



Off-Duty Motivational Reading

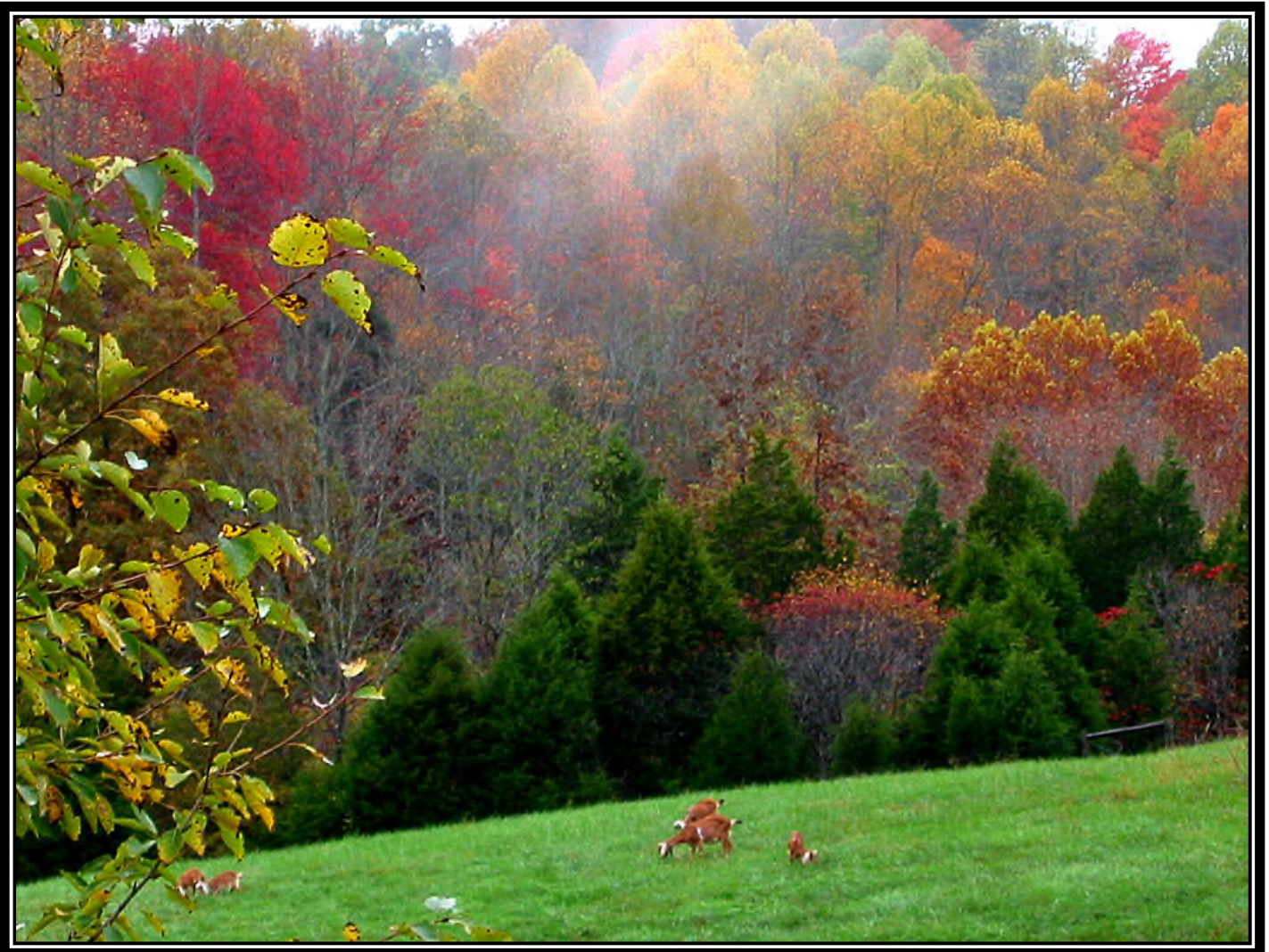
from TheSwordbearer.org

Old Soldiers, Old Leaves, and Duty

I read an article once that made quite an impression on me. It was by a Frenchman...a reporter, I believe. I can't remember if he lived in the 19th or 20th century, but one evening when he was young he was one of many guests at a huge banquet. The long table was festooned with fancy cloths, silver candlesticks, bone china, crystal goblets, and floral arrangements. White-gloved servants quietly and unobtrusively went about their tasks. The young reporter was delighted that he'd been deemed worthy to dine with so many distinguished aristocrats. Most of the guests were between his age and middle age, and all were eating, talking, and laughing with those around them. The reporter was enjoying himself so much he was almost giddy. On his right was a beautiful and charming young lady, and on his left a middle-aged gentleman who was polite and well-spoken, but somewhat reserved. The young man was taken with the young, laughing beauty, and thought she was enjoying him, too. One thing at the banquet, however, seemed incongruous: an old man sitting across the table and off to the right from him. The old man sat slightly stooped with age, and he seemed unconcerned that the laughing young people at the table hardly spoke with him. He ate slowly and wasn't always able to keep drool from his chin. The flickering candles shadowed the lines on his face and made him look frail and insignificant as he quietly contented himself with his own thoughts.

The old man's presence began to irritate the reporter, who increasingly wondered why on earth anybody would invite *him*. The young man turned to the gentleman on his left and asked with disdain and irritation who that elderly, drooling gentleman was. The reserved guest looked with surprise at the youngster, and with perhaps a touch of contempt showing through his impeccable manners replied, "Why, that's General So-in-so." The name had so much impact on the young reporter he didn't even respond to the polite gentleman; he turned and looked at the old soldier with more than newfound respect – he looked at him with awe. The general's feats during his military service were legendary. He had singlehandedly and heroically done much to save France. Suddenly the reporter felt the dinner party fade into insignificance. The pretty young lady became a petty distraction, and the laughing conversations at the table became inane, worthless trivia. *Oh, the things that man had seen and done in his lifetime!* And what mindless lightweights the general was now suffering at this banquet! *No one deserved to dine with him!* The reporter sat there the rest of the dinner and reflected and sobered and matured as he realized a person isn't the outer shell; a person is the sum of his deeds.

One autumn day at Blue Ribband Farm I sat at the desk in our library working. Whenever I looked out the window at the blazing colors of the leaves in all their glory (pictured below) with the mist rising after a rain shower, I appreciated what I was seeing but was distracted by the paperwork I was doing. However, one time as I looked up my eye focused on a single leaf, and then another, and another on the tree I'd planted just outside my window as a short sapling years before. It was now a giant that performed many tasks, including shading our home from the summer afternoon sun. The individual leaves were mottled with spots of fungus, riddled with insect holes, and torn from the wind, the rain, and hail from thunderstorms. Some leaves were already gone, early casualties in the fight against disease, predators, and the elements. But they had all done their part, and they were all contributing to the glorious scene I often took for granted but was now reflecting on with deepening understanding and appreciation. My dad always said, "The picture solves the problem." The colorful picture below illustrates the fact that autumn's big picture of grandeur and glory is actually made up of individual old and dying leaves that are mottled and torn and tired.



I now look at leaves differently. I don't just see spots, tears, and scars, and I don't just hear the rustling of dried brown leaves blowing before autumn winds. When I look at old leaves and bare trees, I hear birds heralding springtime as yellow buds swell with promise; I hear meadowlarks and see the green leaves of summer tilting toward the sun and dappling me with shade; I hear jays gathering beech nuts amidst the symphony of color that crowns the myriad successes that are individual leaves. In winter when I hear the crackling and popping of a fire in the stove and see Robin cozying up to its radiant warmth, I think of trees and leaves and the *glory of **purpose*** in individuals merely *doing their **duty***.

And I look at Christians differently. I don't look at their worldly wealth and their superficial physical characteristics; I look at their fruits. What kind of Christians are they? Do they study and know and discuss the Bible? Are they doers of the word? If so, I realize I'm looking at comrades, I'm looking at wonderful and valued members of the church.

We are leaves on The Vine. Our deeds of submissive obedience to Christ contribute to His glory and to the welfare of His church. There is no nobler deed than the performance of one's duty.

...

Pilgrims' Progress

The Eight Steps of Christian Growth

1. Self/Babe in Christ:

All born-again Christians begin their journey here – in the flesh, ignorant of the Bible, and therefore must live their lives by honestly and sincerely doing what they think is right and good...just like atheists. Many church-going Christians spend their whole lives in this stage of ignorant, well-intentioned, carnal, selfish infancy.

2. Love/Hunger:

God told us we'd have to work if we wanted to eat and grow, and that goes for spiritual growth, too. He also told us to be doers (workers) of the word because our meat is to do the will of the Father (Jn 4:32-34). Therefore our newborn spiritual love/hunger causes us to be drawn to His milk as we begin studying the Bible so we can know the Lord's will and properly serve Him.

3. Work/Food/Knowledge...and Pride:

Our work (Bible study) bears the fruit of knowledge of the word. That little bit of knowledge – as we compare it with the appalling ignorance of most Christians – causes us to get a bit puffed up with pride. And that sin of the flesh causes us to backslide into smug complacency...and our spiritual growth stops.

4. Works of Repentance/Doers of the Word:

If our love for God is true love, we repent of our slovenly pride, get back in the Bible, and humbly get about our duty of being His obedient servants by doing the word that we've learned during our studies.

5. Understanding:

Our obedient works really do result in growth: We begin to more and more understand and appreciate not only what God says in His Book, but also the value of putting those things into action in our lives. And our motivation for being obedient doers of the word shifts away from guilt and fear, and more towards actually *liking* being in His service.

6. Wisdom/Maturity:

Above, our obedient works resulted in our understanding why those things we did were necessary and good. Over time, if we faithfully continue in the word and in doctrine, and continue as faithful doers of the word, all of the above bits and pieces of understanding begin to come together so that we more and more can see the big picture and the amazing consistency of God's word. We are growing into a mature ability to apply the Bible to everything in life.

7. Servanthood:

Our continued growth allows us to better control and subdue the carnal flesh that was such a problem for us as young Christians. Having died to self, God has become our life – and we live to serve and please Him. He and His approval are our reward and our joy.

8. Love:

Because God is love, and because we are walking together with Him in complete selfless agreement, we, by the grace of God, will be given in eternity our new heavenly bodies. Our struggles with the flesh will be over, and we'll live in perfect love forever.

...

Quotations

“For those who fight for it, life has a flavor the protected never know.”
Sign at Khe Sanh, Vietnam 1968

“There is no nobler deed than the performance of one’s duty.”
Len Smith 1990

“People who are late are often so much more jolly
than the people who have to wait for them.”
Edward Lucas 1920

“The music in my heart I bore, long after it was heard no more.”
William Wordsworth 1803

“Happiness makes up in height for what it lacks in length.”
Robert Frost 1942

“Eden is that old-fashioned house we dwell in every day,
without suspecting our abode until we drive away.”
Emily Dickinson 1884

“I do not believe in the collective wisdom of individual ignorance.”
Thomas Carlyle 1850

“The test of courage comes when we are in the minority.”
Ralph W. Sockman 1950

“In the absence of fear, there can be no courage.”
Len Smith 1985

“Present fear is never as bad as later regret.”
Len Smith 1999

“Money often costs too much.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson 1860

“Humility is elusive: When you think you’ve found it – you’ve lost it.”
U.S. Naval Academy *Trident Calendar* 1967

“Upon one link in the cable, dependeth the might of the chain;
Who knows when thou mayest be tested, so live that thou bearest the strain!”
Laws of the Navy, U.S. Naval Academy *Reef Points* 1967

“True love is impossible for those to whom principles mean little.”
Len Smith 1990

“A society is doomed when opinions are respected more than truth.”
Len Smith 1990

“It is a characteristic of the weak to attribute to others their own misfortunes.”
Edgar Rice Burroughs 1915

“Show me the man you honor, and I will know what kind of man you are.”
Thomas Carlyle 1830

“Rights are subordinate to responsibilities.”
Len Smith 1985

“To run with the majority during the race of life
is to be mediocre all of the time and wrong most of the time.”
Len Smith 1990

“A man’s relationship with the Bible is an exact picture
of his relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.”
Len Smith 1995

“Why is it that we have a tendency to lazily assume other Christians have been
the kind of dedicated, motivated, responsible, knowledgeable experts
on Bible doctrines that we have never cared enough to become?”
Len Smith 1998

“I wasted time, and now doth time waste me.”
William Shakespeare 1595

“But at my back I always hear, time’s winged chariot hurrying near.”
Andrew Marvell 1650

“If you do not prepare yourself physically to succeed,
you must prepare yourself mentally for the humiliation of failure.”
Len Smith 1973

“Mental stamina – determination – is a quality of the mind *shattered* by fatigue.
But physical stamina – endurance – is *built* upon fatigue.”
Len Smith 1973

“Endurance cannot be produced by determination alone;
endurance is a product of physical exercise.”
Len Smith 1973

“I hate quotations: Tell me what you know.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson 1849

“It is a great misfortune neither to have enough wit to talk well,
nor enough judgment to be silent.”
Jean de La Bruyere 1690

“Down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean,
who is neither tarnished nor afraid.”
Raymond Chandler 1945

• • •

Poems

Precious Fruit

Adapted by Len Smith
from Martha Haskell Clark's *Red Geraniums*

Life did not bring me silken gowns,
nor jewels for my hair.
Nor fame and friends
to make my days so fair.
But I can see, in my daily life,
the word of God taking root,
And turning me from a carnal tree,
into one that's bearing fruit.

The brambled trials of every day,
the petty tempting things,
May bother me all along the way,
but still my heart has wings,
Because I can see, in my daily life,
the word of God taking root,
And turning me from a carnal tree,
into one that's bearing fruit.

And if my druthers ne'er come true,
for earthly fellowship and all the rest,
And I find myself alone
my journey through,
I'll thankfully rejoice that
God has blessed,
Because I can see, in my daily life,
the word of God taking root,
And turning me from a carnal tree,
into one that's bearing fruit.

Red Geraniums

By Martha Haskell Clark

Life did not bring me silken gowns,
Nor jewels for my hair,
Nor signs of gabled foreign towns
In distant countries fair,
But I can glimpse, beyond my pane,
a green and friendly hill,
And red geraniums aflame
upon my window sill.

The brambled cares of everyday,
The tiny humdrum things,
May bind my feet when they would stray,
But still my heart has wings
While red geraniums are bloomed
against my window glass,
And low above my green-sweet hill
the gypsy wind-clouds pass.

And if my dreamings ne'er come true,
The brightest and the best,
But leave me lone my journey through,
I'll set my heart at rest,
And thank God for home-sweet things,
a green and friendly hill,
And red geraniums aflame
upon my window sill.

It Couldn't Be Done

By Edgar Guest

Somebody said that it couldn't be done,
But he with a chuckle replied
That maybe it couldn't, but he would be one
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.
So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin
On his face. If he worried he hid it.
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.

Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that;
At least no one ever has done it";
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,
And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,
Without any doubting or quiddit,
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.

There are thousands to tell you
it cannot be done,
There are thousands
to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point out
to you, one by one,
The dangers that wait to assail you.
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,
Just take off your coat and go to it;
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing
That "cannot be done," and you'll do it.

Touching Shoulders

By unknown

There's a comforting thought
at the close of the day,
When I'm weary
and lonely and sad,
That sort of grips hold
of my crusty old heart
And bids it
be merry and glad.
It gets in my soul
and drives out the blues,
And finally
thrills through and through.
It is just a sweet memory
that chants the refrain:
"I'm glad I touched shoulders with you!"
Did you know you were brave,
did you know you were strong?
Did you know there was
one leaning hard?
Did you know
that I waited and listened and prayed,
And was cheered
by your simplest word?
Did you know that I longed
for that smile on your face,
For the sound of your
voice ringing true?
Did you know that I grew stronger
and better because
I had merely touched shoulders with you?

I am glad that I live,
 that I battle and strive
 For the place that I know
 I must fill;
 I am thankful for sorrows,
 I'll meet with a grin
 What fortune may send,
 good or ill.
 I may not have wealth,
 I may not be great,
 But I know I shall always
 be true,
 For I have in my life
 that courage you gave
 When once I rubbed shoulders with you.

The Old Oaken Bucket

By Samuel Woodworth

How dear to this heart
 are the scenes of my childhood,
 When fond recollection
 presents them to view!
 The orchard, the meadow,
 the deep-tangled wild-wood,
 And every loved spot
 which my infancy knew!
 The wide-spreading pond,
 and the mill that stood by it,
 The bridge, and the rock
 where the cataract fell,
 The cot of my father,
 the dairy-house nigh it,
 And e'en the rude bucket
 that hung in the well
 The old oaken bucket,
 the iron-bound bucket,
 The moss-covered bucket
 which hung in the well.

That moss-covered vessel
 I hailed as a treasure;
 For often at noon,
 when returned from the field,
 I found it the source
 of an exquisite pleasure,
 The purest and sweetest
 that nature can yield.
 How ardent I seized it,
 with hands that were glowing,
 And quick to the white-
 pebbled bottom it fell;
 Then soon, with the emblem
 of truth overflowing,
 And dripping with coolness,
 it rose from the well;
 The old oaken bucket,
 the iron-bound bucket,
 The moss-covered bucket
 arose from the well.

How sweet from the green
 mossy brim to receive it,
 As poised on the curb,
 it inclined to my lips!
 Not a full blushing goblet
 could tempt me to leave it,
 Though filled with the nectar
 that Jupiter sips.

And now, far removed
 from the loved habitation,
 The tear of regret
 will intrusively swell,
 As fancy reverts
 to my father's plantation,
 And sighs for the bucket
 that hangs in the well;
 The old oaken bucket,
 the iron-bound bucket,
 The moss-covered bucket
 that hangs in the well!

The Old Oaken Bucket

(As Censored by the Board of Health)

By unknown

With what anguish of mind
 I remember my childhood,
 Recalled in the light
 of knowledge since gained:
 The malarious farm,
 the wet fungus-grown wildwood,
 The chills then contracted
 that since have remained;
 The scum-covered duck pond,
 the pig sty close by it,
 The ditch where the sour-
 smelling house drainage fell,
 The damp, shaded dwelling,
 the foul barnyard nigh it;
 But worse than all else
 was that terrible well,
 And the old oaken bucket,
 the mold-crusted bucket,
 The moss-covered bucket
 that hung in the well.

Just think of it! Moss
 on the vessel that lifted
 The water I drank
 in the days called to mind;
 Ere I knew what professors
 and scientists gifted
 In the waters of wells
 by analysis find;
 The rotting wood fiber,
 the oxide of iron,
 The algae, the frog
 of unusual size,
 The water as clear
 as the verses of Byron,
 Are things I remember
 with tears in my eyes.

Oh, had I but realized
 in time to avoid them,
 The dangers that lurked
 in that pestilent draft;
 I'd have tested for organic germs
 and destroyed them
 With potassic permanganate
 ere I had quaffed.
 Or perchance I'd have boiled it,
 and afterward strained it
 Through filters of charcoal

And gravel combined;
Or, after distilling,
condensed and regained it
In potable form
with its filth left behind.

How little I knew
of the enteric fever
Which lurked in the water
I ventured to drink,
But since I've become
a devoted believer
In the teachings of science,
I shudder to think.
And now, far removed
from the scenes I'm describing,
The story of warning
to others I tell,
As memory reverts
to my youthful imbibing
And I gag at the thought
of that horrible well,
And the old oaken bucket,
the fungus-grown bucket –
In fact, the slop-bucket
that hung in the well.

A Song from Sylvan

By Louise Imogen Guiney

The little cares that fretted me,
I lost them yesterday
Among the fields above the sea,
Among the winds at play;
Among the lowing herds,
The rustling of the trees,
Among the singing birds,
The humming of the bees.

The fears of what may come to pass,
I cast them all away,
Among the clover-scented grass,
Among the new-mown hay;
Among the husking of the corn,
Where the drowsy poppies nod,
Where ill thoughts die and good are born,
Out in the fields with God.

Old Ironsides

By Oliver Wendell Holmes

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar; —
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more.

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee; —
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea!

Oh, better that her shattered hulk

Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale!

Do It Now

By Berton Braley

If with pleasure you are viewing
any work a man is doing,
If you like him or you love him,
tell him now;
Don't withhold your approbation
till the parson makes oration
And he lies with snowy lilies
on his brow;
No matter how you shout it
he won't really care about it;
He won't know how many teardrops
you have shed;
If you think some praise is due him
now's the time to slip it to him,
For he cannot read his tombstone
when he's dead.

More than fame and more than money
is the comment kind and sunny
And the hearty, warm approval
of a friend.
For it gives to life a savor,
and it makes you stronger, braver,
And it gives you heart and spirit
to the end;
If he earns your praise-bestow it;
if you like him let him know it;
Let the words
of true encouragement be said;
Do not wait till life is over
and he's underneath the clover;
For he cannot read his tombstone
when he's dead.

The Swordbearer's Burden

Adapted by Len Smith

From Robert Frost's *The Road Not Taken*

Two roads diverged in religion one day,
As more attention to the Bible I paid.
The questions I asked made preachers mad,
And their fearful reactions made me sad.

The denominational road was very wide,
With many grand attractions along the side,
Which allowed the people along every mile
In spite of their ignorance still to smile.

The Biblical road was just a trace;
Nobody would choose it to run a race!
It was lonely and thorny and full of hardship,
But the Bible said it was the way of worship.

My burden is to tell you why
When two very different roads diverged
that I...
I took the one less traveled by.
And with nothing but praise ages hence,
I'll thank God for that difference.

There is a tide in the affairs of men

By William Shakespeare

There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat;
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

The Road Not Taken

By Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Leisure

By William Henry Davies

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.
No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.
No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.
No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea

By Allan Cunningham

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast,
And fills the white and rustling sail,
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While, like the eagle free,
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

O for a soft and gentle wind!

I heard a fair one cry;
But give to me the snoring breeze,
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my boys,
The good ship tight and free –
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornèd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
And hark the music, mariners!
The wind is piping loud;
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashing free –
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

Our Own

By Margaret E. Sangster

If I had known, in the morning,
How wearily all the day
The words unkind would trouble my mind
That I said when you went away,
I had been more careful, darling,
Nor given you needless pain;
But we vex our own with look and tone
We might never take back again.

For though in the quiet evening
You may give me the kiss of peace,
Yet it well might be that never for me
The pain of the heart should cease;
How many go forth at morning
Who never come home at night,
And hearts have broken
for harsh words spoken
That sorrow can ne'er set right.

We have careful thought for the stranger,
And smiles for the sometime guest,
But oft for our own the bitter tone,
Though we love our own the best.
Ah, lip with the curve impatient,
Ah, brow with the shade of scorn,
'Twere a cruel fate, were the night too late
To undue the work of morn!

I Remember, I Remember

By Thomas Hood

I remember, I remember
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon
Nor brought too long a day;
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away.

I remember, I remember
The roses red and white,
The violets and the lily cups –
Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birthday –
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember
 Where I was used to swing,
 And thought the air must rush as fresh
 To swallows on the wing;
 My spirit flew in feathers then
 That is so heavy now,
 The summer pools could hardly cool
 The fever on my brow!

I remember, I remember
 The fir-trees dark and high;
 I used to think their slender tops
 Were close against the sky:
 It was a childish ignorance,
 But now 'tis little joy
 To know I'm farther off from Heaven
 Than when I was a boy.

David, My Fellow Warrior

Adapted by Len Smith
 from George Sterling's *The Master Mariner*

My comrade David left his armor behind,
 And in the hot sun the giant he slew.
 Here in conditioned air I find
 Another novel I hope will do.

He killed the lions that threatened his herd
 In the early morning dew.
 I watch the beasts as I chomp a burger
 At my nearby city zoo.

He expressed his faith in God in psalms,
 And with instruments of music did sing.
 But I was kicked out of a choir
 For not being able to sing.

David wielded in his ample fist
 The bloody sword of war,
 But I am fretful that my writing wrist
 My *Memoirs* might make sore.

I think my comrade now would gaze
 At me with his warrior's knowing eye,
 And seeing my hands as soft as my days
 He'd turn his eyes to heaven...and sigh.

Prayer of an Aging Warrior

Excerpted from Psalm 71

In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust:
 For thou art my hope, O Lord God:
 Thou art my trust from my youth.
 Cast me not off in the time of old age;
 Forsake me not when my strength faileth.
 O God, thou hast taught me from my youth:
 And hitherto have I declared thy wondrous
 works. Now also when I am old and
 gray headed, O God, Forsake me not;
 until I have shewed thy strength unto
 this generation, And thy power
 to every one that is to come.

Evening Contemplation

By George Washington Doane

Softly now the light of day
 Fades upon my sight away;
 Free from care, from labor free,
 Lord, I would commune with Thee.

Thou, whose all-pervading eye
 Naught escapes, without, within!
 Pardon each infirmity,
 Open fault, and secret sin.

Soon for me the light of day
 Shall for ever pass away;
 Then, from sin and sorrow free,
 Take me, Lord, to dwell with Thee.

Thou who, sinless, yet hast known
 All of man's infirmity!
 Then, from Thine eternal throne,
 Jesus, look with pitying eye.

A Friend's Greeting

By Edgar Guest

I'd like to be the sort of friend
 that you have been to me;
 I'd like to be the help that you've been
 always glad to be;
 I'd like to mean as much to you
 each minute of the day
 As you have meant, old friend of mine,
 to me along the way.
 I'd like to do the big things
 and the splendid things for you,
 To brush the gray out of your skies
 and leave them only blue;
 I'd like to say the kindly things
 that I so oft have heard,
 And feel that I could rouse your soul
 the way that mine you've stirred.

I'd like to give back the joy
 that you have given me,
 Yet that were wishing you a need
 I hope will never be;
 I'd like to make you feel
 as rich as I, who travel on
 Undaunted in the darkest hours
 with you to lean upon.

I'm wishing at this Christmas time
 that I could but repay
 A portion of the gladness
 that you've strewn along the way;
 And could I have one wish this year,
 this only would it be:
 I'd like to be the sort of friend
 that you have been to me.

Daffodils

By William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
 That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
 When all at once I saw a crowd,
 A host, of golden daffodils;
 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
 Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
 And twinkle on the Milky Way,
 They stretched in never-ending line
 Along the margin of a bay:
 Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
 Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
 Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
 A poet could not but be gay,
 In such a jocund company:
 I gazed – and gazed – but little thought
 What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
 In vacant or in pensive mood,
 They flash upon that inward eye
 Which is the bliss of solitude;
 And then my heart with pleasure fills,
 And dances with the daffodils.

When the Frost is on the Punkin

By James Whitcomb Riley

When the frost is on the punkin
 and the fodder's in the shock,
 And you hear the kyouck and gobble
 of the struttin' turkey-cock,
 And the clackin' of the guineys,
 and the cluckin' of the hens,
 And the rooster's hallylooyer
 as he tiptoes on the fence;
 O, it's then's the times a feller
 is a-feelin' at his best,
 With the risin' sun to greet him
 from a night of peaceful rest,
 As he leaves the house, bareheaded,
 and goes out to feed the stock,
 When the frost is on the punkin
 and the fodder's in the shock.

They's something kindo' harty-like
 about the atmufere
 When the heat of summer's over
 and the coolin' fall is here –
 Of course we miss the flowers,
 and the blossums on the trees,
 And the mumble of the hummin'-birds
 and buzzin' of the bees;
 But the air's so appetizin';
 and the landscape through the haze
 Of a crisp and sunny morning
 of the airy autumn days
 Is a pictur' that no painter
 has the colorin' to mock –
 When the frost is on the punkin
 and the fodder's in the shock.

The husky, rusty russel
 of the tassels of the corn,
 And the raspin' of the tangled leaves,
 as golden as the morn;
 The stubble in the furries –
 kindo' lonesome-like, but still
 A-preachin' sermons to us
 of the barns they grewed to fill;
 The strawstack in the medder,
 and the reaper in the shed;
 The hosses in theyr stalls below –
 the clover over-head!
 O, it sets my hart a-clickin'
 like the tickin' of a clock,
 When the frost is on the punkin
 and the fodder's in the shock!

Then your apples all is gethered,
 and the ones a feller keeps
 Is poured around the celler-floor

in red and yellor heaps;
 And your cider-makin' 's over, and
 your wimmern-folks is through
 With their mince and apple-butter, and
 theyr souse and sausage, too!
 I don't know how to tell it –
 but ef sich a thing could be
 As the angels wantin' boardin',
 and they'd call around on me –
 I'd want to 'commodate 'em –
 all the whole-indurin' flock –
 When the frost is on the punkin
 and the fodder's in the shock!

Lucy

By William Wordsworth

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
 Beside the springs of Dove,
 A maid whom there were none to praise
 And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
 Half hidden from the eye!
 Fair as a star, when only one
 Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
 When Lucy ceased to be;
 But she is in her grave, and, *Oh,*
The difference to me!

Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening

By Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
 His house is in the village though;
 He will not see me stopping here
 To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
 To stop without a farmhouse near
 Between the woods and frozen lake
 The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
 To ask if there is some mistake.
 The only other sound's the sweep
 Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
 But I have promises to keep,
 And miles to go before I sleep,
 And miles to go before I sleep.

Warrior's Dilemma

Adapted by Len Smith
 from Richard Hovey's *The Sea Gypsy*

I am fevered with the Bible,
 I am fretful with the War,
 For the hunger-thirst is on me
 And my soul is with the Lord.

There's a chariot in the whirlwind
 With its unicorns breathing fire,
 And my heart has gone aboard it
 For the Kingdom I desire.

But...I must fight again tomorrow:
 In this world I must pause,
 To help my fellow servants
 In the glory of His cause.

The Sea Gypsy

By Richard Hovey

I am fevered with the sunset,
 I am fretful with the bay,
 For the wander-thirst is on me
 And my soul is in Cathay.

There's a schooner in the offing,
 With her topsails shot with fire,
 And my heart has gone aboard her
 For the Islands of Desire.

I must forth again to-morrow!
 With the sunset I must be
 Hull down on the trail of rapture
 In the wonder of the sea.

Along the Road

By Robert Browning Hamilton

I walked a mile with Pleasure;
 She chattered all the way,
 But left me none the wiser
 For all she had to say.

I walked a mile with Sorrow
 And ne'er a word said she;
 But oh, the things I learned from her
 When Sorrow walked with me!

The Lamplighter

By Robert Louis Stevenson

My tea is nearly ready
 and the sun has left the sky.
 It's time to take the window
 to see Leerie going by;
 For every night at teatime
 and before you take your seat,
 With lantern and with ladder
 he comes posting up the street.

Now Tom would be a driver
 and Maria go to sea,
 And my papa's a banker
 and as rich as he can be;
 But I, when I am stronger
 and can choose what I'm to do,
 O Leerie, I'll go round at night
 and light the lamps with you!

For we are very lucky,
 with a lamp before the door,
 And Leerie stops to light it
 as he lights so many more;
 And oh! before you hurry by
 with ladder and with light;
 O Leerie, see a little child
 and nod to him tonight!

Don't Quit

By anonymous

When things go wrong,
 as they sometimes will,
 When the road you're trudging
 seems all uphill,
 When the funds are low
 and the debts are high,
 And you want to smile,
 but you have to sigh,
 When care is pressing
 you down a bit
 Rest if you must,
 but don't you quit.

Life is queer
 with its twists and its turns,
 As everyone of us
 sometimes learns,
 And many a failure
 turns about
 When they might have won,
 had they stuck it out.
 Don't give up
 though the pace seems slow,
 You may succeed
 with another blow.

Often the goal
 is nearer than
 It seems to a faint
 and faltering man,
 Often the struggler
 has given up
 When he might have captured
 the victor's cup;
 And he learned too late
 when the night came down,
 How close he was
 to the golden crown.

Success is failure
 turned inside out
 The silver tint
 of the clouds of doubt
 And you never can tell
 how close you are,
 It may be near
 when it seems so far;
 So stick to the fight
 when you're hardest hit,
 It's when things seem worst
 that you must not quit!

The Cross was His Own

By unknown

They borrowed a bed
 to lay His head
 When Christ the Lord came down;
 They borrowed the ass
 in the mountain pass
 For Him to ride to town;
 But the crown that He wore
 and the cross that He bore
 Were His own – the cross was His own!

He borrowed the bread
 when the crowd He fed

On the grassy mountain side,
 He borrowed the dish of broken fish
 With which He satisfied.
 But the crown that He wore
 and the cross that He bore
 Were His own – the cross was His own!

He borrowed the ship
 in which to sit
 To teach the multitudes;
 He borrowed a nest in which to rest –
 He had never a home so rude;
 But the crown that He wore
 and the cross that He bore
 Were His own – the cross was His own!

He borrowed a room
 on His way to the tomb
 The passover lamb to eat:
 They borrowed a cave – for Him a grave,
 They borrowed a winding sheet.
 But the crown that He wore
 and the cross that He bore
 Were his own – the cross was His own.

Sea Fever

By John Masefield

I must go down to the seas again,
 to the lonely sea and the sky,
 And all I ask is a tall ship
 and a star to steer her by,
 And the wheel's kick
 and the wind's song
 and the white sails shaking,
 And a grey mist on the sea's face,
 and a grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again,
 for the call of the running tide
 Is a wild call and a clear call
 that may not be denied;
 And all I ask is a windy day
 with the white clouds flying,
 And the flung spray
 and the blown spume,
 and the sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again,
 to the vagrant gypsy life,
 To the gull's way and the whale's way
 where the wind's
 like a whetted knife;
 And all I ask is a merry yarn
 from a laughing fellow-rover
 And quiet sleep and a sweet dream
 when the long trick's over.

Trees

By Joyce Kilmer

I think that I shall never see
 A poem lovely as a tree.
 A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
 Against the sweet earth's flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
 And lifts her leafy arms to pray;
 A tree that may in summer wear

A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
 Who intimately lives with rain.
 Poems are made by fools like me,
 But only God can make a tree.

To Lucasta, On Going to the Wars

By Richard Lovelace

Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind,
 That from the nunnery
 Of thy chaste breasts, and quiet mind,
 To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
 The first foe in the field;
 And with a stronger faith embrace
 A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such,
 As you too shall adore;
 I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
 Loved I not honour more.

Somebody's mother

By Mary Dow Brine

The woman was old
 and ragged and grey
 And bent with the chill
 of the Winter's day.
 The street was wet with a recent snow
 And the woman's feet
 were aged and slow.
 She stood at the crossing
 and waited long,
 Alone, uncared for, amid the throng
 Of human beings who passed her by
 Nor heeded the glance
 of her anxious eyes.
 Down the street, with laughter and shout,
 Glad in the freedom of 'school let out,'
 Came the boys like a flock of sheep,
 Hailing the snow piled white and deep.
 Past the woman so old and grey
 Hastened the children on their way.
 Nor offered a helping hand to her –
 So meek, so timid, afraid to stir
 Lest the carriage wheels
 or the horses' feet
 Should crowd her down
 in the slippery street.

At last came one of the merry troop,
 The gayest lad of all the group;
 He paused beside her and whispered low,
 "I'll help you cross, if you wish to go."
 Her aged hand on his strong young arm
 She placed, and so, without hurt or harm,
 He guided the trembling feet along,
 Proud that his own were firm and strong.
 Then back again to his friends he went,
 His young heart happy and well content.
 "She's somebody's mother,
 boys, you know,
 For all she's aged and poor and slow,
 And I hope some fellow will lend a hand
 To help my mother, you understand,

If ever she's poor and old and grey,
And her own dear boy is far away."

'Somebody's mother'
 bowed low her head
In her home that night,
 and the prayer she said
Was "God be kind to the noble boy,
Who is somebody's son,
 and pride and joy!"

High Flight

By John Gillespie Magee, Jr

Oh, I have slipped
 the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies
 on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed,
 and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds...
 and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of...
 wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence.
 Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting
 wind along, and flung
My eager craft
 through footless halls of air.
Up, up the long,
 delirious, burning blue
I've topped the windswept heights
 with easy grace
Where never lark,
 or even eagle flew.
And, while with silent,
 lifting mind I've trod
The high untrodden
 sanctity of space
Put out my hand,
 and touched the face of God.

Dust of Snow

By Robert Frost

The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow
From a hemlock tree
Has given my heart
A change of mood
And saved some part
Of a day I had rued.

Be Strong

By Maltbie Davenport Babcock

Be strong!
We are not here to play,
 to dream, to drift;
We have hard work to do,
 and loads to lift;
Shun not the struggle –
 face it; 'tis God's gift.

Be strong!
Say not, "The days are evil.
 Who's to blame?"
And fold the hands and acquiesce –
 oh shame!
Stand up, speak out,

 and bravely, in God's name.
Be strong!
It matters not
 how deep entrenched the wrong,
How hard the battle goes,
 the day how long;
Faint not – fight on!
 To-morrow comes the song.

Tell Him So

By unknown

If you hear a kind word spoken
Of some worthy soul you know,
It may fill his heart with sunshine
If you only tell him so.
If a deed, however humble,
Helps you on your way to go,
Seek the one whose hand has helped you,
Seek him out and tell him so!
If your heart is touched and tender
Toward a person, lost and low,
It might help him to do better
If you'd only tell him so!
Oh, my sisters, oh, my brothers,
As o'er life's rough path you go,
If God's love has saved and kept you,
Do not fail to tell men so.

The Secret of the Sea

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Ah! What pleasant visions haunt me
As I gaze upon the sea!
All the old romantic legends,
All my dreams, come back to me.
In each sail that skims the horizon,
In each landward-blowing breeze,
I behold that stately galley,
Hear those mournful melodies;
Till my soul is full of longing
For the secret of the sea,
And the heart of the great ocean
Sends a thrilling pulse through me.

Who Shall Be Fairest?

By Charles MacKay

Who shall be fairest, who shall be rarest?
Who shall be first in the songs that we sing?
She who is kindest when fortune is blindest,
Bearing through winter the blooms of the spring.
Charm of our gladness, friend of our sadness,
Angel of life when its pleasures take wing!
She shall be fairest, she shall be rarest,
She shall be first in the songs that we sing!
Who shall be nearest, noblest, and dearest,
Named but with honour, and pride evermore?
He, the undaunted, whose banner is planted
On Glory's high ramparts and battlements hoar.
Fearless of danger, to falsehood a stranger,
Looking not back while there's duty before!
He shall be nearest, he shall be dearest,
He shall be first in our hearts evermore.

Hymns

ALAS! AND DID MY SAVIOUR BLEED?

Alas! and did my Saviour bleed
And did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

Refrain:

*At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light,
And the burden of my heart rolled away,
It was there by faith I received my sight,
And now I am happy all the day!*

Was it for crimes that I had done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!

Thus might I hide my blushing face
While His dear cross appears,
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,
And melt my eyes to tears.

But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe:
Here, Lord, I give my self away
'Tis all that I can do.

ALL HAIL THE POWER OF JESUS' NAME!

All hail the pow'r of Jesus' Name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Ye chosen seed of Israel's race,
Ye ransomed from the fall,
Hail Him Who saves you by His grace,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Oh, that with yonder sacred throng
We at His feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all!

AMAZING GRACE

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me....
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now, I see.

T'was Grace that taught...
my heart to fear.

And Grace, my fears relieved.
How precious did that Grace appear...
the hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares...
we have already come.

T'was Grace that brought us safe thus far...

and Grace will lead us home.

The Lord has promised good to me...
His word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be...
as long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years...
bright shining as the sun.
We've no less days to sing God's praise...
than when we'd first begun.

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me....
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now, I see.

AT CALVARY

Years I spent in vanity and pride,
Caring not my Lord was crucified,
Knowing not it was for me He died on Calvary.

Refrain:

*Mercy there was great, and grace was free;
Pardon there was multiplied to me;
There my burdened soul found liberty at Calvary.*

By God's Word at last my sin I learned;
Then I trembled at the law I'd spurned,
Till my guilty soul imploring turned to Calvary.

Now I've giv'n to Jesus everything,
Now I gladly own Him as my King,
Now my raptured soul can only sing of Calvary!

Oh, the love that drew salvation's plan!
Oh, the grace that brought it down to man!
Oh, the mighty gulf that God did span at Calvary!

BLESSED ASSURANCE

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Refrain:

*This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long.*

Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels, descending, bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Saviour am happy and blest,
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

DRAW ME NEARER

I am Thine, O Lord, I have heard Thy voice,
And it told Thy love to me;
But I long to rise in the arms of faith
And be closer drawn to Thee.

Refrain:

*Draw me nearer, nearer blessed Lord,
To the cross where Thou hast died;
Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer blessed Lord,
To Thy precious, bleeding side.*

Consecrate me now to Thy service, Lord,
By the pow'r of grace divine;
Let my soul look up with a steadfast hope,
And my will be lost in Thine.

Oh, the pure delight of a single hour
That before Thy throne I spend,
When I kneel in prayer, and with Thee, my God
I commune as friend with friend!

There are depths of love that I cannot know
Till I cross the narrow sea;
There are heights of joy that I may not reach
Till I rest in peace with Thee.

GOD LEADS US ALONG

In shady, green pastures, so rich and so sweet,
God leads His dear children along;
Where the water's cool flow bathes the weary one's feet,
God leads His dear children along.

Refrain:

*Some through the waters, some through the flood,
Some through the fire, but all through the blood;
Some through great sorrow, but God gives a song,
In the night season and all the day long.*

Sometimes on the mount where the sun shines so bright,
God leads His dear children along;
Sometimes in the valley, in darkest of night,
God leads His dear children along.

Though sorrows befall us and evils oppose,
God leads His dear children along;
Through grace we can conquer, defeat all our foes,
God leads His dear children along.

Away from the mire, and away from the clay,
God leads His dear children along;
Away up in glory, eternity's day,
God leads His dear children along.

HAVE THINE OWN WAY, LORD!

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
Thou art the Potter, I am the clay.
Mold me and make me after Thy will,
While I am waiting, yielded and still.

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
Search me and try me, Master, today!
Whiter than snow, Lord, wash me just now,
As in Thy presence humbly I bow.

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!

Wounded and weary, help me, I pray!
Power, all power, surely is Thine!
Touch me and heal me, Saviour divine.

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
Hold o'er my being absolute sway!
Fill with Thy Spirit 'till all shall see
Christ only, always, living in me.

HE KEEPS ME SINGING

There's within my heart a melody
Jesus whispers sweet and low,
Fear not, I am with thee, peace, be still,
In all of life's ebb and flow.

Refrain:

*Jesus, Jesus, Jesus,
Sweetest Name I know,
Fills my every longing,
Keeps me singing as I go.*

All my life was wrecked by sin and strife,
Discord filled my heart with pain,
Jesus swept across the broken strings,
Stirred the slumb'ring chords again.

Feasting on the riches of His grace,
Resting 'neath His shelt'ring wing,
Always looking on His smiling face,
That is why I shout and sing.

Though sometimes He leads through waters deep,
Trials fall across the way,
Though sometimes the path seems rough and steep,
See His footprints all the way.

Soon He's coming back to welcome me,
Far beyond the starry sky;
I shall wing my flight to worlds unknown,
I shall reign with Him on high.

HE LIVES!

I serve a risen Saviour, He's in the world today;
I know that He is living, whatever men may say;
I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer,
And just the time I need Him He's always near.

Refrain:

*He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me and He talks with me
Along life's narrow way.
He lives, He lives, salvation to impart!
You ask me how I know He lives:
He lives within my heart.*

In all the world around me I see His loving care,
And tho my heart grows weary I never will despair;
I know that He is leading thro' all the stormy blast,
The day of His appearing will come at last.

Rejoice, rejoice, O Christian, lift up your voice and sing
Eternal hallelujahs to Jesus Christ the King!
The hope of all who seek Him, the help of all who find,
None other is so loving, so good and kind.

HIGHER GROUND

I'm pressing on the upward way,
 New heights I'm gaining every day;
 Still praying as I'm onward bound,
 "Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."

Refrain:

Lord, lift me up and let me stand,

By faith, on Heaven's table land,

A higher plane than I have found;

Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.

My heart has no desire to stay
 Where doubts arise and fears dismay;
 Though some may dwell where those abound,
 My prayer, my aim, is higher ground.

I want to live above the world,
 Though Satan's darts at me are hurled;
 For faith has caught the joyful sound,
 The song of saints on higher ground.

I want to scale the utmost height
 And catch a gleam of glory bright;
 But still I'll pray till Heav'n I've found,
 "Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."

HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW

Why should I feel discouraged, why should the shadows come,
 Why should my heart be lonely, and long for heaven and home,

When Jesus is my portion? My constant friend is He:
 His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;
 His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

Refrain:

I sing because I'm happy,

I sing because I'm free,

For His eye is on the sparrow,

And I know He watches me.

"Let not your heart be troubled," His tender word I hear,
 And resting on His goodness, I lose my doubts and fears;
 Though by the path He leadeth, but one step I may see;
 His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;
 His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

Whenever I am tempted, whenever clouds arise,
 When songs give place to sighing, when hope within me dies,
 I draw the closer to Him, from care He sets me free;
 His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;
 His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

I AM RESOLVED

I am resolved no longer to linger,
 Charmed by the world's delight,
 Things that are higher, things that are nobler,
 These have allured my sight.

Refrain:

I will hasten to Him, hasten so glad and free;

Jesus, greatest, highest, I will come to Thee.

I will hasten, hasten to Him, hasten so glad and free;

Jesus, Jesus, greatest, highest, I will come to Thee.

I am resolved to go to the Saviour,
 Leaving my sin and strife;
 He is the true One, He is the just One,
 He hath the words of life.

I am resolved to follow the Saviour,
 Faithful and true each day;
 Heed what He sayeth, do what He willeth,
 He is the living Way.

I am resolved to enter the kingdom
 Leaving the paths of sin;
 Friends may oppose me, foes may beset me,
 Still will I enter in.

I am resolved, and who will go with me?
 Come, friends, without delay,
 Taught by the Bible, led by the Spirit,
 We'll walk the heav'nly way.

I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED

I know not why God's wondrous grace
 To me He hath made known,
 Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love
 Redeemed me for His own.

Refrain:

But I know Whom I have believèd,

And am persuaded that He is able

To keep that which I've committed

Unto Him against that day.

I know not how this saving faith
 To me He did impart,
 Nor how believing in His word
 Wrought peace within my heart.

I know not how the Spirit moves,
 Convincing us of sin,
 Revealing Jesus through the word,
 Creating faith in Him.

I know not what of good or ill
 May be reserved for me,
 Of weary ways or golden days,
 Before His face I see.

I know not when my Lord may come,
 At night or noonday fair,
 Nor if I walk the vale with Him,
 Or meet Him in the air.

I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY

I love to tell the story of unseen things above,
 Of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love.
 I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true;
 It satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.

Refrain:

I love to tell the story, 'twill be my theme in glory,

To tell the old, old story of Jesus and His love.

I love to tell the story; more wonderful it seems
 Than all the golden fancies of all our golden dreams.
 I love to tell the story, it did so much for me;
 And that is just the reason I tell it now to thee.

I love to tell the story; 'tis pleasant to repeat
 What seems, each time I tell it, more wonderfully sweet.
 I love to tell the story, for some have never heard
 The message of salvation from God's own holy word.

I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
 Seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest.
 And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song,
 'Twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long.

I WILL SING THE WONDROUS STORY

I will sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ Who died for me.
How He left His home in glory
For the cross of Calvary.

Refrain:

*Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ Who died for me,
Sing it with the saints in glory,
Gathered by the crystal sea.*

I was lost, but Jesus found me,
Found the sheep that went astray,
Threw His loving arms around me,
Drew me back into His way.

I was bruised, but Jesus healed me,
Faint was I from many a fall,
Sight was gone, and fears possessed me,
But He freed me from them all.

Days of darkness still come o'er me,
Sorrow's path I often tread,
But His presence still is with me;
By His guiding hand I'm led.

He will keep me till the river
Rolls its waters at my feet;
Then He'll bear me safely over,
Where the loved ones I shall meet.

IS YOUR ALL ON THE ALTAR?

You have longed for sweet peace,
And for faith to increase,
And have earnestly, fervently prayed;
But you cannot have rest,
Or be perfectly blest,
Until all on the altar is laid.

Refrain:

*Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid?
Your heart does the Spirit control?
You can only be blest,
And have peace and sweet rest,
As you yield Him your body and soul.*

Would you walk with the Lord,
In the light of His word,
And have peace and contentment alway?
You must do His sweet will,
To be free from all ill,
On the altar your all you must lay.

Oh, we never can know
What the Lord will bestow
Of the blessings for which we have prayed,
Till our body and soul
He doth fully control,
And our all on the altar is laid.

Who can tell all the love
He will send from above,
And how happy our hearts will be made;
Of the fellowship sweet
We shall share at His feet,
When our all on the altar is laid.

IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.

Refrain:

*It is well with my soul,
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!—
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live:
If Jordan above me shall roll,
No pang shall be mine, for in death as in life
Thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul.

But, Lord, 'tis for Thee, for Thy coming we wait,
The sky, not the grave, is our goal;
Oh, trump of the angel! Oh, voice of the Lord!
Blessed hope, blessed rest of my soul!

And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
Even so, it is well with my soul.

JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH THEE

I am weak, but Thou art strong;
Jesus, keep me from all wrong;
I'll be satisfied as long
As I walk, let me walk close to Thee.

Refrain:

*Just a closer walk with Thee,
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea,
Daily walking close to Thee,
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.*

Through this world of toil and snares,
If I falter, Lord, who cares?
Who with me my burden shares?
None but Thee, dear Lord, none but Thee.

When my feeble life is o'er,
Time for me will be no more;
Guide me gently, safely o'er
To Thy kingdom shore, to Thy shore.

LEANING ON THE EVERLASTING ARMS

What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Refrain:

*Leaning, leaning,
Safe and secure from all alarms;
Leaning, leaning,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.*

Oh, how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,

Leaning on the everlasting arms;
Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

What have I to dread, what have I to fear,
Leaning on the everlasting arms?
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

OH, HOW I LOVE JESUS

There is a Name I love to hear,
I love to sing its worth;
It sounds like music in my ear,
The sweetest Name on earth.

Refrain:

*Oh, how I love Jesus,
Oh, how I love Jesus,
Oh, how I love Jesus,
Because He first loved me!*

It tells me of a Saviour's love,
Who died to set me free;
It tells me of His precious blood,
The sinner's perfect plea.

It tells me of a Father's smile
Beaming upon His child;
It cheers me through this little while,
Through desert, waste, and wild.

It tells me what my Father hath
In store for every day,
And though I tread a darksome path,
Yields sunshine all the way.

It tells of One whose loving heart
Can feel my deepest woe;
Who in each sorrow bears a part
That none can bear below.

It bids my trembling heart rejoice;
It dries each rising tear;
It tells me, in a "still small voice,"
To trust and never fear.

Jesus, the Name I love so well,
The Name I love to hear:
No saint on earth its worth can tell,
No heart conceive how dear.

This Name shall shed its fragrance still
Along this thorny road,
Shall sweetly smooth the rugged hill
That leads me up to God.

And there with all the blood-bought throng,
From sin and sorrow free,
I'll sing the new eternal song
Of Jesus' love for me.

ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before.
Christ, the royal Master, leads against the foe;
Forward into battle see His banners go!

Refrain:

*Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before.*

At the sign of triumph Satan's host doth flee;
On then, Christian soldiers, on to victory!
Hell's foundations quiver at the shout of praise;
Brothers, lift your voices, loud your anthems raise.

Like a mighty army moves the church of God;
Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod.
We are not divided, all one body we,
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.

Crowns and thrones may perish, kingdoms rise and wane,
But the church of Jesus constant will remain.
Gates of hell can never 'gainst that church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise, and that cannot fail.

Onward then, ye people, join our happy throng,
Blend with ours your voices in the triumph song.
Glory, laud, and honor unto Christ the King,
This through countless ages men and angels sing.

REDEEMED, HOW I LOVE TO PROCLAIM IT!

Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it!
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;
Redeemed through His infinite mercy,
His child and forever I am.

Refrain:

*Redeemed, redeemed,
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;
Redeemed, redeemed,
His child and forever I am.*

Redeemed, and so happy in Jesus,
No language my rapture can tell;
I know that the light of His presence
With me doth continually dwell.

I think of my blessed Redeemer,
I think of Him all the day long;
I sing, for I cannot be silent;
His love is the theme of my song.

I know I shall see in His beauty
The King in whose law I delight;
Who lovingly guardeth my footsteps,
And giveth me songs in the night.

I know there's a crown that is waiting
In yonder bright mansion for me,
And soon, with the spirits made perfect,
At home with the Lord I shall be.

SOUND THE BATTLE CRY!

Sound the battle cry! See, the foe is nigh;
Raise the standard high for the Lord;
Gird your armor on, stand firm every one;
Rest your cause upon His holy word.

Refrain:

*Rouse, then, soldiers, rally round the banner,
Ready, steady, pass the word along;
Onward, forward, shout aloud, "Hosanna!"
Christ is Captain of the mighty throng.*

Strong to meet the foe, marching on we go,
While our cause we know must prevail;
Shield and banner bright, gleaming in the light,
Battling for the right we ne'er can fail.

O Thou God of all, hear us when we call,
 Help us one and all by Thy grace;
 When the battle's done, and the vict'ry's won,
 May we wear the crown before Thy face.

STAND UP, STAND UP FOR JESUS

Stand up, stand up for Jesus! ye soldiers of the cross;
 Lift high His royal banner, it must not suffer loss:
 From vict'ry unto vict'ry, His army shall He lead,
 Till every foe is vanquished, and Christ is Lord indeed.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus! The trumpet call obey:
 Forth to the mighty conflict, in this His glorious day;
 Ye that are men now serve Him against unnumbered foes;
 Let courage rise with danger, and strength to strength oppose.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus! Stand in His strength alone,
 The arm of flesh will fail you, ye dare not trust your own;
 Put on the gospel armor, and watching unto prayer,
 Where calls the voice of duty, be never wanting there.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus, each soldier to his post,
 Close up the broken column, and shout through all the host:
 Make good the loss so heavy, in those that still remain,
 And prove to all around you that death itself is gain.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus! the strife will not be long;
 This day the noise of battle, the next the victor's song;
 To him that overcometh a crown of life shall be;
 He with the King of glory shall reign eternally.

STANDING ON THE PROMISES

Standing on the promises of Christ my King,
 Through eternal ages let His praises ring,
 Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing,
 Standing on the promises of God.

Refrain:

*Standing, standing,
 Standing on the promises of God my Saviour;
 Standing, standing,
 I'm standing on the promises of God.*

Standing on the promises that cannot fail,
 When the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,
 By the living word of God I shall prevail,
 Standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord,
 Bound to Him eternally by love's strong cord,
 Overcoming daily with the Spirit's sword,
 Standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises I cannot fall,
 Listening every moment to the Spirit's call
 Resting in my Saviour as my all in all,
 Standing on the promises of God.

'TIS SO SWEET TO TRUST IN JESUS

'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
 And to take Him at His Word;
 Just to rest upon His promise,
 And to know, "Thus saith the Lord!"

Refrain:

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!

*How I've proved Him o'er and o'er
 Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
 O for grace to trust Him more!*

O how sweet to trust in Jesus,
 Just to trust His cleansing blood;
 And in simple faith to plunge me
 'Neath the healing, cleansing flood!

Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Jesus,
 Just from sin and self to cease;
 Just from Jesus simply taking
 Life and rest, and joy and peace.

I'm so glad I learned to trust Thee,
 Precious Jesus, Saviour, Friend;
 And I know that Thou art with me,
 Wilt be with me to the end.

WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS

What a Friend we have in Jesus,
 all our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry
 everything to God in prayer!
 O what peace we often forfeit,
 O what needless pain we bear,
 All because we do not carry
 everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations?
 Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged;
 take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful
 who will all our sorrows share?
 Jesus knows our every weakness;
 take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden,
 cumbered with a load of care?
 Precious Saviour, still our refuge,
 take it to the Lord in prayer.

Do your friends despise, forsake you?
 Take it to the Lord in prayer!
 In His arms He'll take and shield you;
 you will find a solace there.

Blessed Saviour, Thou hast promised
 Thou wilt all our burdens bear.

May we ever, Lord, be bringing
 all to Thee in earnest prayer.
 Soon in glory bright unclouded
 there will be no need for prayer.
 Rapture, praise and endless worship
 will be our sweet portion there.

WHEN THE ROLL IS CALLED UP YONDER

When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound,
 And time shall be no more,
 And the morning breaks, eternal, bright and fair;
 When the saved of earth shall gather
 Over on the other shore,
 And the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there.

Refrain:

*When the roll, is called up yon-der,
 When the roll, is called up yon-der,*

*When the roll, is called up yon-der,
When the roll is called up yonder I'll be there.*

On that bright and cloudless morning
When the dead in Christ shall rise,
And the glory of His resurrection share;
When His chosen ones shall gather
To their home beyond the skies,
And the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there.

Let us labor for the Master
From the dawn till setting sun,
Let us talk of all His wondrous love and care;
Then when all of life is over,
And our work on earth is done,
And the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there.

WONDERFUL WORDS OF LIFE

Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life,
Let me more of their beauty see, wonderful words of life;
Words of life and beauty teach me faith and duty.

Refrain:

*Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life,
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.*

Christ, the blessèd One, gives to all wonderful words of life;
Sinner, list to the loving call, wonderful words of life;
All so freely given, wooing us to heaven.

Sweetly echo the Gospel call, wonderful words of life;
Offer pardon and peace to all, wonderful words of life;
Jesus, only Saviour, sanctify us forever.

• • •

Back in the '70s when I was a Naval Aviator, my brother, an Army doctor scheduled for Ranger training, told me he was so tired from his hospital work that, instead of going out and running in the early morning, he tended to turn off his alarm and get a few more Zs. He was worried that, because Ranger training was very physical, he'd struggle.

Motivated by brotherly love, I went out and bought a big poster board, cut out some pictures from magazines, gave them motivating captions, and mailed the poster to him. He taped it to his wall, ran every morning, and distinguished himself in Ranger training.

It is my hope that TheSwordbearer ministry will help you get up every morning and fight the good fight.



Stay in the word, comrades!