

## Introduction

I didn't begin writing poetry intending to share it. I was merely trying to understand my thoughts and feelings. I found that the discipline of rhyme forced me to search through more words in order to locate the optimum nuance. When I finally counted the poems I had accumulated over the years, I was able to locate over three hundred of them (Don't worry. I only share a few of them here).

### Passing Energy

The wind blows  
A windmill stands in the way  
and forces it to pump water as it passes  
What would it have cost the wind  
if the windmill was not there?  
Destruction against a tree or mountain  
or gentle fatigue while continuing  
across a field  
Passing energy

The sun shines  
It warms the earth  
The sun goes down  
The heat is radiated back into space  
What would it have cost the sun  
if its heat had been borrowed for a little  
while to keep a home warm, and given  
back later when the home no longer  
needed it?  
Passing energy

The water pumped is what made the wind  
more valuable  
The home heated help give the sun  
its purpose

A child is born  
grows up  
grows old  
dies  
If he had followed God, His purpose  
would continue long after he himself  
was gone  
What happened to the wind?  
What happened to the sunshine?  
The energy's still somewhere,  
but no longer available  
What happened to the child?  
He's still there too  
but no longer able  
to serve

~~~~~

## Excuses

Coach if I could do it again  
I know that I would surely win  
Butcha see it wasn't me  
It's not the way it should be  
I wish I could do it over again  
– but the time is gone

I wasn't quite ready that time  
or the other guy committed some crime  
But now I know  
and I'm ready to go  
Coach wontcha let me try it again  
– but the time is gone

Now isn't that the thing we always say  
when things just didn't go our way  
We paint the past with excuses  
for our mistakes and abuses  
We should be giving all we have today  
– before the time is gone

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When I got out of the military in early '68' I immediately purchased a powerful custom motorcycle, and put almost 500 miles on it the first weekend I had it. This would be the first of thousands of solitary miles.

The events describe here were set to poetry years later as an aid to recalling the details. They happened as told with minimal artistic license yielded for the poetic format.

I had been arguing with God for three weeks over the knowledge that I was going to have an accident. Still, I was determined to not allow fear to alter my behavior. As this poem opens, I had left the L.A. basin through the mountains above the San Gabriel valley, and was about to enter the Mohave Desert.

Angeles Crest Highway was almost behind  
His bike climbs to seventy from a curve that was blind  
Eighty then ninety and so goes his speed  
but he carries a band-aid in case there's a need  
His bike tops one hundred as he crests one last hill  
passing all other traffic as though it stood still  
One hundred and ten then a hundred and twenty  
My God what a rush! And then on to one plenty  
He smiles as he looks at the fragile front wheel  
between him and the road and a death he could feel  
He then lifts his gaze to adjust to the track  
and in speed-blurred desert sees death grinning back  
But as peace assures him his end is not near  
he starts talking with God and beginning to hear  
I don't understand God, this thing that You've shown  
The meaning of pain in this life I have known  
But I know that You love me surely more than *I* do  
so I'm just going to trust You to bring me on through

As time becomes precious he lowers his speed  
down to about eighty, still more than he'd need  
A small winding road that he'd never been on  
then beckoned his heart to the mountains beyond  
As he entered a curve that his bike couldn't take  
he realized he had a decision to make  
He straightened it out so he'd miss the guard rail  
and then figured out what's the best way to bail  
He then sailed through the air with the greatest of ease  
over cart-wheeling scenery on a warm desert breeze  
He could hear thump and bump from his bike as it broke  
over scenery of boulders, manzanita and oak  
He suddenly found himself flat on his face  
The entire hillside had just this one smooth place  
Through some miracle greater than most he had known  
he found he had broken not one single bone  
But the pain from inside could far more than suffice  
than to put him to sleep and it would feel so nice  
But he knew that to sleep then would bring certain death  
so he fought to his feet while still gasping for breath  
The battered bike lay there; its gas tank was caved  
but was not leaking gas, so it just might be saved  
Exhaust pipes were dented with one twisted out  
but with help from a rock it might be straightened out  
He considered the road on the hillside above  
and wondered if passing cars had any love  
But NO he can't do that he'd stay quite aloof  
because people will hurt you and his heart was proof  
A search though the rocks yielded tools and a part  
and he got that thing working – well at least it would start  
After fighting the hillside and pain like a goad  
he finally got that machine back on the road  
And then as if he hadn't had quite enough  
he said as he rode boy am I ever tough  
In answer his body convulsed with such pain  
deep sobs drove him spastic and threatened his brain  
OK God! I hear you help me if you must  
but please do not send me a human to trust  
The late afternoon was now losing its' light  
He needed a place to hang out for the night  
An old two-roomed school house had people about  
A church from Burbank had come there to camp out  
They could see he was fighting to maintain his grip  
but he refused their offer of a ninety-mile trip  
Just lend me a patch on this old hardwood floor  
by the time the sun's up I'll be out of your door  
- but -  
A sweet kiss on the forehead as he lay there that night  
began to unravel his cold lonely fight

To a dust-covered bum here's a token of love  
In care of a human from heaven above  
When the sun rose he was barely able to stand  
He knew he'd soon die if he refused their hand  
The surgery and eight days of hospital stay  
gave him time to consider events of that day  
Let people get near you a gentle voice said  
But God I'll get hurt said the lad on the bed  
I was hurt said the voice in the same gentle way  
crucifixions are painful now wouldn't you say  
Trust me for your hurts, and yes, there'll be pain  
but I'll be there to help you start loving again  
You thought you were macho to endure all that pain  
but your great fear of love makes you weaker than rain  
He began to relax and let healing flow  
He began to forgive, He began to grow  
A day that began with a kid in a race  
awakened a heart that could love and embrace

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Like weeds struggling to grow  
through cracks in city streets  
I see people struggling to flow  
into simple joys  
through cracks in their own situations  
We all have situations  
Not enough money, time, health  
all of the above  
A broken leg,  
  
A broken heart  
A broken life  
But then there's the crack  
Even if it's just the crack of a smile  
or a glimpse of the world through eyes of a child  
who has not yet noticed the pavement.

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Stereotypes are very important  
It's nice to be able to so thoroughly  
understand someone so easily  
It's nice to feel so superior  
Next time you meet a stereotype talk to it  
They might need your help  
Or... You might need theirs  
A stereotype is a challenge  
They're so smug  
– And you'd like to be  
but you know better

Well, how do you know  
That there are no islands of solid security  
Protruding upwards  
Through this world of fluid confusion?  
Does the fact that you may still be adrift  
In a relativistic sea  
Dictate that there can be no  
Underlying absolutes?  
I'll be your stereotype  
Come crash your best wave against me  
Shake me from my false security  
That I may join you  
In your endless drifting search  
Or, discover  
Why I am so secure  
And be welcomed home at last  
Is there an actual line that must be crossed  
To go from a mother Teresa  
To an Adolph Hitler?  
You'll never know  
Until you've challenged  
The right stereotype

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Will you forgive me when I'm not sorry  
Will you love me when I'm wrong  
Will you still love me when I'm being stubborn  
and convinced I'm being strong  
I'll forgive your pointless nagging  
and your word assaults endure  
I will love you while you're hurting me  
and pray our vows stay sure  
If God's only love towards us  
was the kind we give each other  
We'd be doomed unto death eternal  
and never know God's Son as brother  
But God's love transcends mere justice  
and is greater than our sin  
Please forgive me as I stumble  
and let's be free to love again

---

The parting shot was Lord forgive them  
from the lips of Christ from the lips of Stephen  
He didn't try to point their fault  
before they sealed Him in that vault  
He forgave and lives were built  
Mankind was offered release from guilt  
An angry young man by the name of Saul

was free to become the apostle Paul

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The Holy Spirit of God is no one's servant, and we  
shouldn't act like He is.

Listen to the wind

He has things to say

He has a mind of His own

He may not see things your way

It's not a matter of interpretation

the thoughts He may give

He's not a tool He's like the master

of the life that you live

You may say He says this

You may claim He says that

You may claim it doesn't matter

But the wind continues on

no matter what you think

Close your mind and you may only hear laughter

---

Who can afford to give

Who can afford to trust

Who can afford to sacrifice

all that God says that we must

The heart that would give becomes wounded

The soul that would love receives pain

The lonely cry out for some mercy

The trusting is betrayed again

Where does strength for this life come from

Where does one go for love's rain

Where does one go when they're thirsting

Oh where does one hide from this pain

The air became gentle and fragrant

and peace seemed to be all around

A strong gentle hand soothed my shoulder

though no one had uttered a sound

Words could not answer my questions

To no voice was such eloquence given

but the joy in my heart could not argue

with the love that God sent down from heaven

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Moocher

I met him on the highway

His thumb was in the road

He had no home to speak of

The path was his abode

He started out just having fun  
and taking what he'd find  
But twenty years of taking  
left him broken in his mind

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To the lonely one  
who watches the world go by  
To the silent one  
who's speech is just a sigh  
How do these people meet these people?  
How do they get along?

I wish someone would speak to me  
though I don't know what they'd say  
And I think if I would speak to them  
they'd look the other way  
There's nothing that they want from me  
and when I'm gone my place will be  
....Still empty....

---

Jealous of the youth?  
Are you kidding?!  
That blind and stupid pain  
The relationships, the put-downs  
The dreams that died unreal  
The search for life's reality  
The agony they feel  
The scars of disappointment  
The lessons of defeat  
The questions and the loneliness  
I'm supposed to think that's neat?  
Yeah, I've got those memories  
I don't know what they're for  
I stuffed them in that closet  
with the sign upon the door  
– The sign?  
Well....  
It says....  
Treasures

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There is a category of human that is very poorly understood. They don't say much, and when they *do* speak, nobody wants to hear it anyway. I'm going to tell you one of their best kept secrets.

He doesn't know quite how to show love  
He's trying so hard to be strong  
He works hard to do for his family  
and he doesn't have time to be wrong

But he cries for the love of his children  
When he's some place where they cannot see  
And his heartache he covers with manhood  
because that's what a father should be

Now he has been some miles and knows some things  
He's been there and come back alive  
He's seen people die in the pathways  
and he knows what it takes to survive

And he cries for the life of his children  
may God help them as they go along  
Do they have to make the mistakes he made  
Oh Lord help them to know right from wrong

Dad you don't understand that this world that I'm in  
is so different from that which you've known  
I now have my own mind and it isn't so kind  
that you treat me like something you own

And he cries for his children who hate him  
Oh Lord help them to please understand  
that he loves them and does his best for them  
and may they never step out of your hand

So he cries for the love of his children  
and his love weighs him down like a mountain  
Though his eyes can't shed tears from his prison of fears  
his soul pours them forth like a fountain

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### The Gift

Susie, thanks for the gift  
The busy young man worked as hard as a fool  
earning money to live and a full load at school  
He met a young lady he'd known from the past  
“Sit down and relax, don't drive life so fast”  
She would sing like an angel, was pretty and fun  
“Nice talking with you, but I really must run  
Though a drop of cold water had touched his parched soul  
he couldn't let feelings detract from his goal  
So he busied himself with his work and his books  
as he tried to kill thoughts of her voice form and looks

After some time had passed she again stood before him  
talked him into a date – she seemed to adore him  
Another date and the power of a passionate kiss  
(abridged) beg your pardon, what emotion it this?  
But Susie, thanks for the beautiful gift

Sadly, she faded – dated other he learned



and in the young man now a jealousy burned  
A desert, invaded by showers and flowers  
of love care and passion and jealousy powers  
Walled in by a dam of fierce strength and denial  
put his heart and his soul to their very worst trial  
Stop! No! he can't let this happen  
He can't afford time, or the strength it is sapping  
Deliberately, carefully, as calm as he could  
he put feelings on paper, but it did him no good  
So then he delivered the note to the lass  
stood there as she read it – this guy was so crass  
As she burst forth in tears of injustice and strife  
he turned coldly around and walked out of her life  
As he entered his room, a stark spartan abode  
he knew he still had some thing huge to unload  
For the first time in certainly ten or twelve years  
he fell on his bed and exploded in tears  
Susie, dear Susie, thank you so much  
for this beautiful, beautiful gift

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A small voice said  
from under a stone  
You are worthy Lord  
Though I wish this whole world  
would just leave me alone  
You are worthy Lord  
Though there is nothing left  
for me but this cleft  
You are worthy Lord  
And only You  
can make life matter at all  
Then the earth heard the strain  
and joined the refrain  
You are worthy Lord  
Then the hills answered back  
and joined the attack  
You are worthy Lord  
Then the whole earth declared  
as the demons ran scared  
You are worthy Lord  
And only You  
can make life matter  
at all

---

I never said it  
I never actually said it  
But now they are gone

and I never can  
And I...and I am left with this wound  
that can never be healed  
But they have no wounds  
They can laugh at history  
and all that life has done to them  
They were suddenly free  
The best and the worst that had come their way  
suddenly had no effect whatsoever.  
All they had to worry about now,  
was what they had done to others.

When I think about what Jesus did for me  
everything you have done to me  
everything you've ever thought of doing to me  
everything anyone – all of you – ever did or thought of doing to me  
becomes a joke.

And **I**, am still alive  
I have received forgiveness  
And now I am **free** to forgive you  
And **I**, am still alive

I struggle a bit  
receiving forgiveness was not easy for me  
but **now**, I am free

Yes, I have struggled a bit  
Forgiving was not easy for me  
but **now**, I am free

I knew it had to be true  
but could not accept it rationally  
But I fought for it in my heart  
until rationality no longer mattered  
I became victorious  
and can now **feel** it in my heart

And now I can say it  
I love you

---

The pillar of fire has moved on  
towards a place that's far beyond  
We can no longer say "Did God say?"  
When we know He did but want to stay  
These weaknesses we have entertained in our lives  
These cute little things that God let us keep  
We know He didn't like them  
But He didn't really say all that much about them  
He hoped we'd learn He hoped we'd obey  
He hoped we'd act without having to say  
The pillar of fire has moved on

we may not like it but it's gone  
Did you see which way it went?  
Wasn't this an accident?  
We clung to camp while God was moving  
when we should have been improving  
See its distant light is fading  
We must go now or we'll be trading  
The God of purpose for a fake  
The pillar of fire for a lake.

---

Martha you are troubled  
you have so much to do  
You have your future life to live  
you have the present too  
There are concerns about the past  
and things you haven't done  
There are many tasks you've started  
and those you've not begun

Your heart is heavy like your load  
dear one some thing's not right  
Christ said my yoke is easy  
and He said my burden's light  
Pause a moment, worship Him  
ask His help to discern  
The force used by the power  
that has caused so much concern

Some feel they must tread water  
for fear that they will drown  
But trust the one who walks the seas  
He will not let you down  
If He discloses motives  
You're embarrassed to have seen  
don't fight Him just submit and let  
His Spirit wash you clean

---

Ever notice in a dream how helpless you are?  
Especially when you try to run, and nothing seems to get you far  
There's nothing you can do;  
Circumstances simply don't bow to you  
You simply are not in control  
You may even know you are trapped in a dream  
You know you can wake up and write your own story,  
instead of being pushed along in this mental happenstance  
But you don't – you somehow don't  
you continue to be overcome by the present reality  
of your dream.

And the, the option of awakening slips from your mind  
and the opportunity of escape has passed  
The rules are simple: You are helpless,  
and you take what comes  
The rules are firm, and they don't change  
some effect you might have, but nothing resembling control.  
And then, death.....Where were you when the music stopped?  
The situation reached a crescendo – you are forced  
to reality whether you wanted to go or not  
You've awoken in the dark, and reality is now present  
The rules are different.  
You can move.  
You can control your thoughts  
You don't have to wait until death to be alive  
in the real world. God can move in total disregard  
of your present reality.  
The rules are different – He is not bound by the rules  
of your present reality – what *you* call reality  
You don't simply will any more, you act  
You surrender your intellect – that's right, your intellect  
and you take action  
And you must act in faith, because you are still in the dark  
Your eyes can do you no good in this realm  
You must ask Jesus to guide you and to give you  
the light you need  
Trust  
Respond  
Thank  
~~~~~

Just another shovel full the miner cried  
Just another shovel full and then he died  
He'd been turning shovels over forty years  
He'd spent his prime of life his health and many tears  
He was sure that soon he would be very rich  
Nothing short of wealth could move him from that ditch  
The goals he'd set before him blinded all his life  
He'd left behind a family and a lonesome wife  
He started out believing he would strike it rich  
He died while swinging shovels at his childish itch  
The Bible tells about a man who tried so hard  
to build a bigger barn up in his own back yard  
While planning on his future he'd forgotten where he'd been  
While making plans for future things he died in sin