trust Renewed

Trust strained
can rob the
soul.
Trust broken
can
despair the
mind.
Trust given to another
can destroy
the first love
intimacy
privileges
and nakedly
expose shame
conceit
and powerlessness.

Trust renewed
is an act of
humiliation embraced
conceit destroyed
shame exposed.
Trust renewed
is an act of
trust.

Embracing the undeserved
nature of trusting for intimacy
is a harsh reality
where only God's
mercy-intimacy can
sustain.

I choose to trust you.
I choose to believe you.
I choose to sort the lies of destruction.
I choose to see God's mercy to you and me
to us.

Beauty

To perceive that you might love me
is a life time of doubt
To feel your love for me is
an eternity of joy
It's beauty that joins the
two -
The beauty of your holiness

I am not interested in the
language of the Hebrews
or the Greek or the
Americans, Chinese or Russians.
I'm interested in the language of God
to hear His thoughts
to feel His feelings
to know His love for me.
Spirit of Holiness reveal Your beauty
and open my heart to
receive and
calm my fears so I may
live in humility and peace.

Sovereignty

We the people
of this sovereign
state of humanity
Do declare we have
inalienable rights
to act shamelessly
and call it courage
to act lustfully
and call it pure love
to demand
while demanding
to lavish wealth
while neglecting
a robbed poor
to require poverty
for our souls.

Jesus,
the Perfect Man
the Mighty God
the Prince of Peace
the Wonderful Counselor
the King of Kings -

Come change all of
this and show
Your sovereignty with
the state of humanity!

Papa

Papa
I see you
Papa
you don't look at me
Papa
you don't play with me
Papa
you do what I want
Papa
you only hold your bottle

And Mama
you work
And I cry inside.
Is something wrong?
Is it me?

God they call you
Father.
But what is that
to me?

Mystery Questions

Job asked why and got a
whirlwind
another asked why and was
stricken dumb
Mary asked why and
got an answer.

I have a question too -
why?

God in Judgment

You know what I'd like to do
around our tea and coke
late one night with
friends like you?

I'd like to turn the table...
It's time I feel no guilt no shame no sin
but only just anger.

Sure I've sinned but
I did not create the sinners
Sure I'm guilty but

I didn't speak the law
Sure I'm shameful but
I didn't form the whip of shame.

You God have done it all
You created beauty with chaos and
cruel nature with peaceful lakes.
You made man or
evolved him or
whatever but
man is brutal and cruel and hopeful -
That's a reflection on you.

Can not the judged once judge the Judger?
Are you without responsibility for this mess.
The screams of generations sound from
shallow graves.
And do you feel no shame no guilt no sin
no pain, but only rage?
Has this experience of yours really been worth it?

I rage at you. Will you respond?
Or in silence condemn my soul for
all I say is true of you?
What answer would satisfy my pierced decaying heart?

Only the sheer power of universes
colliding can persuade me you're still in control
as if you clapped you hands.
But then this show of force would
terrorize my soul and solidify my heart.
Maybe a more dramatic, less frightening show of
force would do - like the bringing to
life of the dead - such power is true might!

Only in the eyes of a child do I
see the hope of a world gone away
can you pierce my cold heart with
such innocence of hope?

Only in true love can I
admire your
love which is good
which is forever
which never fails
which nourishes my soul
Do you have such love?
Or are you as I feel and reason.

Only in true freedom can I
experience the god of my imaginations
but I am not free...
Are you then imaginary?

Jesus

you came as an innocent child
Jesus
you rose from the dead
Jesus
you nourish my soul with your words
Jesus
you offer to free me too.

But can I trust you...
If not I judge you.

So then I can choose to be
a slave and a judge
or a freedman - loved and worshipping You.

The question remains
does the God of reality and
the God of my most hopeful
imagination have anything in common?

Jesus please tell me so and
then break open my jail.

Seeing Christ

Come Holy Spirit
Indwell our union
Make us one
So we might experience
A taste of love-bond
As Jesus with
His Bride the church.

Fill our land with
Such powerful unions.
May the world stand
In awe of what
You can do within
A singular bonding of the sexes.

Draw them to Yourself
As they are confronted
With the solution to
Their deepest longings.

May they see Christ in us
The hope of glory,
The Author of faith,
The very manifestation of love.

2/22/93

And Jesus Wept

I stooped low in shame and fear
of His majesty
While my deceived world denied His glory.
And He raised my quivering head
with tenderness.

I learned to respect His
beauty carved in the
tentacles of the heavens and
the appeal of the human
female.

And yet I fear Him.
My dislike for His tolerance
of human evil
bears seeds of
resentment and bitterness.
And still I fail to see
the depths of His love.

To the King I bow in respect and fear and terror
and fail to obey Him
for my bitterness and stubbornness.
In His Majesty I seek my honor till death
and still I missed His grieving eyes.

Grieving not for my failure to push
out the boundaries of His kingdom
But by my clinging to shame
which protected me from
the terror of intimacy - the embrace of my soul
By the One Who could absorb me into oneness.

I have failed to receive His embrace
for fear of losing
my separateness.
Such a fear
decades of His gentleness
with pain
finally revealed.

What folly within the heart of man!
The One Who endured
the pain of creation gone awry.
The One Who in kindness leads people
to repentance through delayed justice
And respected the separateness of Satan himself.
Would He obliterate my will, my uniqueness, my separate integrity
in His saving act?

As I feel the pains of Jesus
 my terror defenses are slowly subsiding
So that I may receive
 the Father's loving arms around me
And the Spirit's filling presence
 within me but not absorbing me
As we weep and rejoice together
 over our losses and gains.

Jesus loves me and He wept.

May 27, 1993 RCE

The Prodigal Father

A rich father with two sons was filled with passion to conquer his new world. In greed he could not wait for his sons to bear children to help fulfill his dream.

This man looked across the lake and saw a father with many sons and daughters. So he slew the father and interned his children. All this he justified by the nobility of his dream and his perceived ignobility of the other family.

This dream grew and so did his injustice. The dead man's children were humiliated, shamed - sexually, emotionally and physically.

Other rich men resented his arrogance and injustice. And in the name of their dreams came and dismantled the rich father's dream. An grave injustices were done to his household - but nothing compared to his own injustice.

But a peculiar thing happened. Shame never worked its power of healing.

The rich man died. His sons grew old and their sons grew old. And not one of them embraced the shame of the prodigal father. The dream lived on and took other power turns. And self-righteousness lived on and flourished.

The poor man's children also multiplied in numbers and the boldness of their bitterness. Too weak to turn on their offenders, they turned on themselves. Raping, abandoning, drugging, and murdering each other to purge the bitter pent-up anger of their fore fathers.

How long O Lord will the rich man's deception live? How long O Lord will the poor man's bitterness devour his body?

I call my white brothers and sisters in Christ to embrace the shame and sin of their heritage. Hide no more behind the glory of the South or the "we were dealt unjustly by Sherman and the carpetbaggers" mentality. Embrace the shame of your fore fathers - it is our shame.

Humble yourselves before the living God Who will judge us individually and as a group. And let's humbly unite to ask forgiveness from our fellow humans created in the image of God - our black brothers and sisters. Their anger and rage at our self-righteous deception is justified.

But their bitterness before God is not justified. I call my black brothers and sisters in Christ to embrace the God of compassion Who has saved you from hell by His Son's brutal death and by His power to raise dead flesh to life.

Humble yourselves before God Who has promised to forgive you if you forgive others. Your anger is justified but sin not. I call you black men to stop pillaging your society with irresponsible sex, abandoning your children, drug abuse and violence. Your identity is much higher than that. Fully embrace your identity as a creature in God's image.

I call my white brothers to embrace their black brothers and sisters and weep together and heal together in churches. Remember God desire setting things right with an offended brother more important than worshipping in beautiful church buildings.

Now who will go first? There is only one right answer. Both should go first. And if the other doesn't follow that is his choice and to his harm. The stakes are high. Forgiveness and restitution is the answer. It must start in our churches and spread to the streets, malls and work place.

1993

With You Lord

Your delight in me & us
Your trust in me & us
Your daily loving mercies and tolerance to me & us
Your jealous passions for me & us
Your plan for me & us in this world and the next
Your people gifts to me and us
Your calling and drawing me and us as a Father, Lover, Friend, Savior
Your life for and to me and us
Your power to me and us
Your beautiful holiness and glory exposed to me.
Your peace and joy to me and us
Your protecting and providing authority surrounding me and us
Your Spirit in me and us
Your universe gift to us all
Your Son in me and us and His gloriousness
Your spiritual gifts to me and us
Your revelations to me and us (special in Scripture, general and special to me)

November, 1999

Our Wants

Do You want me to
live, or
to die?
Do You want me to
die living
Do You want me to
live dying?
Do You want me to
live dying to live?
Are my wants Your wants?
Are Your wants my wants?
Who is trusting who?

December 1, 2004

Original Arrogance

Father, You
Created me –
Not me You.

You validate
My existence –
Not me You.

Then why do I
Complain as
Though I
Understand?

Forgive my
Original arrogance
And envy
While I learn to
Celebrate the
Beauty of Your image
In free will and
Goodness.

May 26, 2005

B'lieving

Hain't got time for b'lieving
Just enough time for the doing.
Win that, bank this, use them up –
I hain't got no need for
B'lieving.

Been there done that
Here and now
Everywhere I do
Is how
I hain't got no need for
B'lieving.

Bliss and wants and lusts
And laughs – no need
For me to live
Without –
Till my world toss
Me upside down.

Coming down it's quite the view

Seeing shoes prints on
My face and stuff.

I hain't got no time for
B'lieving ... no need for b'lieving
Till my world toss
Me upside down.

Laying low and thinking hard
Life ... it like the ocean depths
Hain't got no one nor a
Compass seeing north
I hain't got but time for
B'lieving.

March 2011

Whelmed; Ratic

Such interesting truncated words
 whelmed; ratic.

To be whelmed as in
 overwhelmed
Implies possible
 underwhelming occurrences.

What is overwhelming is
 mercy and perfection.
Underwhelming then must be
 an abundance of the unmerciful;
 an ugliness of imperfection?

To be ratic as in
 erratic
Might that imply a
 proratic.

What is erratic is
 my soul's responses to mercy and perfection.
Proratic must then be
 A positive, consistent openness
 A beauty of regularity without conformity.

If so ...

I am ratic-whelmed
by the Triune God.

September 28, 2010

Somewhere

somewhere in the scope of things
my heart and soul join to form
a defragmented union in peace
that weathers the ravages inside and out
only somewhere is now and now is in Him

June 25, 2012

Below all That

I-We say we need food, air, water
To exist today, tomorrow, this year
And we do at one level

I-We say we need beauty, sex, bonding
For pleasure, love and continuation
And we do at one level

I-We say we need cars, planes, trains, ships
For mobility, adventure and exchange of good
And we do at one level

I-We say we need money, jewels, debt
For stuff, beauty, and security
And at one level we do

I-We say we need power, authority and a name
For impacting, ruling and identity
And at one level we do

I-We say we need hope, peace, and joy
To tolerate the uncertainty, boredom and chaos
And at one level we do

I-We say we need binaries, dot.coms, clouds
To program, store and retrieve
And we modern humans do

I-We say we need sunlight, the light of truth and symbolic link between these
To bring purpose, direction and transcendent meanings
And we, at one level of our humanness, do

Yet at that level all needs
Are just desires

Below all that
We all need only You—the Triune God of Eternity
For ‘Your love is better than life itself’

To discern desires from needs
With our minds and hearts and wills
That is a life-time journey of faith, hope and love!

August 12, 2012
RCE

Sacred Mysteries

If a measure of
a man is
to receive back
love for
love given
through initiating
forward
then
I am a man

If a measure of
a man is
to receive
love from
Mercy’s hand
then
I am man

If a measure of
a man is
to give and receive and uninhibit
mysterious love
in unison between
my Lord and my wife

then

I am too a man ...

Before

I work out
to explore the
boundaries of an
aiMind and
prophetic leadership
in an exiling world

Come join me

as we go
in parallel and in union.

October 2010

Poems regarding Church & Christianity

Bride Poem

She's loved though
she plays the whore-bride
Lost in the power of her
own fading beauty.

Little does she see
the nature of undeserved love
Blank to perceive her flawedness
Yet all her actions tell the truth
of destruction.

The soul has a wrapping
of fleshy appearance
to play out the heart beat
of inner desires.

A whore-bride longs deeply
for loving caresses
to know she deserved
what she knows is not true.

Soul sensitivity exchanged for
shameless sensuality
never removes shame's stain
on the inner soul.

Holiness is a lost concept
to a whore-brides yearning.
Beauty corrupted by
the power to self-deceive.

Whoring brings a comfort
of authenticity.
Of knowing one's real
and alive.

Self-righteousness
stinks and soul-wholeness
is beyond reach.
So sensual pursuit is relief.

Yet a bride
she is meant to be.

Jesus
sees her arrogant agony -
her soul destruction

by fleshly delights
twisted by self power
and fading beauty.

He draws her as
lovingly as a pure bride.
His power to transform
seems small to
his love which pours out
such undeserved love.

Bride Song

(OF MADONNA)

Jesus
come rescue me
I've played the whore
I know the ways of the sensual world.

I cower at you
standing, peering
delighting to see my soul.

But I'm unclean, undone
distorted and flawed.
I've corrupted beauty, power and truth
exposing my desperate, shameless heart.

Come Jesus
Make me your pure bride
Make my soul race
at Your undeserved love.

(OF AMY GRANT)

Jesus
come rescue me
I've played the bride
I know the pursuit of undeserved love.

I feel you
standing, peering
delighting at what you see.

But I'm unclean, undone
distorted and flawed.
I've sought beauty, power and truth
and exposed my longing, shameful heart.

Come Jesus
Make me your pure bride
Make my soul race
at Your undeserved love.

(OF BOTH)
Only one lover can touch my
soul-sexual shape within.
Only one lover will heal.
His name is Jesus
whom I don't deserve.

Come Jesus
Make me your pure bride
Make my soul race
to Your holy love.

I exchange my other loves and pursuits
for the love-worship of You.

Bride Beauty

She's loved though
she plays the whore-bride
Lost in the power of her
own fading beauty.

Little does she see
the nature of undeserved love
Blank to perceive her flawedness
Yet all her actions tell the truth
of destruction.

The soul has a wrapping
of fleshy appearance
to play out the heart beat
of inner desires.

A whore-bride longs deeply
for loving caresses
to know she deserved
what she knows is not true.

Soul sensitivity exchanged for
shameless sensuality
never removes shame's stain
on the inner soul.

Holiness is a lost concept
to a whore-bride's yearning.
Beauty corrupted by
the power to self-deceive.

Whoring brings a comfort
of authenticity.
Of knowing one's real
and alive.

Self-righteousness
stinks and soul-wholeness
is beyond reach.
So sensual pursuit is relief.

Yet a bride
she is meant to be.

Jesus
sees her arrogant agony -
her soul destruction
by fleshly delights
twisted by self power
and fading beauty.

He draws her as
a pure and beautiful bride.
His power to transform to beauty
seems small to
His love which pours out
such undeserved passion.

Two Brides

BRIDE ONE
Jesus
come rescue me
I've played the whore
I know the ways of the sensual world.

I cower at you
standing, peering
delighting to see my soul.

But I'm unclean, undone
distorted and flawed.
I've corrupted beauty, power and truth
exposing my desperate, shameless heart.

Come Jesus
Make me your pure bride

Make my soul race
at Your undeserved love.

BRIDE TWO

Jesus
come rescue me
I've played the self-righteous bride
I know the pursuit of deserved love.

I feel you
standing, peering
delighting at what you see.

But I'm now unclean, undone
distorted and flawed.
I've sought beauty, power and truth
and exposed my longing, shameful heart.

Come Jesus
Make me your pure bride
Make my soul race
at Your undeserved love.

TOGETHER

Only one lover can touch my
soul-sexual shape within.
Only one lover will heal.
His name is Jesus
whom I don't deserve.

Come Jesus
Make me your pure bride
Make my soul race
to Your holy love.

I exchange my other loves and pursuits
for the love-worship of You.

Poems regarding Self

Humble Arrogance

Ascribing the arrogance to
myself
to believe I can touch the
heart of God
can only be achieved with
the innocence of a child
or the shame ridden remains
of a convicted one
freed by God's mercy and invited – no carried –
into the presence of the Holy One by His delight.

This latter I attain to for
I am a freedman – an alive man –
deserving the brutal punishment by which
my own heart condemns me –
when I dare to look
which dead and alive men and I seldom will to do.

But Jesus frees and enlivens and transforms my
very being!
Once a dead alien to God, now a free child
adopted from deserved alienation.
A child learner – under the
tutelage of my Maker
much in need of a transformed heart and mind.

A child servant to a
Sovereign Lord of love
Who knows that only through
submission to the ways of love and mercy
will I grasp the goodness
and peace my soul longs for.

I am a child warrior and ambassador –
a representative of His power and justice –
a defender from evil –
a co-participator in the plans of God.

I've grown to embrace the co-regent
status afforded the first parents.
Rulers to care, nurture, explore
the glory of God in the universal playground.

Yet my heart was re-made for far more –
to be embraced by a Lover as
a bride and as a best friend –
my true spiritual-sexual-regent identity ignited.

To such levels of arrogance
only God can drag me (or blind pride steal to)
by His unreasonable and immeasurable delight in me –

Such delight – to feel His pleasure
captivated my heart, conquers my
waywardness...

I am His bride and His friend co-ruling in His universe,
warring against evil and representing His merciful presence
with the innocence of a beloved child.

Such arrogance is only tamed by
the humble remembrance of the shameful, slavery
depths within my human nature
which is my lineage.

Come Lord Jesus ... love me deeply as your bride
Show me Your delights!

An Ordinary Man

What have I done?

I have not murdered or dismembered
though I could in a fit
of rage or
the irrationality of fear.

I have not adulterated or romantically deceived
though I am capable of
sexual indiscrimination
when the pains of
loneliness
pierce and twist through
my soul.

I have not sinned
any more than any
ordinary man.

And even if I did these things,
how wrong would
that be?

Others before me have
trodden the route of
dehumanization
for the sake of their
humanity
and the fulfillment of
their lust.

And yet in silent, dark times
upon my bed
as I self-condemn
my judgment of those
whose sins are just as
mine...

I judge their small lies to me
with the torment of a
whirlwind.

I condemn their
inconsiderateness in
friendships
spawned by their own
fears as emotional
betrayal and reject them
before they abandon me.

I show contempt for their
plight to achieve
humaneness while I
struggle inwardly on a
similar endless spiral
fraught with
self-contempt.

I have not brutalized
any man's flesh and yet

with brutal words in
thoughts I have slain
many souls who have
crossed me - only my
powerless fear has
restrained me.

In all I have drowned
my soul by anesthetizing
my pains.

Even still I have sinned
no more than any
ordinary man.

What of these sins I bear?
My weight is not one
of guilt.

Yet deep within my soul,
my passions,
my sinews,
the burdens of shame
pierces daily
with irrational, chaotic
brutality:

For who I am -
For what I do -
For my world around me -
I am shame...
And all others too.
I am an ordinary man
with ordinary shame.

Shame
is burdensome

Shame
is constant

Shame
is my emotionally
honest reality.

I cannot deny it -
for it is true

I must not deny it -
or the final salvage act
against my soul will
be complete at
the wickedness of my
own dehumanized
masculinity.

I will not deny it -
that price is too great even
for me.

I am shame
and so my emotional

integrity takes a final stand against
the death of my humanness.

I am shame
I am waste
I deserve to be unloved
I am unlovable
I deserve to be abandoned.

I would abandon me
yet that act would relieve
my burden and I don't
deserve such deceptive soul-comfort.

My shame
is your shame
Your shame
is mine.
I deserve to feel
deeply the collective
weight of it all -

No act of honor can
free me
No act of dishonor can
bind me more deeply
for I am -
and we are.

Come Holy God
whom I rage against
whom I reject
whom I fear
by whom I get my just
compensation.
Come, validate my shame -
my existence!
Treat me like waste
in your eternal
cycle of butchering
shame with justice -

Butcher me,
only You can give me
my justice!

And in Your presence
before my doom,
Let me hear the words
I long to hear
And so validate my
being and preserve my
integrity for eternity
with Your holy condemnation-
"You deserve all of this

For you truly are unlovable."
And with this merciful benediction
I gain a faint praise for what
my soul so longed for -
a breathe of true humanness.
Thanks -

But what is this I feel -
a warm touch of a hand
upon my shoulder
a strong gentle voice
affirmingly saying -
"I agree,
you are waste
and I will make you
lovable.
"Your integrity is true
you are right
but
I will set you free from
shame, indignity
and clothe you with
soul-beauty beyond
imagination -
you will be lovable
in the presence of holiness -
and honored to the highest degree
- you will be My beloved
child.

"All this I offer you
not because of your
irresponsible integrity
which felt only a fraction
of your true shame -
not because of
restraint of your shame
which could indulged openly
with a portion of its
lust for power limited
only by time.

"All this I offer you
because of My seemingly
irrational choice of
love which conceives of
no boundaries but
for your sake does not
violate your shame with
the demand to be received.

"Come enter in,
enjoy, be free
in Jesus' Name.
Your waste-soul will change

to gold-beauty.
Your waste-body will also
change - in time - through
the gate of death.
So be patient and wait and enjoy Me
and do not forget from where
you have come or to where
you're going
or else sin and shame will
bind you again and
strip you of joy.

"If this be done,
even then know that
the beauty of your soul
will not return to waste.
But a miserable soul
you'll be
smeared with indecent scent.

"Enough - Come!
Enjoy My beauty -
The beauty of holiness -
The beauty of the
 gift Child Jesus
and His glorious ascent!"

Myself

Besieged by uncertainty
 without awareness
My culture has robbed
 my identity
So I quest to be
 real.

Power to control
 defined me
With the stench of
 degrading humanity.

Pleasures that
 explores the depths
Of the soul and
 reveals my aloneness
Are empty wells.

Pain that
 discovers and shapes
My conscience
 uncovers my

Shame.

I can impregnate
but not
Duplicate.
Who am I?

And in all I can
seek the boundaries
Of love and hate which
tears at the
Fabric of my
tears.

My soul and my body
seek the unity
Of oneness -
with a woman.

Such affirmation
of my identity
Is not so strongly
to be found on
This world.
Yet she does not
define me.

I am who
I was made and remade
By my Creator.

To live a
short time in the
Struggle to be real
in a world of consequences.

4/11/93

Birth: 2010

Impaled with despair
Appalled with disgust
I seek more of what I feel not?

Abandoned before knowledge
Adrift in real illusionary space
Every angle a possibility and a dead end?

Fear blends to terror
Anger to rage

How could they?

Grappling in the light
Surrounded within darkness
Honesty demands manifestation?

But to express my horror
My fear, my depression
Is this my only justice?

Inherited hope was an illusion
No reality transcends repeatable space
My cry burst forth to ambivalence?

Stop them all!
Forbid them all!
Kill them all?

No price for justice is too small
My serrated soul mourns aloud
I will find more of what I feel Not?

7/21/92

Tempted

The winds blew strong
in my childhood.

Wants produce desires
Youth and grabbing are synonymous,

Locks, doors ...
all can be pried for
the prize within.

Eyes are opened
to see beauty and pleasures
lust rises to a boil.

All is accomplishable
failure is none
youth has its vantage
till death knocks
next door.

Shattered and shaky

unseen doors shut unnoticed,

Retreat and questions
Why, How, Why, How?

Youth turns to manhood
ever so slowly,

Questions and answers
Rise and fall together,

Manhood to mid-age
surprises the boy,

Old problems
New tricks loom every side.

Answers and answers
ring in my head,
Others now question
Questions now answered,

Uncertainty yield quite
surely to certainty
error seem less a possibility,
Now lurking very deadly
that serpent of pride.

Eyes are not dim yet
Feelings have blossomed
Some drives diminishing
Others full bore,

Manhood is shaky
Basis now waning
Pride demands proving.

Hard work has prospered
Locked doors now open
Prizes are all around
Demanding more room.

Why now the storm!

Meaning is in judgment
Faith is in truth,

No hope of turning
Leads to despair,

Creation's power alone
My hope I'm trusting,

Come Holy Spirit
Work in my heart!

Summer, 1987

Isn't It Amazing

Isn't it amazing
to look in a mirror
There I stand a wonderful and
glorious being
Rotting and decaying before my
very eyes.

Isn't it amazing
to see with finite eyes
The eternal being before me
encased in a temporal clothe.

I am that glorious being
standing upright and strong
I am a marvelous re-creation
adorned by love and mercy.

Startled I jump back
from my mirror
as I see anew the
sight before me.

I see the bright light
of the One I'm reflecting
for He has given me life.

Infinitely more glorious than myself
and not a bit decaying
So bright and wonderful His being.

How long I missed His presence
before me.
I'm saddened and shamed by me
lack of sight.

Isn't He amazing!

Now joy and delight fill
my being as I focus
on the Creator.
No more need to focus on
my reflection when

now I see His
glory vaguely.

11/89

This Sadness in Me

Often I look out and
 see people grouping
They talk and walk and
 find places to fit.

Oh, no they don't feel
 kinship but
At lest they talk
 about the same things.

Seldom do I find
 someone who feels
And thinks intuitively.

Seldom do I find
 someone who reflects
And integrates and seeks
 what is not evident.

If only I could
 control the loneliness
If only I could
 avoid the poverty
If only I didn't
 need others so badly
Then this sadness would
 change to contentment.

I need Someone to tell
 me what to concentrate on
Someone to insure I'm paid
 for my work
Someone who cares and
 understands me.

I have tried hard
 not to need someone
But it drains me to the core
I'm left a shipwreck
 wandering stranger
in an overpopulated world.

Some have tried to guide me
but their boxes are too tight.

I've surrendered to their forms before
and made a living thereby
But in the process something died
deep within my core.

Now my energy is spent
I can't juggle all the balls
If I play what's in me
I can't support the horde.

And if I play their restrictive tune
what's left of this measly life
Just flows out and so I
collapse ... a shell without its soul.

Can this dilemma be beat or
shall I surrender my heart
Broken and bleeding ...
This sadness within is deep.

I've given my life to learn life
its depth, its breath, its love
I've tried to balance these factors
to describe a foundation
to live a foundation
So that the next generation can build on.

What's life, what's death, why live
Why die ... are just some
basic questions.
Now how do I go on from here.

Much can be done to write and
explore this core for all men's soul
But without the support of kinship
and money I must desert my soul.

Must I build my little house on
this foundation to support my crew
While failing to expand and deepen the
foundations for many others to
build much more majestically than I do.

My dilemma is clear
My responsibility is sure
I must support my family
Or I've discredited the
truth of the foundation.

Maybe someday I'll look back
and say all my scratching was worth it
But from this point as I look forward

my soul is sick at the thought of a buck.

May this sadness within me not
discredit the foundation.
My soul still jumps with joy at each
brick that is laid in that hole.

The foundations of others are crumbling
the generation to come has none
I cry as a man with a developing
message but no support
for my family in hand.

I can't sacrifice my family for
this need
That would discredit the work
that is done.

So I'm left to a living death
of a kind
To build a small structure for
crude money
Instead of digging a giant foundation
for a generation to come.

This sadness in me is real.
I fight ... I've fought but
But now I've about succumbed
My heart splits open
I've cried many times.

Is it now surrender time ...
Do I bury my talents that are useful
Or do I fight some more.

Do I lay down heart and
give all my energy to provide money
for this crew of mine.
Yes I choose my family – I love them
over this life of mine.

May what I've done somehow be
planted and yield multitudes of fruit
I pray God will honor as I bury
this personhood of mine.

9/89

My World

Laced with beauty
 deceptive and corrupted
This world of mine keeps
 floating by ...
Aimless and pointless yet
 conveyor belt style.

Good is longed for
 evil is craved
Circumvent the planet
 to find any more.

Small as specks of dust
 Lost in a sea of foam
It's beauty is unsurpassed
 It's pain has gone on too long.

Much more than particles
Much more than life
Much more than one can perceive
Is the spectacle of time in reality.

The seen and the unseen
 dazzle and foretell
There is order ... there is chaos
There is law ... there is choice.

Hearts pound in unison
hearts beat to different
 drum beats
Surely they keep going
But why ... many have
 lost hope.

Where will it all end
 Since the beginning is sure
No way to slow it down
 No way to repeat its path.

Judgment gives evil fear
 While good's hope is only there
Soon death will swallow life
 And all will be.

People fight and curse
 Nations rule and kill
People love and cry
 Cultures weave and deceive.

Such cycles of success
 breed failure to the rest

When one sees from the
portal of time.

And the unseen helpers and
their counterparts
Add to the milieu as
Good surely overcomes evil
by weakness.

But are they for us or
are we for them?
Yes.

8/21/89

Soul Cry

I pour my soul out
I have nothing left
All I am is before You
I am but a shadow of a man

Fill me with Your Spirit Lord.

An Abandoned Body

Left by the wayside
Close to the gutter.
Alone, rejected, forsaken
I am an abandoned body.

Flesh and blood
Still rise and flow.
Yet I am abandoned
By my soul.

I did nothing wrong!
Please do not condemn me!

I only responded
As any body would.

Touch excites me
 I was made that way.
I only responded
 As any body would.

I did nothing wrong.
 Please do not condemn me.
I only responded
 As any body would ...

I was made
 To feel pleasures.
I only responded
 As any body would!

Please look at me
 Don't hide O my soul.
There was no shame in me
 Don't run O my soul.

Please feel what
 You're missing.
I was made
 A beautiful mansion for you.

Come back, O my soul
 Behold me,
Embrace me,
 For I am yours.

Caress my skin
 Explore my pleasures
Feel my pains, my joys
 And so find rest.

3/25/92

Shame

There's the counselor,
There's me.

The question is -
 How are you?

The answer -

I feel like shit.
No,
I feel like
I am shit.

Not too cheerful a choice
of words,
But
true.

How come?

It's not that
all I do is shit -
It's that
all I am is shit.

How come?

God, did You make
me this way?

Can the power of
racial-sexual abuse
Emotionally be this
powerfully subjugating?

I know what to do
with shit.

God, what will You
do with shit-me?

I hope not the same...

4/6/94

The Invalidated Pains Of A Lost Child

Unwanted before
birth
An inconvenience to a
struggling family.
I arrived
on a busy day
Surrounded by people
to greet me.
But why did they

scatter so fast?

By year one
I had become
In reality or dream
- I know not -
The prime object of hate
and pyre torment
To a sister spurned by
her dad.

Abandoned at three
by a working mother
Left with a maid
no one liked.
Unable to talk
in sentences
Sadness befell me
alone.

Caught at age four
by my daddy
Trying to sit on
Grandmom's lap.
Shamed for not knowing already
I'm too big for that.
Unable to talk
in sentences
Sadness and shame for wanting touch
settled in ... alone.

Lost child
they now call me
Lost in the rush of
my crazy world.
Dad drunk, Mom at work
siblings ignore and hate me
So they admit now.
Lost child ... lost pain
alone.

A latch key kid
by age seven
I know the way home
no one there to welcome me.
Just an older brother and sister
who cling together
But leave me out.
Ashamed to feel my pain more than theirs.

Ashamed of my pain
and why not

Mine was so small a thing
to them
I did well in schooling and sports.
Why should I feel the pain of
outstripping my brother and of being ignored?
Ashamed of my small pains.

Secured the position as
Daddy and Grandmother's favorite
Forever to receive
watches and extended family praise first.
No thought was ever given
to my pain of such
inequities.
Ashamed and alone
no glimmer that anyone
understood.

My pain of family shame
was unimportant.
Only the secrets must be kept
Dad's drunkenness
Dad's mischief
Ashamed and alone I kept silent.

Three weeks before he
died
We all visited him
again.
One word misspoken to
a sick man
Brought a torrent of
shaming from the rest.
No one noticed the pain of a fourteen year old
Trying to say "hi" and "bye" to his
Dad.

Then he died.

I was the first and only child to meet her
her words spoke first to me.
The shock and embrace from his death
was followed by
Responsibilities.
Who noticed the pain
of my having to decide
His autopsy?
I bore my role well
And gave leadership ... alone.

We picked up my brother

at college
I tried to speak
acknowledging our mutual pain.
He cut me off
immediately this time and again.
Alone.

We picked up my sister
at a friends house
All huddled around to
support her.
I cannot remember a time ever
when my family supported only me.
Lost.

Next day back
was a shocker.
No one had paved the way.
My words stuck in my throat
as I informed them.
My friends ill-equipped to respond
left me without touch or word.
My sister's girlfriends responded in shock to the pain
But mostly for my sister.
I rode my bike back home
alone ... in pain.
No one cried for me.

Mom's pain was too much
that summer
She stopped work and
grieved at home.
Sometimes alone
sometimes in my arms.
Who noticed the pains of
a young man.
Providing and grieving
alone?

Slowly I deadened
to those around me
Night after night
I fought images
Alone.

I choose to seek God
and to follow.
Much joy came my way
But never the joy of family support.
Rather only shame.

My health is

an enigma.
I look fine with
no outward signs.
Yet my system
mal-blood nourished
Seems forever to cry
Alone.

My mind is
quite different from most.
Statistically few are the
abstract system builders.
Many praises have greeted me.
Many envious souls have remarked.
Yet no one has grasped my
sadness in feeling
multi-dimensional reality
being destroyed by others of
my kind.

My wife is a wonderful
creature
I desire and admire
her deeply
For a time now she
needs body space
I give her
to help heal her pains.
But I have pains in the
process.
Small in comparison yet in pain.
Alone.

Each singular pain is a small burden
All added together is a little
Yet down deep the pain of being too
unimportant for my pains to be noticed
Outweighs them all.
Lost child.

Each passing pain
seems so trivial to others.
But my pain
is all that I have
For me to not lament it
would be the final crushing neglect.
The lost child would be no more.

They write about us
in the literature.
They call us by name and say
Lost child
Hard to identify

Most fragile
And little else.

God gave me a
 darling wife
Who embraced me.
Such a strong
 validation
To point me
To His healing and
 permanent
embrace.

And why did Jesus
 cry for dead Lazarus
A friend He would
 raise quite soon?
Were not His tears
 to comfort
The pain heavy heart of
 a sister
Who felt abandoned, alone
 and too unimportant
for Jesus to come?

Lord,
 Let me feel Your embrace
 To see Your tears for my pain.
Then turn my eyes like You did Martha's
 to behold the goodness of Your grace.

I'm not lost or
 too unimportant
For the mighty God to
 transform
To be in His holy
 presence
Forever drawn near a
 Loved child.

One's Peace

At peace ...
 does it only refer
to the state
 of the body in death?

The aching waves
 which rise and fall in my
 body
Remind me of the cruel
 hand of racial retaliation inflicted on me.
No marks remain
 yet the body was succumbed
And shame encircled the
 will.

The raging in my
 soul
springs from bitter
 hatred of an
adult world writhing from its
 own childhood
and my own guilty unforgiveness
 as I follow their steps.

The trouble in my
 heart
emanates from the
 loneliness of abandonment and
the reality of human separateness.

The turmoil in my
 mind
reveals my humiliating
 dependency on time to
 define me.

Where then can I
 turn?
Will the syllogisms of
 philosophy
Settle my turmoiled
 mind?
Will the intimacy of
 my lover satisfy
My troubled
 heart?

Will the revenge of
 wickedness -
 others and mine -
Calm my raging
 soul?

Can determination
 and perseverance
Scrap shame from my
 will?

Can the drugs of

anxiety
calm the waves of my tormented
body?

Where then can I turn?

Is there not One Who
has made me?
One Who's design was
fulfilled in my sinews?
Can not He prescribe a
solution to fulfill
My deepest longings for
peace in this world and
in death?

Let Him speak to me
And suspiciously
I will examine.

Let Him not demand my
trust
For experience has left
me torn to ambivalence.
May Your kindness break my
wretched existence and
that of my kind.
May Your kindness bring me
What I can only faintly imagine -
peace.

May 19, 1993 RCE

Beyond

I can imagine a beyond all
I can imagine a beyond with me there
I can imagine a beyond without me there

I can imagine the elimination of all -
thus a new beyond -
with or without me there ...

Thus I am present here.

January 10, 2005

A Place to Start

You, Dad & Mom, have defined me
(biologically and sociologically)
to the point that

I trust
I am
present
to a beyond

and therefore
I am NOT
Present into beyond without
Diminishing presence

And therefore

And therefore
I trust the
I AM that I AM
That is fully present here and beyond

Note:

A baby has no self identity and cases things in 'other'. Having been birthed from other – differentiation comes afterward.

The Grooves

Screwed is
a frame of mind
to embrace the
Grooves.

Round and round
you go and deeper
every turn.

Screwed by my
frame of mind seeking not
my way but
that path others
lay for me to get
a pat.

Turn your screw
into a path with

Grooves of mysteries
where only God
can lift you
though while
others seek to
grind you down.

Screwed is
just a frame of
mind—a
place to live—
The Grooves.

March 2011

This Ugliness

Ugliness invades me.

Each morning the mirror shows my true surfaces.
I wash myself.
I drape beautiful things upon my naked body.
I try to act nice.
I smile.

Yet my insides feel really ugly.
Like my soul is wrapped in old dung.
I despair and wish for more.
I smile ... and try to act nice.

January 21, 2008

Misunderstood

Is it possible to be
understood?
Can the depths of my
pleasures and pains
be measured by
another?

The longing is great
to have the expanses
of my needs

explored by a
woman.

(Total dependency is
a reality to be
grasped only in
light of total
independence.)

Can a dependent woman
plumb my soul's
grief?

Can she feel the
despair of a child
in trauma and abandoned?
of a teenage fatherless?

Can God?

Brought face to face
with the pain and
loneliness of
misunderstood grief

My hidden expectation,
my secret demand
is revealed...

I want so much
to be understood -
to not carry this
pain alone.

The loss of the hope
of being understood
by another
is still a greater
pain - but I will
bear it - alone.

Even God I perceive
understood His Son
as He hung dying.

Even Jesus seemed
to escape abuse as a
child.

My High Priest suffered
more deeply but He
couldn't understand my
grief. And I can't understand His.

But then a ray
broke through
Jesus bore all
sin - its guilt
its consequences
its pain and grief.

And so in those
 few moments of
 time the timeless
 Savior understood
 for eternity the
 depth of my
 grief.
"My God, My God, why have
You forsaken me."

At last I am understood
 and freed to respond
 to Him and to not
 desperately need her.
Jesus alone stands
 misunderstood
 forever.

And maybe I was
 more understood by her
 than I could bear to admit.

Miscellaneous Poems

The Hope of Hell

In the absence of hell
 there is no hope.
In the pursuit of hell
 there is no peace.
In the belittlement of this eternal torment
 there is only deception.
In the fear of soul's destruction
 is the beginning of wisdom.

Life hath no meaning
 without the reality of hell.
Death, without this option,
 leaves a fragmented, despairing world drowning it's pains in shameless lust and calling it civilizing
 hope.

Come -
 embrace the hope of hell!
 for without this ultimate
 judgment
 no act of the ages has
 lasting meaning in this passing world of
 good-evil contradictions

Come -
 embrace this final destiny
 through whose lens
 reveals hope for this
 armamented civilization.

An American Lament

How did we get here?
How long can we be tolerated
O Lord of host through history.

Gone is the standard bearer
No more do absolutes guide
We're left to the winds of seared consciences.

Our thinkers proposed relativism
Our forefathers acknowledged the idea
Our children are awashed in its sea.

Gone are emotional guidelines
"Honesty demands outward expression"
No limits curtail this freedom of speech.

Anger and terror, lust and greed are unleashed
They ravish our beings on media screens
Feeding the monsters within
each of us.

Intimacy and unborns are but play things
No commitment attached to either
Pleasure only dominated our mindsets.

The fallout is now being seen
A generation without a concept of loyalty
A people emotionally scared and
ambivalent of other's pains.

Sliding from reality
The sense of illusion
Slowly engulfs our little ones.

Our culture makers have raped us
Slowly but surely they lead us
Despair and destruction the end.

Time is going now
The irreversible movement
Which God has set in place.

Our thinkers conjecture erasing its limits
Our artist portray this fantasy with glee
Our grandchildren will be locked in its despair.

How long O Lord of Host
Will Your strong arms spare us
With mercy and tenderness shake us to our roots.

7/21/92

Words

How grotesque
these feeble words
they shame
glorious reality!

Love and Hate

to love life
 in the face of evil
is to either be blind, stupid
 or
to by faith honor the God of life
 while separating evil from life
 and so hating evil

to love my self and life is
 to honor the God of creation and life
to hate evil and shame and pain is
 to identify with Jesus
to joy in suffering is to ...

3/90

Deaths

death of options -
 oh death where is thy sting
death of expectations -
 oh death where is thy sting
death of abilities -
 oh death where is thy sting
death of health -
 oh death where is thy sting
death of life
 oh joy of embracing life.

3/15/90

Lament To Beauty

Where do I find beauty?
 in the movies
 in the buildings
 fashions
 MTV?

Has our modern culture
 created beauty?
Has our Christian culture?

What is this stirring
in my soul?
Why can I not
rest?
What haunts my
senses? my spirit?
Why do I thirst
for beauty?

Is there beauty in
immorality?
If so, my soul can
delight in
delicious movie offerings.
For blood and passion flow
mingled down
upon its altar of worship
And millions drop millions
into the door keepers pot
as they enter movie tabernacles
But immorality is not beauty
though it excites the senses
and the soul is violated.

Can creative beauty be found in
the Christian settings?
Moralizing, evangelizing, traditionalizing has all but
killed
creative beauty.

Yes, there is beauty in
holiness.
Yes, there is beauty in
nature.
Yes, there is beauty in
imagination.
Yes, there is beauty in
relational harmony.
Yes, there is beauty in
sexual passion.
But will it together be expressed
creatively by this
generation of artist?

We abdicated
emotional honesty
sexual-spiritual passion
moral creativity!
Will we not be judged for our
surrendering?
Will we ever regain these powerful
culture makers?

Look back to the beauty of
past generations
not
to steriley modify it
but
to be enlivened by their
passion for beauty.

Beauty draws
and can draw people
to God.

Ugliness repulses
but also draws people
to embrace their
true origin
but
creativity is addictive.

Spiritual-sexual passion and the universe
illuminated by
creative beauty and
morally honest ugliness
is a lost art.

Mourn with me
our loss and pain
is enormous.

Why Outside

If I were a fish,
why do I go outside
the aquarium.

If I were a male,
why do I go outside
the club.

If I were a female,
why do I go outside
the parameter.

If I were a rock,
why do I go.

If I were,
why do I go outside.

April 15, 1994

Good-Evil-Sin

Humankind is
 basically
 good
but we can
 sure generate
 evil.

Humankind is
 basically
 evil
but we can
 sure emulate
 good.

This dilemma
 of contrast
can be resolved
 only by
embracing
 sin.

The uncomfortable
 bosom
of personal and corporate
 sin
leads us to
the nourishing
twin breast of
 mercy-grace ...
Our only hope.

Linger, drink deeply, return
 often
and find
 love.

4/17/94

Language of Condemnation, Mercy and Grace

Condemnation

deserved
wretched
birthright
unlovable
torment
rejection
abandonment
loneliness
destitute
banishment
shame
powerless
guilt
despair
hell

Mercy

undeserved - a birthright
condemnation canceled
shame exposed & removed
unlovable
distance
self-righteousness exposed
unshackled
freedom
pity
guilt forgiven

Grace

deserved - a re-birthright
beauty extended
clothed with righteousness
like, delighted, desirable
intimacy
growth
love
kindness
tenderness
compassion
power
riches
servant, child, friend, bride
heaven

A New Thing

I am
male
I am
her male
I am
in her world
I am
towed by her, powerless
I am
a leopard
a bear
a lion
a dog
a spirit
a beast
a spiritual beast
a demons spirit beast
With animalistic lust
I might conquest her but never attain to her (?)
I am always conquered from within and separated from her humaneness

A pet or
A wild animal
But always a beast

Thine hath cast her and her kind
into humaneness
But left me and my kind
trapped - a kind of our own.

Cross species intercourse
yields the same results -
female humans
male beasts.

There is no out
I can become a
powerful beast
a weak beast
a sensual beast
a non-sensual beast, but
always a beast
for my soul is possessed with a
spirit beast
and not a nice one at that
It torments my soul
my masculinity
my beast-hood
Sometimes it sleeps,
Sometimes is purrs
Sometimes it snarls
but never is it not there

I am possessed and
oppressed
My identity is wrapped,
ensnarled with
its animalistic
instincts.

To be human would be
divine
And the chasm
between me and humaneness
Is just as great as between
my female and god-ness
She can sense and taste and desire
god-ness but she
cannot attain for she is
only human
I can sense and taste and desire
humaneness but I
cannot attain for I am
only beast -
spirit beast

My origin is deep
my world consistent
Only for past time reveals
the brutal possession
for a perch of true
humaneness long forgotten within my sinews and now just faintly imagined

But as demon-spirit is passed from
soul to soul
so my masculine soul has been sexually merged
by multi- century
proliferation of
bestial demon spirits.

Who will de-possess me?
Can I rip this spirit from every tissue of my soul without destroying my existence?
Will the spirit tire and leave me free?
If the woman master unleashed me
I would not be human but only an unleashed beast.
If the woman embraced me fully
with her humaneness
would I separate beast spirit from human spirit?
Would she dare?
This has promise for
"The Lord will create a new thing
on earth -
a woman will surround a
man."

But lo, even in this surrounding
only truth is revealed
I am a beast

and I more strongly perceive humaneness - what is not then within me
This path to freedom is harder with total shame
Shall a beast not shame at the thought of depraved humaneness?
Even still I press on.
The path to freedom is yet inaccessible
or is it?
Shall not the woman free me
by prayers of exorcizing
which I cannot perform
for self-exorcism
is unlikely since only
deeper punishment is possible
within a self-containment prison.

Woman for a moment
a brief time in history
risk beyond risk and genuinely
perfume my soul with
respectful feminine
sexuality so strongly
that the faint scent of male humaneness
may inflame my soul to
desire full exorcism of
this spirit-beast.

And pray fervently that the
strong stench of spirit-beast will not immediately
repulse you to flee my presence with disgust.
That this faint scent will encourage
you on
That truth will full open your
man's eyes to ask for
the deliverance from this
demon-spirit-beast.
Come Jesus, cast out this common demon and heal my
masculine soul
Create a new thing on the earth even now.
Create me a human man -
to see, to feel, to think, to
will, to love, to create with
real joy, strong peace,
determined patience and faithful love to all my brothers and sisters.

Youth

A time of destruction
of security
of opportunity
of ideals

The reality of
job's
money
and responsibilities
and sex

are enough to destroy
anyone's youth.

Economic Crisis

This economic crisis
I cry is
worse than the one
last year and
not as bad as the
one to come next.
But not as bad as
during the war,
famine,
flood, fire...

Life is hard
the struggle is endless
There are few joys
few riches.

I see it on our faces
The wear daily
before our children's
eyes.

The toil of worry
overcoming the
toil of work
together they take
their toil.

Then toils forbid the
luxury of
real thought
they find the soul

to the bed of adultery.

Luxuriated by
godless realities
Bankrupted by
the reality of godlessness

All because of my
toil and this
present economic crisis.

But if my body and soul
had no needs
why would I worship Him.

What would lure me
to my knees?

If this present economic
crisis has not turned
my heart to Him

Why should I think a
no-need world would
turn it's hearts to
the reality of His
love,
truth,
holiness and,
beauty.

And so His
kindness
delayed
is just
draw our hearts
during this
present economic crisis.

Healing the Soul

Who's soul
needs healing
dear friends...

Come let us
confirm

Mine, yours ...
the worlds?

Does the doctor
diagnose
soul-diseases?
Does she
prescribe
rest or the
knife to extract
cancerous cells?

Surely there is
a sickness of
soul in our
world

Surely there is
a physician
to heal...

Power which Deceiving

Find me a spot on
the planet earth
That the deception of
power has not
soiled the soul.

The essence of life to be
grasped in utter
dependency

So any power deceives
from that a child
to a teacher to a
worker to a government
leader.

Power deceives
the best of us
the worst of us
to believe we don't
need and thus can
ignore the needs of
others
distain the help of
God.

All power - any power
deceives the
reality of death and
consequences.
Beware

Impressions of Trauma

Awakening from the trauma of
brutality
The shame of senseless
murders.
Mingled with the chronic fear of
treachery.

A people arises
unprotected
From the endless deceptions of
false hope.

Wanton pleasuring offers relief from
pain
Only to multiply it by
fetal death.
Westward philosophies invade as
Evil's plan goes forward.

The soul numbed in captivity
like the cyclical path of the metro
Always achieving, moving, exerting along the same path
lined with the bodies of forced labor.

And yet thawing ... slowly
May it past the fright of melting sting
without more trauma.

Forgotten is the hope of honest
power
Long gone the sense of
meaningfulness
What's left can only be lifted by
the taste of true kindness.

November 30, 1992

My World

Laced with beauty
 deceptive and corrupted
This world of mine keeps
 floating by ...
Aimless and pointless yet
 conveyor belt style.

Good of sorts is longed for
 evil is craved
 (at least vicariously)
Circumvent the planet
 to find any more.

Small as specks of dust
 Lost in a sea of foam
It's beauty is unsurpassed
 It's pain has gone on too long.

Much more than particles
Much more than life
Much more than one can perceive
Is the spectacle of time in reality.

The seen and the unseen
 dazzle and foretell
There is order ... there is chaos
There is law ... there is choice.

Hearts pound in unison
hearts beat to different
 drum beats
Surely they keep going
But why ... many have
 lost hope.

Where will it all end
 Since the beginning is sure
No way to slow it down
 No way to repeat its path.

Judgment gives evil fear
 While good's hope is only there
Soon death will swallow life
 And all will be.

People fight and curse
 Nations rule and kill
People love and cry
 Cultures weave and deceive.

Such cycles of success

breed failure to the rest
When one sees from the
portal of time.

And the unseen helpers and
their counterparts
Add to the milieu as
Good surely overcomes evil
by weakness.

But are they for us or
are we for them?
Yes.

8/21/89

On Life

Only the absence
Of life can
Help describe the
Beauty of its power.

Life without boundaries
Is an arrogance
Of a sea turtle
In flight with eagles.

Embracing my life as
Beauty and power requires
A view of a Beholder
Someone other than me authenticates my beauty
And boundaries my power.

November 1999

Me & My TV

Me and my TV
Me and my TV
The view is
Always what I want.
Me and my TV
Me and my TV

I'm the master of remote
Me and my TV
Me and my TV

Imagination reigns by day
Life-giving fantasy by night
Me and my TV
Me and my TV

Other friends
Complain a lot
Their partners
Are a strange lot.
Me and my TV
Me and my TV

Why risk the hurt and pain
Of life
When I can
Reign supreme.
Me and my TV
Me and my TV

The sights and sounds
Of nature and love –
All seem better
On the tube
Me and my TV
Me and my TV

Touch and smells
Aren't yet more real
Someday soon
They'll mimic too.
Me and my TV
Me and my TV

But can they fashion
A tube that feels
And will it feel
My dying soul?
Will it feel
My dying soul?
Me and my TV

Me and my TV.

December 1, 2003

Shock Reality

Refrain:

*Shock is in
It's in vogue
Reality sucks
Unless it shocks you*

Boredom is slain
The common is bored
Shock common boredom!

Play to shock
Sex to shock
Shock to horror
Reality sucks
Unless it shocks you.

Let's play shock
Show me yours and
I'll show you mine.
Shock 'em more!

What is real?
What is right?
What is shock?
Giver me more!

The mirror shocks most
If we choose to look.
The mirror shocks most
If we choose to look.

The shock of soul-life
Squirting into the dark
Becoming a dead-soul
Such a shock is real life.

December 1, 2003

Here I sit

Here I sit
Bare assed upon
Some ceramic pot.

Contemplating
What is to come and
What might have been.

I see clearly
So little
And hope for so
Much more meaning.

And so I sit –
It is a daily
Habit of mine –
You to?

The Normalcy of Why

A child of four
often asks the most
reasonable question
of integration –
“Why?”

The disillusioned response of
a child of eight –
“No more whys?
before becoming a
philosophical teen
who challenges –
“Why not?”

Another response is
“Creative harmony
across jealous space” –
yet still “Why”
remains encapsulated beyond –
thus completing the answer
symbolical reasoning.

December 1, 2004

dysfunctional excellence

excellence

excels at
many levels

dysfunctional excellence

is a common
level to live because ...

dysfunctional non-excellence

is just too brutal
to survive over time.

December 1, 2004

Groaning with Joy

Today
The world has sounds
Listen to the night
To the day.

What shouts without notice?

The groans of work
Perceives safety and security
That flee with the winds
Of the economy.

The groans of food consumption
Being in the field
Pass through slaughter houses
Extends into dining room
And have been relocated into
McDonalds.

The groans of family
Shriek with anger
Passivity
Divorce.

The groan of sexuality
Grinds with effort
To find oneself in pleasures.

Society is cooped by
The world bank
And the bottom line
Of deception –
The deception of temporal
Permanence.

Our groaning reminds us
Of this deception ...
And a sense of meaninglessness.

Meanwhile we groan
With inexpressible joy
The hope of transcendence
The hope of glory
The glory of identity
Passing into Life.

What does God hear?

April 7, 2005

Dying Bodies ... Living Souls

Dying	Bodies		
Walking	Slowly		
Soon	Will		
Rest	Among		
Fading	Flowers		
	Living		
	Walking	Souls	
	Gaze	Slowly	
	Creator's	Upon	
	With	Face	
		Smiles	

Ralph Davis, April 24, 2002

Death Life Eternity

Death is my friend
For she is but an uncertainty and gateway to
The Slain Lamb of heaven in the city of God

Life is my friend
For she is but an awareness and taste
Of all things past, present and future

These mysterious friends I behold with awe
In the movement of transcendence and place
Into eternity

And I choose to
Embrace death before life and life before eternity
And eternity before them both.

Ralph Ennis
June 28, 2010

Resources to Explore

CONNECT BIBLE STUDIES

GOD: Connecting with His Outrageous Love
IDENTITY: Becoming Who God Says I Am
SOUL: Embracing My Sexuality and Emotions
RELATIONSHIPS: Bringing Jesus into My World
LIFE: Thriving a Complex World
FREEDOM: Breaking the Power of Shame

IMAGE-BASED

The New Me
Searching the Ordinary for Meanings
Grapplings: Why Do People Suffer So Much?

BOOKS

The Shame Exchange: Trading Shame for God's Mercy and Freedom
Worth a Thousand Words: The Power of Images to Transform Hearts

INVENTORIES

Breakthru: Discovering My Spiritual Gifts
Breakthru: Discovering My Primary Roles

For the above resources see:

www.ralphennis.com

About the Authors

Ralph and Jennifer Ennis have served with The Navigators since 1975. They have ministered at Princeton University, Richmond Community, Glen Eyrie Leadership Development Institute, The CoMission in Russia, and in Raleigh, NC. In 2006 Jennifer co-founded JourneyMates, a ministry to help people grow in intimacy with the Triune God through Scripture, silence and solitude.

Unless otherwise noted, the essays of the WB Series have been written by Ralph. However, each work was crafted in the context our marriage relationship and with the editorial benefit of Jen's perspectives and unique abilities.

In 2018 Ralph and Jennifer celebrated 45 years of marriage. They have four married children and 15 grandchildren.



Our web sites:

www.journeymates.org
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