

Ripples and Reflections

THE POND

*A Calm Clear Pond
Undisturbed
Its Mirrored Visage
Reflecting all around
a Beautiful array of Nature

A Small Pebble thrown
The Mirror Broken
An ever Expanding Circle
Of Ripples and Reflection

The World of the Pond
Changed
For a Moment
Still Beautiful in its Change*
Mark Stracener

I always enjoyed skipping rocks. When my friends and I would get anywhere near a pond or river or ditch, something in us made us want to pick up the nearest rock and try and see how many skips we could get before it sank. When that rock sank, we never really watched just how many ripples it made or how long they kept going.

We all make those ripples in our lives. Good or bad, everything we do in life continues. The smallest kindness to someone could spread outward for not only hours, but possibly years. The smallest unpleasant act can do the same. The choice is, do we leave in our wake smiles or sadness, tears or joy? I choose smiles. Life itself has enough drama to give us without us bringing more to ourselves or to someone else. Consider this: an old man is at the grocery store for the first time after his wife of sixty years passes away. He has never gone shopping in his life for groceries. You notice the old man who slowly moves down the aisle with his walker and shopping cart. He has no clue where anything is. You offer him some help. He refuses at first, but with persistence he allows you to help. His fear and awkwardness is turned into an outing of giving by someone he never knew. His pace is still slow as he leaves the store, but peppy nonetheless—ripple that will continue for sure. A reflection of love for a fellow rock-skipper.

I have always written poetry and stories. In elementary school, my friend Tommy Kimbrough and I wrote quite an extensive book for sixth graders called, *Herbert*. Herbert was quite a cool kid who had some pretty incredible adventures. It was a lot of fun and that literary adventure with him made me want to write. Tragically, my writing buddy was killed in a car accident after being assaulted one night. His glasses were broken in the assault, and he hit a bridge on his way home. The ripple of the worst kind cost my friend his life.

Life is full of love, heartbreak, joy and sadness and everything in between. These are my feelings so far. Thank you so much for giving me a little time in your busy day. May all your ripples be good ones.

Grandparents

You know those really seasoned citizens who have distinct aromas? Grandparents hug you too tightly and always tell you just how tall, big, pretty, handsome and special you are. Grandparents know all the homemade cures for everything and use ingredients in their food you don't recognize.

I am quickly becoming one of these people. I have seven grandkids of my own now. I can't wait to pass on my homemade wisdom to some of my grandkids' soft minds full of mush.

I must say, however, age has become very relevant to me. I used to think that fifty was old. Looking back in my rear view mirror at fifty, I must say, heck, fifty isn't old—80 is old.

We get from our grandparents, as far as I have experienced, wisdom and faith. This is their legacy to me. I saw the meager lives they lived, and I saw true happiness and love for each other, as well as the ever-present, open Bible. A servant spirit was so obvious in their lives. It kept them stable and loving life.

The poem, "The Hummingbird" is about being given that legacy of love, caring, giving and respect. This one is a nod to my dad's parents, Hester and Ellis Stracener from De Valls Bluff Arkansas.

The Hummingbird

**I always admired and Loved it
When I would visit Grandmas House
But it was always out of reach
Even when I stretched my arms out**

**So high on the shelf
So safe and secure
There was something about it
So Fragile, so Pure**

**A small glass Hummingbird
With wings that stretched so far out
And a beak so long and fragile
How it never got broken,**

I just don't know how

**I asked my Grandma
If I could hold it one day
She looked up and stared at it
And softly began to say**

**This Precious little Hummingbird
Was a gift from my dad
I can't quite say how old it is
But when I got it, I was amazed and so glad**

**I got it on my Wedding day
In a wooden box that he made
He took it out and handed it to me
And said, you won't break it, don't be afraid**

**Then he told me this Small Glass Bird
Was for my husband and I
It's a Symbol of your Love for each other
He said through a tear and a sigh**

**Grandma said, this Little One survived
Through many years of hard life
We watched over it and adored it
Through happy times and through strife**

**We treated it like our Love for each other
With Care and Respect
Through Children and Wars
Struggles, Sickness and Death**

**We were determined to keep it safe
And we both thought it through
When we both have gone Home
We wanted to give it to you**

**She carefully handed me the Hummingbird
I held it tight in my hands
Grandma cupped her feeble hands below mine
In case it needed a soft place to land**

**I could see just how priceless it was
To my Grandma that day
We admired it for a few minutes
Then returned it to its safe place**

**It was such a Sad day
When she left to go Home
I remember holding the Hummingbird box
Feeling Sad and Alone**

**This Treasure she left me
I would keep in a Special Place on my shelf
Then one day carefully bring it down
When I took a Wife for myself**

**Now it sits in an Honored Place
A Symbol of my Love
For the Wife that God has given me
A Gift, from a Winged Angel up above.**

The Ballad of Ancel and Sadie, is a true story of my grandparents, Ancel and Sadie Thomas. He was a Church of God Preacher in Des Arc, Arkansas, and his wife Sadie, who was hearing challenged, learned to play a red and white electric guitar. She would turn it up loud so she could hear it. He preached and she was the music in the service. They made a great team of evangelists. She was four foot ten inches tall, and she would hug you until your eyes popped . The best fried chicken ever made was fried in her house. I used to love staying with them. I remember their morning routine. She got up before dark to cook his breakfast and heat up the coffee pot on the stove. The coffee and breakfast smells made you want to jump out of bed. He would sit there at the table and eat his breakfast, and then he'd pour his coffee into the saucer and blow and sip it. God how I miss them!

The Ballad Of Ancel and Sadie

**Ancel was a young, hard working gentleman
Sadie was a beautiful Indian maid
They fell in Love down by the river
They didn't know what path their lives would take**

**Sadie kept and served her loving husband
Ancels heart was true, he loved his wife
The twists and turns they walked together
Hanging on to Love , Hanging on to life**

**He was a carpenter, a very good one
He built his house, nail, board by board
The two discovered something was missing**

That's when they learned to serve the Lord

**Ancel became a preacher in the pulpit
Sadie learned to play a red and white guitar
He would preach to whoever would listen
And she would play with all her heart**

**The two were blessed with two loving daughters
They raised them with love and hugs so tight
Their loved stayed true, Hands clasped together
Hardly ever straying from each others sight**

**Sadie was there at Ancels bedside
When the Lord Above called Ancel Home
She knew her service here on Earth was over
And in six months, she joined him There**

**Sadie keeps and serves her loving husband
Ancels heart is true, he loves his wife
No twists, no turns, they are together**

Hanging on to Love in Eternal Life

Parents

I grew up in a suburb of North Little Rock Arkansas called Rose City. I would like to say it compares to Andy Griffiths's Mayberry, but we were a little rowdier than Opie and his gang. It was indeed a fantastic place to grow up. Rose City was safe and had endless ways to enjoy a hot summer day. My parents didn't know if I was frog giggin', trappin', huntin', or finding a blue hole to swim in by the river. A short bicycle ride and you could have your bobber in the water and be yankin' out a fish in no time. A lot of our neighborhood consisted of people who had moved "to the city" from the rural areas of Arkansas. My dad was a sharecropper's son looking to make his mark, and Momma was the daughter of a preacher and business owner. She learned her skill for work in the diner my grandfather owned, as well as working in the local movie theatre. My mother and father couldn't be more different. Dad had a very strict upbringing that involved something called a "razor strap" and had an incredible work ethic. Momma was more loving. She was gentle and affirming. They both prepared me to work hard, be smart and to make all the right choices. Discipline was imminent if you didn't. I did learn I could outrun her and make her laugh when I had done something wrong. Dad was a sure whoopin'. Mom taught us unconditional love, and Dad taught us love with a few conditions.

One thing they never did prepare me for was that one day they would grow old and, one terrible day, leave me. It's so very hard to watch them become elderly and feeble people who need us. My mother was the heartbeat of our family, and even into her

eighties continued to serve my dad. Her servant heart was known to all. The mail lady came up to me at mom's funeral and told us Momma would wait for her sometimes to invite her in for biscuits and gravy. She was a gift to all. We thought Dad would go first and Mom would spend her final years living with us. It wasn't to be. In one twenty-four hour period, she went from being a servant here on Earth to being a servant to the Lord. It still hurts. It always will. Dad decided to stay in their house. Her memory and her stuff was there, and he wanted to be near it.

SEASONS

**The Cold winds blow hard
In the Winter of my Life
I lash out at everything
My Kids, My God, My Wife**

**Longing for My Youth
Remembering My Spring
I miss the days past
When Energy and Ambition were King**

**My Summer days were filled
With hard work and Great Fun
Sports and young Friends
And Health by the Ton**

**I barely noticed the Autumn
My hair turned like the leaves
I knew the Cold was coming
But still chose not to see**

**Now the Winter is here
In all of its Fury and Pain
I look at My legs
Once so Strong in the Game**

**Now it's Step by Step
Each one is such Struggle
Just to stand up from my chair
Is such Pain and more Trouble**

**My Frustration is Great
My Patience is Gone
My Choices are few
I long for the Sun**

**I Desperately need the Summer
To come back again
But I know this Cold, Cold Winter
Will soon see My End**

**My Wife has Lovingly served Me
For all of My Life
She's shared all My Struggles
And Felt all My Strife**

**Together we'll face this Harsh Winter
Warming each other with our Love
Soon we'll find Our Eternal Springtime
In the Sunshine of Heaven Above.**

FOREVER

**I'll Hear You in the Sound a Snowflake makes
As it slowly settles to the Ground**

**I'll See You in the Beautiful colors of a
Rainbow in the Early Morning Mountain Mist**

**I'll Feel You on the Soft Skin
Of a Newborn Baby**

**I'll be Amazed by You in the Fragile
And Colorful wings of a Butterfly**

**I'll Smell You in the Fragrance of
The First Rose of Spring**

**I'll Forever hold on to Your Warmth
In our Final Caress**

I'll Thank God for the Gift of You

Forever

The Nap

**I was just a small boy
Who, I'm sure had been fussy that day
My Mother decided
It was no longer time to play
She said we could take a nap together
Because she too needed some rest
So we went to my bedroom to shut our eyes
For however long we could get**

**It was a Beautiful Spring day
The sun was shining so bright
A Breeze was blowing through the open window
All was Peaceful, all was right
Momma drifted off to sleep
She was snuggled close to me
The curtains gently swayed in the breeze
I closed my eyes and fell asleep**

**That Precious Memory I would Hold
For all of my Life
A Memory we would talk about
On the last night of her Life
She drifted off to sleep
Because she needed some rest
I'll Forever be thankful
And Forever be Blessed**

Finally Home

**The Tears are here
Streaming down our Cheeks
Her Pain is now over
Her Spirit is now Free**

**She has Finished her Race
It was anguished and Sad
To know She is Home-bound
Makes us all more than Glad**

But Still the Tears are here

**The Void that's Created
Can never be filled**

**The memories so Vivid
When we are quiet and still**

**The Loss of a Mother
A Sister, a Friend
Is such a Great Loss
So Hard to Comprehend**

But the Tears are still here

**On the Streets of Heaven
Tears of Joy fall like Rain
A Beloved Believer
Is now coming Home to take her place**

**They Can't wait to Welcome her
As she steps on those Golden Streets
A Multitude of Angels
Are there for Her to meet**

**And Tears of Joy Fall
Like Diamonds in Her Soul
Now, She's finally Home
Now, She's finally Whole**

But the Tears are Still here.

My mother called me one morning about a dream she had. She told me that she got a call from her mom in heaven. She was so excited, and she wanted to write down what happened in her dream. I had no idea at that time just how important that dream would be to me later. Oh, what a gift it would be to talk to her just one more time.

Mothers' Day

**It was just another Mothers Day
And all the kids had come and gone
We'd laughed and talked of memories
Of Childhood times at home
The evening started setting in
And supper came and went
My mind was on My Mother now
My rock, my dearest Friend
I couldn't get her off my mind
I missed her with every breath**

After many years of grieving
I still hurt from her death
My eyes got heavy sitting there
My reality turned to dreams
I entered into another World
Free from toils and schemes
I thought out loud, I'll just call Mom up
I'm sure she'll take my call
Of all the loves of all my life
It's her I'd like to speak to most of all
I reached for my telephone
And then to my surprise
I KNEW Heavens' number
A small tear fell from my eye
An Angelic voice answered
This is Heaven, Can I help you ?
I was so shocked and excited
I didn't quite know what to do
When I had finally gathered myself
I boldly asked the Voice
I want to talk to my Mother
She said, that's an Interesting Choice
You see your mothers standing here
And she was calling you
But here in Heaven, it's always Love
That just keeps shining through
There was a small pause
Then I heard the Sweetest Sound of All
It was my mothers Sweet, Sweet voice
On the other end of the call
When I was able to finally speak
We talked and talked and talked
We talked of Kids and Grandkids
And about our Christian Walk
But then she finally said to me
Don't worry my dear Child
They'll come a day when you'll join us
And your grieving put aside
Your Dad, he's here too
With all of those, that you still hold so dear
So Patience until that Great, Great Day
That you'll be Finally Near
We said Goodbye
The Phone went silent
And I Awoke with a Start
I looked down and noticed

**The phone clutched close to my Heart
It was a Gift from God, I know it was
That's all that I can say
But I'll Never have, on this ole Earth
A Better Mothers' Day**

Love

I can't remember when I haven't been in love. My mother gave me that gift. She taught me how to love others. Her unconditional love will be with me forever. One thing is for sure though, I never had any trouble "falling" in love. When I was in elementary school, I always wondered if every girl I met would one day be my wife. I remember thinking that she's on this planet right now walking around and all I have to do is find her. I always fell hard and, as all childhood loves go, they always ended quickly. It always hurt. There were many who I thought would be "the one," but for some reason or another they weren't. It was in the pursuit of what I thought would be "the one" when I met my first wife. I guess all this time I should have been looking for "the two" instead. We had some great years together, and parted with two beautiful daughters and lots of wisdom for us both. I met my "two" on a bowling outing with my sister and her husband. I'm sure she was impressed with my bowling ability. I'm sure that cinched it. It's been thirty years now, and we have two daughters to go with my first two. I couldn't love her more. It's been a fun and crazy roller coaster, but we can't wait to grow old together and swap dentures or body lotion. It's going to be great. If you have been blessed to be in love, I hope you will share these poems with your, one, two or seven. Feel free!

Just One Minute

**I wake up beside you
You're always here by my side
I watch as you lay sleeping
I kiss your cheek, I see you smile**

**My mind turns toward the workday
So very much to be done
I get dressed before the sunrise
I see the glow of the rising sun**

**The workday can be so crazy
But you never leave my mind
A call from you makes it all worth it
Because I know at home just what I'll find**

**I drive up in the driveway
Another day under my belt
All the days' cold confusion
Begins in my to slowly melt**

**I come inside the doorway
To find you going about your day
I reach out to hold you
And to you I begin to say**

**Hold me for One Minute
Hold tight and close your eyes
Hold me for just One Minute
Make my troubles melt like ice**

**Feel the warmth of my body
Then look into my eyes
Give me just One Minute
For me to re-energize**

**When that minutes over
Give me just one kiss
Smile and say you Love me
I live for Minutes like this**

**Now I'm ready for anything
My job, my kids and Life
Thanks for just that Minute
You're my Love, my Breath, my Light**

Have you ever thought about just how many people are on this big, blue planet? Literally billions of people are walking around looking for that one special person. The odds of being with your loved one is astronomical. This poem is about those incredible odds..

My Universe

**The universe is such a vast expanse
And it's not the only one
In all the darkness and all the light
Billions of stars, millions of suns
Planet upon planet, moons, dark and bright
Dark sides and mysteries**

Some visible, some out of sight

**The country we live in is free beautiful and vast
And the state we are from
We are so very blessed to be cast
From the deepest of space
To right here by my side
God gave me you
Among the billions he could have tried**

**We were meant to be together
There's no doubt in my mind
God looked the whole Universe over
And it was you for me to find
Together forever, and so very proud to be
No one could be better
For a lonely man like me**

**You are my Universe, my air my Sun
You're the better half of me
And together we make One.**

YOU

**I was in my deepest pit
With nowhere else to go
I reached out to the Hand of God
Because I knew he loved me so**

**I asked Him for a Heart so Pure
Who would Love me to the end
Someone with who I could spend my life
Who would be my dearest friend**

**As always when God's concerned
He gave me more than I could claim
He sent me someone who would love me so
And would forever share my name**

**I asked Him so very fervently
For a Heart I Knew was true**

**I asked him for my Hearts content
That's when God sent me YOU**

There's No Tellin'

**I don't know where we're goin'
But I have such Peace knowin'
You'll be there 'till the end**

**The water under the bridge is flowin'
And much deeper all the time
But together we'll weather
Whatever Hill there is to climb**

**My Heart is in Tune with yours
Our Song in both our Hearts
Together we are Music
And always have been from the start**

**The look in your eyes is Precious
It gives my Heart just what it needs
I hope I have the same look for you
Our Love is like a Seed**

**Ever watered with Gods Grace
Our Love will never die
Hand in Hand we'll fly together
Through the Clouds in Heavens sky**

**He Created us Both
And He knows how well we fit
We were made to be together
No matter how tough our lives get**

**There's no tellin' where we're goin'
But together we'll see it through
Because Nothin' could be better
Than to walk this life
Hand in Hand
With You**

Together

**we waited so very long
to come back to this place**

it's a cold crisp winter day
and we kick the leaves out of our way
i feel the warmth of your hand
so tightly wound around mine
you've always been so very loving to me
always been so much more than kind

of all the places that i could be
of all the loves that could be mine
of all the faces i could see
of all the hearts that for me shine
it's you my dear, and only you
i've given my life for
and it's the minutes with you my dear
that i long for

i can't decide what is more beautiful
the mountain scenery or you
the love that shines from your eyes
or the sky of brilliant blue
i feel so very fortunate that God
has put us here
to live our lives together
always closer, always nearer

It has been so very long now
since our journey had it's start
but it's never been more obvious
just who owns all my heart
just like autumn
our lives together are creeping past
the golden leaves are beautiful
but their time goes by too fast

i will cling to you forever
even time cant stop our love
we'll still walk together on golden streets
hand in hand, in Heaven above

The Hand

Her feeble hands they trembled
As they clutched the pew that day
She closed her eyes and sang
Not one note of dismay

Beside her in her seat
Two Bibles, side by side
When the message started
She opened one and placed her hand inside

Her friends who sat beside her
Had noticed through the years
She always placed her hand there
Just why was never clear

The next Sunday they decided
They would finally ask her why
They waited by the front door
To ask her when she walked by

She walked up to them slowly
Struggling with her load
She stumbled on the steps
Her Bibles fell on the road

They ran over to help her
She struggled to her feet
When they reached for her Bible
It was opened for all to see

Inside the cover was a hand
Traced onto the page
They handed her the Bibles
And helped her to her place

She placed the books beside her
Then worshipped with the rest
Her hand inside the cover
Her Heart among the blessed.

When the Service ended
They helped her to her ride
She said I know you're wondering
About the Hand that's drawn inside

She steeled herself to tell them
She felt a rush of Love inside
Reaching into her purse for a tissue
To dry a tear tracing from her eye

**My Dear Husband gave me this Bible
Before he told me the news that day
That he would soon be leaving me
And that his cancer was back to stay**

**The Bible was in a box
He sealed it with a bow
He asked that I no open it
Until his time to go**

**When all was said and done
When I walked our house all alone
I opened up the box to read
My Loving Husbands' Poem**

This Hand

**This Hand held yours so tightly
When we met and fell in Love
This Hand clasped with yours together
As we sought help from God above
This Hand caressed our Children
As we Loved and held them tight
And checked their foreheads for fever
So deep into the night
This Hand worked long hard hours
As we struggled to survive
This Hand fits so Perfectly
In the Hand of my Dear Wife
So here it is my Dear
Drawn upon this page
Please come and hold it daily
As you struggle with your age
I can't be there beside you
But soon we'll meet again
And Hand and Hand we'll walk
In a Place that has No End.**

When you do fall in love, you expect it to be forever. Never do you consider the thought that the person who holds your heart will be gone. Death is cruel. It doesn't care that you don't think you could exist without them. Grief takes such a huge toll on our lives, but eventually you allow yourself to love again. The poem "Window Pain" is about the time

when you do decide to get married again and what that feels like. The day full of music, dance, food and love can't help but remind you of the beautiful day of the first time the ring was placed on a willing finger.

Window Pain

**She stares out of the window
Through the blueness of the night
The rain trickling down the panes
Through the flashing of the lights
The thunder in the distance
Now so very far away
Reminds her of another time
Another Joyous day**

**It was going to be forever as the two became one
There was music, there was laughter
There was dancing, there was fun
A moment frozen in time
Like their youth in a frozen frame
She was giving up her single life
Even giving up her name**

**She turns slowly in her wedding dress
To an image in the mirror
Maybe tomorrow will be more luscious
Hopefully tomorrow, even clearer
Her love for him is undeniable
She is finally ready to start again
She never thought there would be a second chance
To fall in love with her dearest friend**

**She knows he would want her happy
Even if he wasn't by her side
The rain returns just like the memories
She holds so dear, so deep inside
The raindrops on the pane
Match the teardrops from her eyes
She can feel the thunder in her heart
And knows she'll love two for all her life.**

There is no love without commitment. When we fall in love, we can't wait to spend every hour with the one of our affection. Marriage means waking up every day to the one we adore. The days of new love turn over into a more mature love that roots and grows on the inside of our hearts. Years and years together through the struggles of life, kids, houses, wars, sickness and death cement us to each other. We know each other better than anyone else in the world. When our companion changes, and we start to see that they are not the same as before, we don't understand. Illnesses such as Alzheimers and others start to steal our partners away from us. That brings about the commitment that began when we first started our love journey. True love stays. True love gives. True love helps. The poem, "Love is Love" is about that time. It's a story of a lady we met during the Christmas season while out shopping. That picture of true love will stay with me forever.

Love is Love

**It was a cold winter day
As we rushed our way into the store
I passed by an elderly lady
Leaning on a car by the entrance door**

**She looked so weak and tired
Leaning on that cold car
Her eyes seemed so distant
Vacant and so far
I turned around to go back
To see if I could help
She was wearing only a light jacket
Hardly enough to warm herself**

**Can I help you ma'am?
Is there something I can do?
She told me, I don't know where I am,
Do I know you?**

**We brought her a shopping cart
To help steady her as we walked inside
We asked, are you here with someone,
Did someone else drive?**

**Placing her hand on her chin to think
She searched and searched her brain
I know I came with someone
I think...Bradshaw is his name**

**I found her a seat
And we went to the service desk**

To have them page her friend
We waited a few minutes
Then we paged the friend again

That's when we noticed him
Making his way down the aisle
As he got closer
We could see his crooked smile

Middy, he said
Why did you get out of the car?
You know it's cold outside
You could have fallen
Or wandered off too far

She looked him over
Then she said, Do I know you?
He turned his glaze to us and said,
Sometimes I don't know what to do

This beautiful lady is my wife
Going on 65 years
He then cleared his throat
To try and stop his flowing tears
Leaning on his walker
He told us about the Love of his life
She has always been my best friend
You couldn't ask for more in a Loving Wife

We raised three beautiful children
They come when they can to give us some help
But, Bless her Heart, She just has troubles
Taking care of herself

It's an Honor and a Privilege
To help her each and every day
Sometimes she even knows me
Sometimes she'll even Pray

I'll never leave her side
I'll always be her man
I don't know why she's become this way
I'll never understand

But Love Is Love
And ours will never die

**Her hand still fits in mine
And I'll always be her guy**

**We helped them to their car
Closed the door
And watched them drive away
Our tears were cold on our cheeks
On that cold, blustery winter day**

**I hugged my wife and told her
Love Is Love my dear
I don't know what lies ahead
Just know I always will be near**

Kids

My legacy, the fruit of my loins (I always hated that one); my children are what will continue long after I'm gone. They are my time machine to propel me forward into the future.

I always wondered what kind of dad I would be. I hoped I would be like Andy Griffith in Mayberry. I would talk to my son about the ways of the world. I would espouse my great wisdom and knowledge to him and he would grow up thanking me for all I have done and given to him—wrong! Fate or providence would have it that, not only am I not Andy, but God would bless me with four daughters.

Most of my talks with them were returned with heads cocked sideways, eyes squinted and big question marks on their foreheads. I tried my best to give up all the secrets of men so they could be on the lookout for those dastardly boys and their evil intentions.

I shared two daughters with my first wife, and their young lives were spent between my house and the house of my ex. Driving in the car to get them was always adventurous. Trying to learn where all the clean bathrooms were on the drive was a necessity.

I had all four girls stretched out from infant to twenty years old. Every stage you could imagine, I had to go through all at once.

The one that gave me the biggest challenge was my last one. She was born with many disabilities. Everything you ever thought or learned or knew about what children were supposed to do was gone. Logic was gone also. Red plus blue became rhinoceros, and one plus four became goose. In all her struggles, I think I have learned the most from her. Her innocence and wonder about everything is astounding. She sees the world completely differently than we do. Her rose-colored glasses are a color I don't even understand. She is a gift, as well as the other three of my "fruits." Did they all make the right choices? Not always. Do they learn from their mistakes? Probably not. Do I love them unconditionally? Absolutely !

Call Me Dad

I didn't know what was happening
behind that thick door
But I knew when it opened,
i'd be different than before,
Where once there were two,
I would very soon see
Beautiful eyes of blue
and us two become three

Bursting through that door
in a box flanked by scrubs
I would very soon discover
what it meant to fall in love
Feeling that heavy weight
every Dad feels inside
I wanted to hear her little voice
then the nurse made her cry

The sound that came forth,
pierced me straight to my soul
I knew I must now protect her,
like nothing I've ever known
The tears they welled up,
like my chest filled with pride
I had never felt a rush
like this of love deep inside

You know ,The cry of a baby,
to some must seem sad
But for the first time in my life,
my new name was Dad

She captured my heart
with her sweet little voice
It was right then and there,
I knelt, to thank God for his choice
To give me this little one,
I just can't say why
But I'll cherish her and Love her
till the day that I die.

I'm Not Perfect

I wasn't born perfect
There are flaws that you can see
You can point and you can laugh
Just try to love me, for me

Sometimes my life's a struggle
And I don't understand just why
I get so very frustrated
And sometimes, It makes me cry

I try to be like them
So that they might be my friend
I just seems they all grow up so fast
And our friendship comes to an end

I know that my God loves me
He sent his Son for even me
His Spirit lives inside
And in His Spirit I am Free

If I had to choose to have a perfect body
Or to choose to have a perfect soul
I know my choice is easy
Cause I know it's God that makes me whole

He'll always be my friend
From today until Forever
And no matter what the world says
His love they'll never sever.

So, NO, I am not perfect outside
And that's OK with me
Because I know It's inside
Where My Lord will Always be

Why The Angel Cries

I look into the Mirror
There's a "Monster" looking back
There must be something terrible
To make the other kids turn and laugh

I try and try and try
To stop this "Beast" that takes my pride
There must be something i can do
To help my Broken Heart, so deep inside

I Really try to hide Myself
So others may not see
I only wish I had the Answer
To all this misery

There was a time I gave out Hugs and Kisses
And would Smile and Laugh and Sing
But now people just seem to stare at Me
And I feel their Cruel Sting

My Mommy and Daddy Love Me
But I can see it in their eyes
Their Hearts are breaking along with Mine
So they wear a smile for their disguise

The medicines they give Me
To help Me in My fight
Are really hard to take sometimes
Because My mouth doesn't work just right

Sometimes it's very difficult
To carry on each day
My Struggle increases constantly
From Day to Day to Day.....

*If only there were answers
To why this Angel Cries
And maybe a Solution
To stop a Disability this Size*

*Then Maybe she could look into
The Mirror just once and see
Just what a Gift you are My Lovely Child
To All the World
And Me*

Just Waiting

She was here only yesterday
My friend who plays with me
I sit and watch for her return
Just where could my friend be
I'll watch a little longer
I just know she knows I'm here
I can't wait for her return
Her friendship to me so dear

Who knows why kids are born
Who just aren't like the rest
It could be God puts them where
Special parents could be blessed
These kids are full of love

**It overflows to those they trust
The question never comes up
Whether it's fair or if it's just.**

**If I just wait here long enough
No doubt we'll laugh and play
Just seems like it's been so very long
Can't imagine her delay
My dolls, my swingset and all my toys
Are here for just us two
If she doesn't come to play with me
I don't know what I'll do**

**The innocence of these children
Stays with them in their heart
They don't understand
When friends grow up
To only leave them where they are
To them friends are so very special
There love for them is deep
But time goes on
Friends come, friends go
They try so hard to see**

**I had another friend before who
disappeared like this
It's like she grew up and went away
Without even a goodbye kiss
It's getting dark, I must go in
No friend tonight for me
But that's OK, I'll be back here
Tomorrow waiting,
She'll be here,**

You just wait and see.

You spend your life with your kids trying to keep them safe and alive. I will never forget when my first child fell and busted her lip. I felt so terribly guilty that I had let her down, and avowed to never let any of my children hurt again. I couldn't have been more wrong. Having them at home where I could keep them safe was easy. Watching them grow up and experience all the hurts of the world was the most difficult. Boo boos on fingers and knees were easy, it was the heart hurts I couldn't fix that pained me as a parent. If not careful, this evil world will take our precious gifts and destroy them. Months and months without communication was like death. You begin a mourning that you can't explain. You know they're alive, but don't know where they are and if they're ok. Not knowing is excruciating. The poem, "Have You Seen Her" is about one of those times.

Have You Seen Her

**Have you seen her
I can't find her anywhere**

**I see her pictures in my Heart
It's just not the least bit fair**

**She was here beside me
Not too long ago
Now she's disappeared
I can't imagine where she'd go**

**Please tell me if you've seen her
She's such a precious Child
I don't quite know what to do
Maybe she's lost,
somewhere scary and wild**

**I watched over her so closely
And kept her oh so close to me
I Protected her and Loved her
Then one day I set her Free**

**I watched her from afar
As she took her glance away
The Dangers of the World surrounded her
And she bent to their evil sway**

**The World took my Precious Gift
And did such awful things
It persuaded her to follow them
Told her what songs to sing**

**Like a tiny Glass figurine
That's been dropped and broke apart
So this bad world has done to her
As well as my own Heart**

**So please tell me have you seen her
And please tell me if you do
I want my gift to come back to me
She doesn't have to be good as new**

**I'll take her back, scars and all
I still love her with all my Heart
She doesn't have to be Perfect
You see, she's the missing piece
Down so Very deep
In my Heart**

Divorce

Divorce really, really bites! Never have I gone through anything like it or similar to it. Add kids to a divorce, and it can literally destroy your world. I have always said that divorce is not about two people splitting up, but two people being ripped apart—ripped apart from the inside out. Nothing on this planet compares to going from being head-over-heels in love to, well let's just say that there really is a very fine line between love and hate. I used that same line to jump rope for years.

A good thing about growing older is that you acquire certain wisdoms. One of those is that you no longer wish plagues and pestilence to fall upon them, but you come to actually wish for their happiness. I can always say I was her number one. I think I still have the foam finger.

There's no way to prepare you for that first time you come home to find, where before there were laughing and games, hugs and kisses, these things have been replaced with the loudest thing of all: silence. I was wallowing in the mud of divorce while God threw a rope to pull me out, kicking and screaming. He eventually pulled me out dirty and muddy, but He washed me white as snow.

I wrote the poem "If Only" just a few months after my divorce. It can still bring back feelings of sadness.

IF ONLY

Sitting here all by myself
It's awful Lonely here
I think of Friends and Family
That I do hold so dear
It's really easy now to think
And I Dread it to Begin.
The time is right, I know it well
For the "If Onlys" to Creep in.

If Only I had money enough
To do with what I Wish
If Only I had Time to Spare
To Relax or Read or Fish
If Only I could take my Kids
And Hold them Tight to Me
To tell them how Very Much I care
And Bounce them on my Knee

If Only I could watch them Grow
And Lead them through This Life
If Only I had a Friend

**That I could call my Wife.
If Only I was Satisfied
With Where My Life is Now
If Only these "If Onlys"
Could Go Away Somehow**

**I know that I must stop this Woe
I can't keep going on
For Jesus Loves Me, this I Know
But His Work is left undone
In Me He's working Overtime
Freeing Me from Guilt and Sin
To keep these awful "If Onlys"
From Slowly Creeping In**

The poem "Please Don't Cry" is written from the eyes of a child. It tries to say that there can be love in a relationship between father and child after a divorce. If there were such a thing as a successful divorce, I had one. It takes both parents working together for the love of the children, and keeping out those selfish desires that come so easily.

Please Don't Cry

**it was somewhere back in childhood innocence
i can't remember just where or when
but the man i loved so dearly
who had become my dearest friend
came to me one day
with tears falling from his eyes
he tried to speak and tell me
i was going to start a new life
he reached out to touch my face
and tell me he had to leave
he told me please don't cry, I love you
it's not your fault, you must believe**

**he said please don't cry, i love you
I'll see you soon my dear
We'll hug and have fun together
there's no need for fear**

**He was always there for me
on weekends and important days**

but it was always so hard to say goodbye
and watch him drive away
As i grew older, it grew easier to understand
his love was unconditional
i made mistakes , he held my hand
i fell in love and life went on
and i learned just what love meant
i looked into the eyes of my child
that for sure was heaven sent
dad would come over to visit
and whenever he would turn to leave
i could feel the tears well up inside
and then he would say to me

please don't cry, i love you
i'll see you soon my dear
we'll hug and have fun together
there's no need for fear

I watched as he grew older
his youthful blonde was turned to gray
my kids grew up and loved him
they always hated when he went away
i still have chills when i remember
the night i got the call
please come quick, theres something wrong
the leaves were turning in early fall
i arrived in the room and they told me
he's been waiting to have you near
and in the voice i loved so much
so faint, i leaned in to hear

he said.
please don't cry, i love you
i'll see you soon my dear
we'll hug and have fun together
there's no need for fear
This time is no different
I always will be near
So, please don't cry, I love you
I'll see you soon my dear

The last thing in the world you want is to see your child experiencing a divorce. You know the hurt and tears involved, and again you feel helpless and unable to love them through it. Losing the ability to see your kids every day is so hard. Minutes stretch into countless days of missing them terribly. "All Alone In A Place Called Home" is about a parent losing their kids, and how hard it is to carry on without them.

All Alone In A Place Called Home

The Love song has ended

The last notes have now been sung
I sit among the wreckage
And all I feel is numb

I still can see the pictures
Hung with smiles upon the wall
It all seems so very long ago
Another life, a long, long fall

I walk into my empty house
The silence hurts my ears
This is what I dreaded most
This is what I feared

I reach out to hug the air
My eyes they well with tears
They tell me time will heal the pain
But they say it could be years

All alone in a place called home
I'm sitting here in so much pain, so scared and all alone
He just can't see the emptiness and pain deep in my soul
I just keep crying and trying, to get him off my mind
Cause I'm so alone in a place called home

I know that it won't be long
That soon I'll see my boys
But again the silence tears my heart
No boys, No Noise, No Toys

I hear the echoes of their voice
Oh Mommy come and see
I feel so empty deep inside
And drop down to my knees

I look up to the stars above
Breathe deep and dry my eyes
I know somehow I'll love again
I know somehow I'll try

I'll not sit here in this much pain, not scared and all alone
I'll never let him see the emptiness and pain deep in my soul
I'll just keep crying and trying, to get on with my life
And start My new life in a place
Called Home.

Giving

The world wants something for nothing. It's true—gimmee, gimmee, gimme! Have you ever noticed that if you give something away for free, or do something for someone for nothing, you usually get a look of, *ok, just what do I owe you?* Or *what do you want from me?* A servant spirit in this world is not something you encounter every day. The old

saying, “it’s better to give than to receive” is a completely true statement. How good does it feel to see someone in real need and to give of yourself or your belongings to help? It shows the spirit of love in your character and mirrors the ultimate giver: *Jesus*. I had the extreme honor of being a hospice volunteer with my wife in Louisiana. The people we encountered there showed us just what was important in life as it slowly ebbed away. Faith and family was paramount. One sweet spirit we encountered was a man named Willie. He and his wife, Pauline, were in love and had been for decades. He was a cowboy and loved to watch those old westerns in black and white on TV. He told us about a dream he kept having of a big black stallion that was right behind him, biting at his neck. Willie said he couldn’t run quickly enough, and the beast was catching up to him every night. He would call sometimes at night to tell me about the dreams and to just talk. The poem, “Willie and The Black Stallion” is about my experience with Willie. What a wonderful character he was.

Willie and The Black Stallion

Willie Loved Living
And he Loved Horses too
His heroes were guys like
Roy Rogers and Lash Larue
When I would come over to visit
TV was in Black and White
The Old shows would keep his attention
His Heroes always won the fight
Willie also had Cancer
His Pain took his will
His best moments where times
When He was Sleeping and Still
He called me late one night
Scared and all alone
I could hear he was breathless
On my end of the phone
He told me of a Black Stallion
Nipping at his Neck
He was running as fast as he could
It was like he had large weights on his legs
He said,” I know he’s close
I can feel his Hot Breath
And I know if he catches me
It’s gonna be my Death”
I came over to comfort him
His sick frame was so weak

He was such a sweet and gentle man
I always felt so blessed to meet
Willies' Dreams continued
The Stallion came closer each night
I always Hated that the thing he Loved so much
Was giving him such a fright
It wasn't long after his call
The Stallion no longer ran alone
You see the Horse wasn't coming to hurt Willie
It was coming to take him Home.

I Have No Army

The Grocery store was crowded
As I stopped on my way home
Standing in Line I noticed Her
She was Frail and all Alone

The Elderly lady looked Small
Standing there beside her cart
I couldn't tell if she was finished shopping
Or, was she about to start

The only things in her basket
Were some Tuna an apple and some cheese
The cashier totaled her up
"That will be 3 dollars and 60 cents please"

The little old lady fumbled around in her purse
To gather up her cash
When she pulled out her money
She let out an audible gasp

She handed the cashier 2 dollar bills
Then went for a change purse in her bag
I could see her face turn from concerned
To tearful then to sad

she told the Cashier , "put the Apple back
It's really more than I need
I can get by without it
It's not like I have an Army to feed

I no longer could stand and watch
I offered to pay her bill

**She pulled her glasses down her nose
Bowed her head and got quite still**

**"Young man," she said , "You have a family
And I'm sure they need your help
I appreciate your kind offer
But I can take care of myself**

**A man behind me shouted,
"I have more bread than I need
What you said was right
I have No Army to feed."**

**Then another and yet another
Spoke up to fill her Cart
I knew one thing for certain
As her basket filled, so did our Hearts**

**She stood there speechless
Then reached in her purse down deep inside
To pull out a tissue
To wipe the tears falling from her eyes**

**"You've all been so kind to this Old Lady,
I can't thank you enough for all this food
But I know One thing for sure,
God is Good, Yes, God is Good.**

Faith

Lost!

That would be me without my faith. I can't imagine not having the Creator of the universe at my side. I can't imagine marriage without His guiding—work, kids, breathing, tying my shoe, anything at all! He gives the world the opportunity to see all the beauty of creation, and the opportunity to experience real love as it was meant to be. He gives us the real opportunity to be forgiven and accepted for whatever or whoever you are. Have you ever tried to put together a swing set? Try putting together a swing set for your kids without the instructions. That's what life would be like without the instructions and the rule book: the Bible. It's all there. There's no secret. From the first page to the last, there's always one answer: love. Love is the answer, and God is love. Think of all the things going on in the world right now, inject love into any situation on both sides, and then you have real solutions. Sounds simple doesn't it? It is. Try it, try Him. Believe!

Perfect Harmony

We all seek out the Harmonies
In all our daily lives
Something to make our lives complete
Something to make us thrive

The notes aren't always perfect
Though we try and try and try
But You Dear Lord are faithful
And standing so close by

You are my Harmony
You make my Voice complete
The perfect pitch
The perfect note
That makes my life so sweet

Together we make Music
Alone, there's just one Voice
But put the two together
It's so much more than noise

My inner Music is Beautiful
And it's all because of You
The perfect Harmony impossible
Until You come shining through

So walk along beside me
And listen to Us sing
Because nothing could be better
Than to Harmonize with the King

You are my Harmony
You are my Harmony
You are my Harmony

SIMPLY PARADISE

I lay here on the Lush Green Grass
A Breeze blows through my hair
How Blessed I am to Rest here now
Without a Need or Care

The Smell of Spring is all around
Beautiful Birds fill up the Sky
The Trees are Full, the Flowers Bloom
In their Midst are Butterflies

I Hear a Choir of Multitudes

Not Very Far Away
Their Harmonies, so Fine and True
Not One Note of Dismay

I Hear a Voice and Turn Around
And Who Else could it Be
But Jesus, my Closest Dearest Friend
Who'd like to Sit and Talk with Me

We Both sit back and Wonder at
The Beauty All Around
I Thank Him for His Love So True
And this Paradise I've Found.

The Hourglass

I have a Beautiful Hourglass
I Treasure it more each day
I watch others as they trod along
Kicking Sand out of their way

My Sand grows more Precious
As it drops down and out of sight
I can't replace it in my glass
Though I try with all my Might

Each person has their own Hourglass
The Grains grow Fewer
As the Days go by
So, instead of trying to replace the sand
Just Thank God For His Wonderful Gift of Life

DELIVER ME

It was her job to do
In rain, sleet or snow
The mail had to be delivered
But today her steps were kind of slow

Still fuming from a fight
With her husband the night before
She didn't know if her marriage would survive
She didn't know if she could take it anymore

She went about her route
Just trying to finish her day
Stepping off a front porch

She heard someone say

“Good morning young lady
I hope your having a good day”
Looking back at the front porch
An elderly lady pushed
A screen door out of her way

“Would you like to come in for some breakfast ?
I won’t hold you too long,
You know your welcome to come in
Unless your boss thinks it’s wrong.”

She was taken aback
She didn’t quite know what to say
But they had a good visit on the porch
And it helped to bring a smile to her day

She sat silently at the supper table
With her husband that night
Something told her to tell him
Instead of holding it inside

He told, “be careful,
You never know about people like that.
Besides, you could get into trouble,
Let’s just leave it at that”

Weeks turned into months
She’d always smile
When she came to her street
She looked forward to seeing her
Today she’d take her up on the offer
To come in and eat

Looking through the screen
The lady was waiting for her return
She gave the same offer as always
But this time, she showed no concern

“You bet I’ll come in and eat
I’m pretty hungry I’d say”
She could smell the Breakfast
Through the screen door,
And I’m in no hurry today”

Their visit was brief
But meaningful for sure
She knew she had found a friendship
That for years would endure

Biscuits and gravy
Was the morning treat
And they decided they’d plan
A weekend to meet

It took a lot of convincing
To get her husband and kids to come along
But together they drove over
She told them to put their manners
And nice faces on

Walking into the house
His awkwardness he couldn't disguise
The elderly lady could see it
So clearly in his eyes

She came over to hug him and the kids
To make them feel at rest
She said, I don't have many things
But my life has been blessed

She pointed to all the pictures on the wall
Of her husband and kids
They were my life, my love and my passion
The sparkle in her eyes could not be hidden

They all sat down to a wonderful dinner
And she served them so well
They could tell she loved to serve
It was so easy to tell

After dinner the photo albums came out
And each picture shined with such love
She was very careful to give credit
To her God up above

Then with a hug and a kiss
And some leftover apple pie
They left to go home
And she noticed a tear in his eye

"What's wrong?", she asked
Is everything ok ?"
After quite a long pause
He started to say,
"I want what she has,
I want one day to look back,
To show someone our photos
And to be a great dad.
I know the road we're on
Is going nowhere
I want to be on her road
I want to go there."

Her tears they began
As they drove their way home
The next weekend she went to church,
But this time not alone

**They were all smiles and hugs
Holding hands as they walked down the aisle
In the back pew their special guest
Couldn't help but shed a tear
Through her smile**

Step By Step

**Continue on
Step by Step by Step
No matter what the obstacle
No matter what lay ahead**

**Keep your vision forward
Keep your Hope Steadfast
Always moving Forward
Ever Onward toward the task**

**Take the Hand that's there beside you
Take Him with you on your Quest
Never Letting Go
Always giving your very best**

**Hold Tightly
The Choice is yours to make
When your uncertain
Hold even tighter on your way**

**You may let go of His Grasp
But beside you He'll always be
Those Nail Scarred Hands will Protect you
Then Forever set You Free**

Choices

There are so many choices to make in life. Choices we make always determine how happy we are. Bad choices made could take years to recover from, if not a lifetime. In my life, I have seen so many people with incredible potential destroy themselves with alcohol or drugs or many other things. People expecting life to be an everyday party and good time find themselves trying to get out of the hole of addiction or living lives of regret for what could have been. I always pictured people with addictions as people with huge *beasts* on their backs that everyone could see except them. The beast clings to them, claws deep inside, feeding off of them until they're done, and the beast climbs off to devour another. The poem "The Beast" is about that monster.

THE BEAST

The 'larm clock breaks the mornin' silence
Head in hands, sore, wracked with pain
He swore he'd never, ever
Ever drink like that again

But he walked into his Lair
Didn't see him standing there
He put his claws down deep inside
He had nowhere left to hide

He had to Feed The beast

He walks into his workplace
They all know just where he's been
His bloodshot eyes they tell the story
Of his struggles and his Sin

They know he walked into his Lair
Wouldn't see him standin' there
They knew the claws were deep inside
And they knew he wouldn't hide

He had to Feed The Beast

He's on his way home from work now
And the cravin' soon begins
The Beast he starts to growl
And on his Face an Evil Grin

Cause he knows he's comin' to his Lair
He won't see him standin' there
He has his teeth down in his soul
And he's lost all self control
And he's growin' bigger still
Going straight in for the kill
And when his evil's done
He knows he's not the only one

Who wants to Feed The Beast.

Choices

My life is a stew

Of people places and things
Some good choices made
Whether to cry or to sing
Choices that were made
Some good and some bad
Friendships and losses
Great times and times sad

I am what I am
Because of all this
The dark and the light
The tears or a kiss

If only i'd said yes
Instead of saying no
If only I'd said Stop
Instead of saying Go
If only I'd looked
Before I jumped in
If only i'd tried
Instead of letting it end

The roads that I travel
And the turns that I make
The candles I blow out
On a fiery birthday cake
I'll continue to try
To do what is right
And when I make a mistake
I'll try to keep it out of sight

Just For Fun

God must have one terrific sense of humor. If my life was a reality show, I'm sure it would win an Emmy in the comedy category. I'm a goofus—yes a certified goofus, just ask my wife and kids. Even my cats shake their heads when they walk by me. That's ok, I enjoy laughing at myself. I know for sure I have raised four kids that speak fluent Goofish because, bless their hearts, they're just like me. Sorry about that, kids. Isn't heredity great?

There's No Cat on My Beach

On a Beautiful Beach in my Dream
Sand in my toes, cold drink in my hand
It's shattered by sounds
I can't quite understand
There's no Cat on my Beach
There's no Paw in my eye
Slowly opening my eyes
I finally realize

The stupid Cat is hungry
Then I glance at the Clock
Oh my gosh, I'm late to work
So I go into the morning trot
Fumbling through the dark closet
To gather my clothes
Then running to the bathroom
To brush my teeth and blow my nose
I must feed the stupid Goldfish
Before I rush out
Only to find Goldie belly up in her bowl
Oh she's dead, there's no doubt
That's gonna be a really sad kid
When she finally wakes up
Now she'll want a bird
A lizard, pony or pup
No time for that now
I've got to Rush out
If I'm late for work again
They'll fire me, no doubt
Grabbing my keys
My wallet and my pride
I jump in the car
For a fast, stressful ride
As I back out of the driveway
I think I've run over a log
Oh my, what have I done
I've backed over Stanley
My Neighbors 3 legged dog
I have no time for sentiment now
He'll see him soon enough
The clock is rapidly ticking
I glance at my gas, It's just not enough
Quickly pulling into the station
To pump me some gas
I grab a couple gallons
Because that would be fast
The card won't work in the pump
So I have to go in
It's Todd the cashier
He has more tatoos than he has skin
Your card is declined
He boldly mumbles out
His tongue ring clinks against his teeth
As he sticks his tongue out
I plead, Man i'm in a big hurry
You know I'm in here all the time
I've got no Cash and no more cards
Not even a dime

**You know I'll catch you tomorrow
If that's OK
He strokes his bleached goatee
Smiles and then starts to say
Mr. Johnson, How about a tip
The next time you roll in
What about 10 bucks
Both his teeth shine as he grins
Whatever you say
Was my speedy reply
Now I've got to go
Todd, I've got to fly
Leaving black skid marks
And smoke in my wake
I've got just enough time to make it
Before I'm too late
Clacking and smoking
As I hit 95
I think I can make it
But ole Betsy might not survive
I make all the lights
And no Cops see my sin
The parking lot seems oddly empty
As I rush my way in
An old man in a Guard Uniform
Starts walking to my car
It's kind of spooky
Kinda strange and bizarre
Getting out of my car
To run to the Clock
He raises his hands up
And he hollers, Hey Stop !!
Is there some kind of emergency
Just why are you here
We haven't opened on Saturdays
For over 10 years
I felt quite a shock
When I realized what I had done
I should still be in my bed
Dreaming of sand and the sun
My phone starts ringing
My wife says, where did you go
The neighbors at the door
And he wants to know
Who ran over Stanley
His best friend in the world
And not only that but
You've got a very sad girl**

She kept rattling on
About this and then that
I got back in my car
Took a deep breath and just sat
The smoke still rising
From under my hood
I turned back to go home
To do just what I should
I'll tell my neighbor I'm sorry
Hug my daughter and flush her fish
I'll continue to do what's right
Feed the cats, maybe buy them a new dish
I'm blessed beyond measure
I've known that since the start
I may have a scrambled brain
But I've got a Full Heart

Onward

Another day in this life. Did I give enough? Did I leave smiles in my wake? Did I reflect the love I wanted to? Did I make good choices? I hope so. If not, God willing, I get to do it again tomorrow. It's all good. I have noticed that you only get out of life what you give. If you are not getting what you expect, try giving more.

This is what I have learned so far in this journey. I can't wait to see what God has in store for me tomorrow. I love the quotation by American author John Burroughs: "*The smallest deed is greater than the greatest of intentions.*"

May you make all your ripples good ones.

I Want To See What She Sees

Looking around my world
I see evil and wrong
Sometimes I feel like an Alien
Most times I don't belong

What used to be right
What used to be just
Has now been replaced
With arrogance and distrust

I long for another time
When there was goodness and right
I long for my childhood
When life wasn't such a fight

I think of my mother
And where she is now
My soul longs to join her
To visit her somehow

I want to see what she sees
I want to hear her sweet voice
I want to smell the roses of Heaven
If I could just have that choice

I want to shield my eyes
Because the Golden Streets are too bright
Oh, but to soak in the beauty
Of every awesome, majestic sight

But the worlds not going to change
From its darkness to light
I have no control
Of its sadness and plight

But my *God's in Control*
Of this world and it's woe
He'll continue to bless His children
Under Heaven below

I know all will be good
I have no fear
I know I'll be more than safe
Because my mother whispers in His ear

