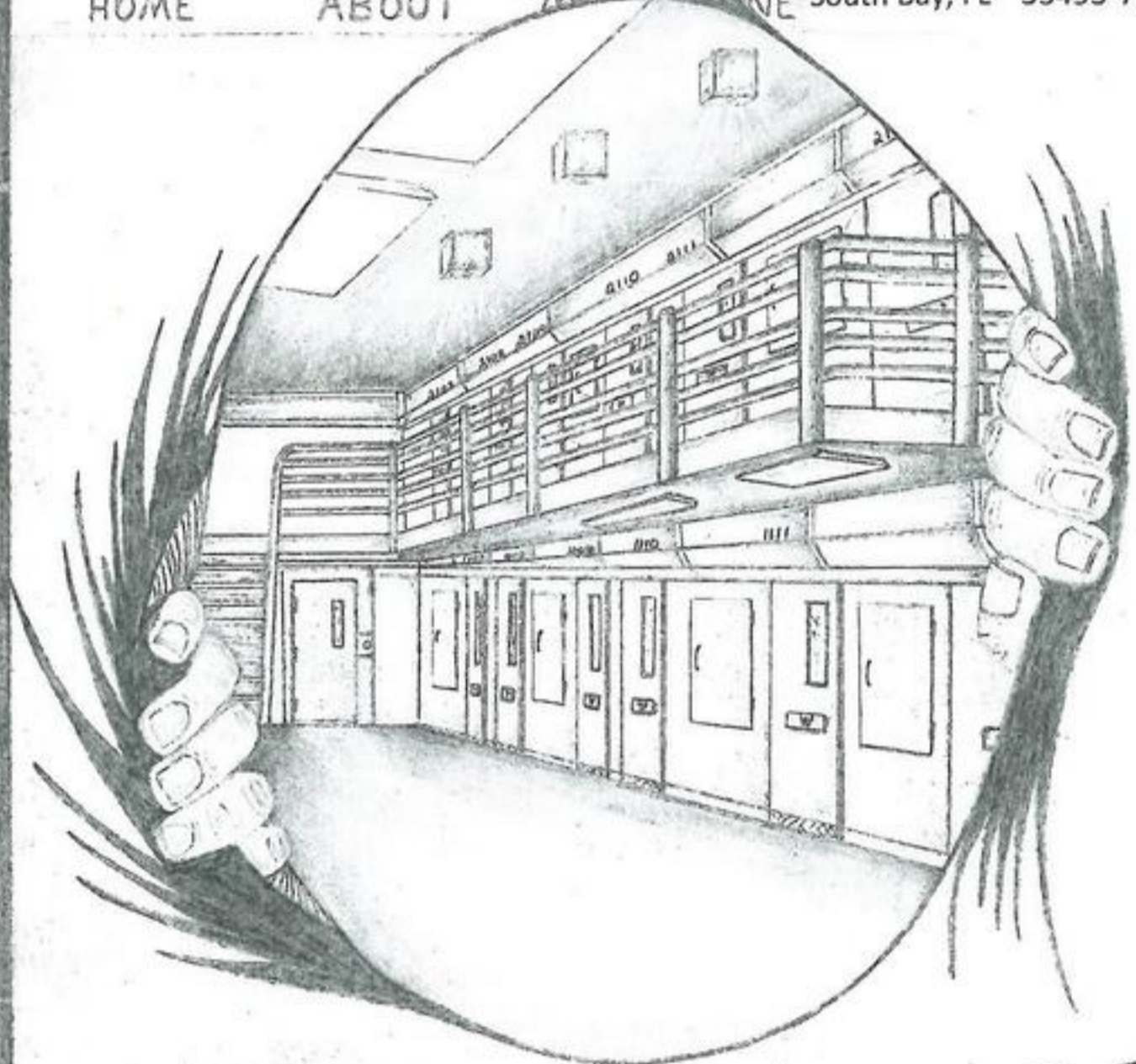


Between the Bars

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HOME ABOUT MA NE



R. B. 2012 LBJ

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Guide My Hand

Though my 3 fingers hold the pen,
I pray God, that you guide my hand —
To help me touch the hearts of men,
That they may come to understand.

Your boundless mercy and amazing grace,
That they may know your perfect peace.
And in you find a resting place,
Where fruitless worries would all cease.

Help me find a way to impart
The joy I've found as I've kneeled.
And your word, hidden in my heart,
Through my writing - may be revealed.

Not my words, Father God, but yours -
May be planted and then take root, —
And that your spirit opens doors,
So those words may then bear fruit.

I pray you use me as you will,
And that your perfect will be done, —
That your Holy Spirit may instill,
The means to glorify your Son.

I've poured your word into my spirit,
And meditated upon each line;
That I may both fear - and revere it,
As a spiritual gold mine.

Its riches, which are BEYOND compare,
MUST be declared to this generation!
So I pray God that I may share,
The great hope of my salvation.

Your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ,
The only hope for a sin sick soul.
For which He gladly sacrificed
His life - that we may be made whole.

I'll hold the pen, God guide my hand,
That your truth may flow ~~slowly~~ *FREELY*
According to your perfect plan,
I pray God, that you may use me.

The 5 Crowns

In most of man's endeavors,
There are treasures, awards and prizes —
Steps, ladders, goals and levers,
By which he measures how he rises.

There are Oscars for the movies,
And Tony's for the stage, —
Grammy's in the music world,
That all serve as a gauge.

Pulitzers, for writers,
Nobel's for scientists —
Peace awards for those who rise,
By being humanists.

There are honorary doctorates,
Fellowships and grants.
Coronets and baronets,
In England and in France.

World Cups and Olympic gold,
Pennants, banners and flags —
All prizes you can hold,
That get your picture in the mags.

But a warehouse full of trophies,
And a truckload of awards —
Statues or biographies,
And other such rewards.

One day will lose their luster
Begin to tarnish and rust —
One day, even their "Nuster" *"DUSTER"*
Will simply return to dust.

3
What I'm about to say may surprise,
Or even seem a bit abrupt—
But there's another kind of prize,
And a crown that won't corrupt.

Heroes, and heads of state,
Might not even make this list—
Wealthy folks with vast estates,
May also just be dismissed.

Although "works" can't earn our salvation,
Once saved, they can earn our regard *REWARD* -
As we overcome tribulation,
It's the mark that we're pressing toward.

An incorruptible crown for temperance,
And for exhibiting self-control —
Bringing the flesh into obedience,
Of the spirit and cleansing the soul.

The crown of life is for bearing your cross,
With faith - it's a daily sacrifice—
Learning to rejoice in the face of loss,
And for knowing God's Grace will suffice.

A crown of rejoicing for winning souls,
For personal evangelism. —
For taking part in the great commission,
SHINING ~~Swinging~~ God's love - as if through a prism.

The crown of glory for feeding the flock,
With the nourishing word of the Lord.
Helping them to plant their feet on the rock,
And teaching them about His sword.

The crown of righteousness will belong
To all those who love His appearing —
And I'll tell you, friend, it won't be long,
It's so clear that the time is nearing.

4
Decked out in white robes and gowns
As the heavenly angels sing —
The saints of God will lay their crowns,
At the foot of the throne of our King.

We race NOT for some corruptible crown -
And not for the praises of men.
And once won - we'll gladly lay them down,
To hear "Well done, my good and faithful friend."

Our hopes are not like other men's
Once saved, our priorities shift.
We look at life through another lens,
And salvation's our greatest gift.

In all of our endeavors,
What we seek as the highest prize —
Is to always do whatever's,
Seen as the best in the Master's eyes.

Our crowns are incorruptible,
And the glory is not our own —
Our "treasure" is not bankrupt-able,
For the riches that we have known.

All begin and end —
At the foot of the Master's throne.

Incorruptible Crown, 1 Corinthians 9:25-26
Crown of Life, James 1:12, Rev. 2:10
Crown of Rejoicing, 1 Thes. 2:19, Phil. 4:1
Crown of Righteousness, 2 Tim 4:6-8
Crown of Glory, 1 PT 5:1-9, LK 10:35

The Journey

I want you to take a journey with me,
Let's travel back in time - through the Scripture.
Travel through the Word of God with me,
And see it clearly - as a picture.

I want you to imagine this scene,
It took place in 2nd Kings, 6:8 through 18 -

Syria'd declared war on Israel,
They chose to war upon God's chosen nation .
God's chosen, surrounded by the infidel -
And Elisha praying for salvation.

Elisha's servant went out to spy the land,
He came back trembling and confounded.
Try as he might, he couldn't understand -
Elisha'd said "Fear not", though they were surrounded.

You see - the servant was like you and I,
Looking at life through the natural eyes,
He couldn't see the heavenly host -
Whose numbers had darkened the skies.

Well, Elisha prayed the Lord open his eyes,
Not in the natural, but the spirit realm.
Can you imagine the servant's surprise -
No doubt it had to just overwhelm.

The army he'd thought had them surrounded,
Was surrounded by chariots of fire.
The servant must have been astounded ,
By what was about to transpire.

Once again, Elisha simply prayed,
And the enemy was struck blind.
The power of God had been displayed -
Can you imagine that scene in your mind?

That same power belongs to you and I
We can go boldly to the throne of grace.
And our God is faithful to supply
The strength we need and a resting place.

Now we both know the Word is true,
Let God be true - and every man a liar .
We know what the power of prayer can do,
Call down the hosts in chariots of fire.

Today's battle may be of a different sort,
But the word of truth was revealed.
Romans 10 - "who has believed our report?"
Isaiah said "By His stripes we are healed".
Hallelujah!

Now I want you to imagine this,
The woman who had suffered so long.
As Jesus walked by with Jairus,
Determined - she made her way through the throng.

She knew that just the hem of His garment,
Had the power to make her whole .
To end all those years of torment,
Restore her - body and soul.

Can you imagine what she must have been feeling,
After touching just the hem of His clothes .
When she felt her body healing,
By the power just a touch bestows.
Hallelujah!

Today we don't need to touch His clothes ,
Nor to fight our way through the crowd .
Through just His name that same power flows,
Whether whispered or said out loud.
Jesus!

Now we both know the word is true
Let God be true and every man a liar,
He's standing by to strengthen you,
Every time you begin to tire.

And remember what else He said,
My dear, he promised "always" to abide.
When you were in that hospital bed,
Ministering angels stood at your side.

Not just the hem of His garment
But Jesus, through the spirit inside,
Heard your every whispered prayer,
And dried your eyes each time you cried.

~~Today, we don't need to touch His clothes,
Nor to fight our way through the crowd —
Through just his name that same power flows,
Whether whispered or said out loud.
Jesus!~~

Duplicate

Today, we don't need to touch His clothes,
Nor to fight our way through the crowd —
Through just his name that same power flows,
Whether whispered or said out loud.
Jesus!

Now I want you to imagine this scene,
To see it clearly in your head -
Our Lord, Jesus Christ, the Nazarene,
Standing at the foot of your bed!

Think about the comfort of His touch,
Imagine Him - right there in the room.
Can you hear Him say "I love you so much,
You are the reason I rose from the tomb".

My dear - we don't have to touch His clothes
Nor to fight our way through the crowd —
Through just His name, that same power flows
Whether whispered, or said out loud
Jesus!

We know He's not a man that He would lie,
And He said He would NEVER forsake you!
He's there to wipe every tear from your eye,
To give you strength when trials shake you.

The next time you're feeling weary,
My dear - I want you to remember this.
NOT just the comfort of the Master's touch,
But the promise of his kiss!

REV. 21:4 *And God shall wipe every tear
from their eyes...*

Testimony

The view that I once had of sin,
Was not through another man's eyes.
Perhaps unlike you, I once sat in a pew,
While wearing a clever disguise...

But beneath my cloak of righteousness,
I'd just built a house of lies.

I took pride in my humility,
And I saw no contradiction -
Now I realize what a mockery,
I'd once made of the crucifixion.

I'd put a "new coat" on the old man,
Instead of the other way around.
It may have looked good from the outside,
But the "new man" was totally bound.

Like a gracious host, I'd asked the Holy Ghost,
To come in - and make himself at home.
He took a look around, and what he'd found,
Was all the rust there beneath the chrome.

My "pious grin" had just hid the sin
Of a "publican" that mainly brags -
And that "new coat" I'd put on the "old man"
Was, in reality, just filthy rags.

My vanity, and my inequity,
Had been defining my circumstance -
I dropped to my knees and with a tearful plea,
I simply begged for another chance.

I said I would not rest until all my lies
Had been dispossessed and evicted.
No more lies! And no more alibis!
Then I "confessed", and I was convicted.

Well, no "hot coals" had touched my lips,
And no angels suddenly appeared -
No trumpets blew, and no veil was ripped,
But all those dark, dark clouds had cleared.

I tremble to think if I had waited awhile
And got caught up in a deserted "I'll" —
I'll wait, I'll see, I'll pray, I'll think about it,
I'm "almost convinced", but still - I doubt it.

I hope you don't just sit on the fence,
And later hear the words "Get thee hence".
Oh my God...
"I never knew you, get thee hence."

So don't get ^{caught} crushed in "Agrippa" denial -
In which you were "almost persuaded".
You may find yourself in a deserted "I'll",
WISHING you had never waited.

Well - it's not easy to admit these things,
To talk of the mask that I used to wear.
It's a painful thing to lift the lid
On my past shame like this and share.

But - if I can reach just one man,
Touch a heart, or help to save a soul,
Perhaps help someone to understand -
Then it would be a worthy goal.

If THEY can learn from MY mistakes,
Avoid the pain that I've endured...
If I can spare them the heartaches,
Or help to have their soul "restored".

Then my time spent close to the fire -
And all those times that I felt the pain
Might just edify, and inspire -
And my journey won't have been in vain.

God is Love

Young folk look, with hope, to the future,
While some old folk may yearn for the past.
Yet those magical moments in between,
Somehow - never seem to last.

Yet each day carries its own blessings
God's great gifts of mercy and grace.
That we miss while we are obsessing
Over those things that we can embrace.

While we search for those things that glitter,
Those things we can hold or touch -
So often we may end up feeling bitter,
When we find it's "fool's gold" that we clutch.

Once we understand we've been building on sand,
And our dreams have all faded like mist,
By then it's too late to appreciate -
All of those blessings that we have missed.

So let's start now, today, at this moment,
Let us begin to realize;
When all has been said and done, my friend,
It's only God's love that satisfies.

11

Afterglow of Prayer

Sitting here in the afterglow
Of a mighty moment of prayer,
In which the words just seemed to flow,
And I know that the Spirit was there.

Prayer can shut the mouths of lions,
And open doors that set us free.
It can stop the rain from falling down,
And change the course of history.

It can heal the broken hearted
And give us all the victory.
The gates of hell cannot prevail,
With prayer as the master key.

It's the power to bring down strongholds,
And to "cast down" ~~the imaginations~~ *VAIN IMAGINATIONS* -
Build a hedge around our households
And bring healing to our nation.

With faith - you may move mountains.
But with prayer - cast them into the sea.
With prayer we get as much attention,
As God gave at Gethsemane.

When we say the words "Our Father"
We enter the throne room of Grace.
And we know we need not bother
With any sorrows in this place.

When we cry out in Jesus' name,
We're welcomed into God's embrace.
By the Blood of Him who overcame -
When He died for sin - in our place.

"The fervent prayer of a righteous man",
The Word tells us, "availed much".
But it also lets us hold His hand,
And feel the glory of the Master's touch.

12

So - while sitting here in the afterglow
Of a mighty moment of prayer -
I can't help but shed these tears of joy -
At the foot of the Master's chair.

The Bible

There are 66 books in the Bible,
That line up and flow - the gift of the Word,
And though written by 40 different men,
It was the same message that all heard.

They were written in 9 different countries,
And yet - not once did they lose the thread.
While written in 3 different languages,
They seemed to all from a single head.

Among the writers were farmers and kings,
Even a Gospel by a physician.
Rich men and poor men, judges and priests,
Generals as well as musicians.

There were "scientists" and fishermen,
From the cities, the country and shore.
By the Word of God, some were "born again" -
Changing the world forevermore.

They wrote from divine inspiration,
Not one of them wasting a line.
All shared in the great revelation,
As though the fruit of a single vine.

Though spread out over 1,600 years,
It flows - as a single, perfect story.
And a re-occurring theme appears,
God's great love, His mercy and glory.

God used these men - time and time again,
To share with the world His story.
So that we all might be lifted up -
By His great love, His mercy and glory.

13

Armor of God

Doubt is a dart that the devil uses,
Aimed at the heart of those he abuses.
He shakes the mind, and rattles the nerves,
Trying to bind anyone who serves.

The father of lies, as sly as a thief,
He'd have you stagger in disbelief.
He'd have your fears multi-tasking,
And make you waver in your asking.

To rock your faith is part of his plans
Unless you're safe in the Master's hands.
He'd shake the faith of the most devout -
If he can get them to walk in doubt.

But - no need to fear his fiery darts,
Nor demons dabbling in his black arts.
The Lord we serve is more than able
In fact - he's already prepared a table.

With faith we'll feast - the last to the least -
Of us who choose to run "the good race".
With faith and hope there's no need to "grope",
We can be safe within God's embrace.

Yes, doubt is a dart that the devil uses,
To shake your faith - he first confuses.
A "spirit of fear" is one of his ruses;
A "roaring lion" - a role he chooses.

Let's not be ignorant of his devices.
He weakens the faith of those he entices.
But - with "loins gird about" with the Word of Truth,
We're given armor that's fire proof.

From those fiery darts, we're kept quite safe,
When we put on the "shield of faith"
To cast down vain imagination -
Put on the helmet of salvation.

14

To guard against his divisiveness,
Put on the breastplate of righteousness.
Even when mute - we're still quite eloquent,
With "feet shod" our walk IS our statement!

Protected by armor
And delivered by prayer -
The devil doesn't stand a chance.

With the armor of God
We rejoice - in joy -
No matter what our circumstance. *Eph. 6:10-20*

Hold On

I've been down in the valley of despair,
Where a thousand tears are shed —
Way down deep in the valley of despair,
Where my faith was like a thread.

That thread of faith was my road to hope,
And I held on in desperation —
Until I wove that thread into a rope -
It was the hope of my salvation.

At times it seems I've been to hell and back,
But I've come back with a testimony —
The Lord was there to pick up the slack,
And never once did He leave me lonely.

There's death and doubt, and yes - despair,
Down in the valley, as everyone knows —
But I've come back with a word to share,
It's to the valley that the river flows.

In the darkest part of that valley,
I came across the "River of Life" —
A fountain that was flowing freely
Amid that barrenness and strife.

13

Way down deep there in the valley,
Amid the darkness and despair,
My spirit began to rally,
When I realized that the Lord was there.

He was right there beside me,
The "Shepherd" that I'd heard of -
To comfort, lead and guide me,
Into the light of the Father's love.

So hold on if you make that journey,
To where the bitter winds often blow
With his rod and staff, he'll comfort you,
No matter where you may have to go.

The Test

One day this same "test" will be your testimony
And you won't stand on mere ceremony.
You'll raise your hands high and boldly say
What God had done - and how he'd made a way.

SPEAK OF

You may ~~silence~~ the doubts that tried to fill your head,
Tell of the fiery darts, and the tears you shed.
Of all those sleepless nights, tossing upon your bed,
First counting sheep - then being shepherded.

THEN,

~~And,~~ Hallelujah! Tell of the peace you found
That enabled you to somehow rebound.
How you "let go" and simply trusted God
And the Lord was there with his staff and rod.

To light, to lead, to rule and guide -
And as He'd decreed, to always abide.

Yes - one day this test will be your testimony,
Of how the Lord never left you lonely.
How he was there to guide you through -
And you will share what you know is true...

14

Though troubled on every side,
In the end - you were not distressed.
Because He who promised to abide -
Was there to see you through the test.

Promised Land

What would it be like
If you never had a care,
Never had a trial,
Or a burden to bear.

What would it be like
If your faith was never shaken,
If you never had a doubt,
Or ever been mistaken.

What would it be like
If you were always warm -
If you never felt a chill,
Or had to face a storm.

If all your goals were met,
And all your bills were paid,
And when the sun bore down
You always had some shade.

Never lost a loved one
Or had to suffer pain,
And the words "Well done"
Were a constant refrain.

What if no seasons changed,
No trees gave up their leaves,
And you lived in a world
Where no one ever grieves.

A world like that?
God could have made it,
But it was this world
That He created.

In a world like that,
With no extremes -
Who would call on God,
Or have a need for dreams?

This world - with all its sorrow,
Its tribulations and its pain;
Its concerns about tomorrow,
And all the things we can't explain.

Did not come about through chance.
It was not mere "evolution".
It was not random circumstance,
Or some genetic substitution.

God spoke it into existence,
Laid it out according to plan -
According to divine providence,
That we may not understand.

So let us learn, then, to seek His will,
And His always outstretched hand;
And His Grace will suffice until
He leads us to the promised land.

Matt. 25: "...come, ye blessed of my Father.

Inherit the kingdom prepared for

you from the foundation of the world."

Holding Our Hand

Before a tear can roll from cheek to chin,
Our Father reaches out his hand -
To touch our soul and let healing begin,
In ways we may not understand.

Before the pain can bring us to our knees,
He's already there, at our side.
There in the midst of our catastrophes,
A healing balm is being applied.

We're all the same, in the midst of our pain,
It's so hard to feel the Master's touch.
We only feel the flame, and the weight of the chain,
Which is why we may complain so much.

But before that tear can roll from chin to chest,
Our Father's hand is already there.
To comfort our souls and to give rest,
Even though we may be unaware.

When the pain subsides, and we've made it thru,
We may think we did it on our own.
When our tears have dried like the morning dew,
He sits there - smiling - upon his throne.

Yes - we may look back and see a single track
Of footprints - left there in the sand.

~~That the Master had been holding our hand,~~
*PERHAPS UNAWARE AS WE, LOOK BACK
THAT THE MASTER HAD BEEN holding our hand.*

Feature Presentation

Movie screens in your imagination
Can destroy your peace of mind.
And bring you under the domination
Of the wicked one's lies that bind.

If your "feature presentation"
Isn't starring the Lord, Jesus Christ,
Then you're open to the exploitation
Of Lucifer's main device.

He has a "cast of thousands"
With the many parts they play.
They'll plant their seeds of doubt and -
Attack your faith in the matinee.

If you let him have a "starring role",
He may appear as an angel of light --
Then it won't be long until he takes control,
And peace of mind has taken flight.

Scenes of nudity and graphic violence,
Can quickly become "rated X" --
Bringing lust of the flesh as a consequence,
Leaving us stressed, vexed and perplexed.

Before you get yourself into that rut,
Into Satan's mental tug of war -
Call on the savior, and he'll yell "CUT!",
And leave that trash on the cutting room floor.

So let the gift of your imagination
Revolve around God's Grace and glory.
Around the majesty of His creation,
After all - this is His story.

Just imagine "the coming attraction".
The Lord returning in power and might.
It's sure to have "plenty of action".
And oh... what a beautiful sight.

So let His Word be your inspiration -
The Lord produce, and the Spirit direct.
What a beautiful revelation -
The Holy Trinity in full effect.

God's Grace and peace
Is more precious than gold -
Now THAT'S the "greatest story
That's ever been told". :D

Let's Pretend

Let's pretend, for just a minute, my friend,
That all your deeds were shown on CNN.
That everything you had ever done -
Was shown on "prime time" to everyone.

Let me ask - would you do the same?
Just pretend that this was a game.

The things you've done, would you do them again,
If they were all broadcast on TBN?
What if your life was an open book,
And everyone could just take a look.

And all the things that you'd like to forget,
Were splashed all over on the internet.
If all the things that you knew were wrong,
Were played on every station as if a number 1 song.

If the darkest secrets hid within your soul,
Were flashed on the big screen at the Super Bowl.
If all the dirt, the darkest part of you,
Was shown on cable, or on "Pay Per View".

How would it feel, if all your "petty crimes"
Were shown on the cover of the New York Times.
It's just a game - but imagine the shame,
If all your sins were posted under your name.

Well, my friend - it's time to open your eyes.
Consider this - just a word to the wise.
The heart of man can wear no disguise
That can hide his intent from the Master's eyes.

Hebrews 4:12 will erase any doubt
If you don't understand what I'm talking about
"He discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart".
Soul - spirit - joints and marrow - he divides apart.

If it's still not clear, or you have any qualms,
Take a look at 44:21 in the Book of Psalms.
"Shall not God search this out?" - No secrets, my friend.
This time it's not a game of Let's Pretend.

But thank God for his mercy and his amazing Grace,
Though we all have stumbled, we're not out of the race
There's redemption - and forgiveness for sin.
It's about where you're going - not where you've been.

Come now, friend - let us reason together,
The weight that besets us is light as a feather.
And though your past was as it were mud,
You can get cleansed - put it under the blood.

Because the price was paid at Calvary,
And the blood of Jesus has set us free.
He paid the price to give us liberty,
And when He shed His blood - we got the victory!

So while there's time - think about it, my friend,
This time it's just a poem, and soon it will end —
It's up to you, what the future will hold.
Just remember - you've already been told.

"He discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart..."
But it's not too late to make a fresh start.
The next time that you hear an altar call,
You can nail your [missing word?] up on the wall.
SINS

The time is at hand, yes - the night's far spent.
Make a stand on your knees - time to repent.

Fig Leaf

Well, I've never heard this said before,
But if the first "religion" had a name.
A little hut with a sign on the door,
Would bear the "fig leaf" that hid the shame.

They weren't trying to reach out to **God**,
The fact is, they were trying to hide.
They were hoping to avoid the rod -
Not trying to be sanctified.

They used to walk in the cool of the day,
In fellowship with the Creator.
Then they hid, not knowing what to say,
Led astray by the Prevaricator.

The first words of God that were repeated
Were, somehow, twisted into a lie.
He'd said of that fruit "Do not eat it"
Neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

When the serpent came to beguile Eve,
The first thing he did was misquote the Word —
To lead astray, he would first deceive,
With a lie that was really absurd.

He said, "You shall not surely die,
But you shall be more like a **God**." *god*
And so Eve chose to believe the lie...
Exchanging fellowship for the rod.

It pains me to think some things haven't changed
The Word of God is still being twisted.
Taken out of context and re-arranged,
And the truth is still being resisted.

Through self-deception and delusion,
Men's hearts just continue to harden.
The father of lies and his illusion
Didn't stop back there in the garden.

Many churches in the land today,
Should have a fig leaf upon the door.
They ignore the truth, seeking their own way
Through fables, traditions and lore.

23

Line up their actions with the Word of God,
Test the Spirit, and look for the fruit.
You might find the grapes of wrath being trod
And the word of truth is destitute.

I feel led by the Spirit to speak out.
I'm not trying to cause any pain.
I'll ruffle some feathers, without a doubt
But I'm not worried about the sons of Cain.

My heart goes out to the innocents,
To all those who are being misled.
Lies from the pulpit are a pestilence,
Like a virus that is being spread.

One day soon will come recompense,
For surely vengeance belongs to the Lord.
And some will hear the words "Get thee hence".
Everlasting fire - their reward.

If it turns out I've burned some bridges,
I've got the only bridge I'll ever need,
And that's the bridge that began at the Cross,
By which my salvation was guaranteed.

Anyone who has been offended,
Or thinks I've just sown some seeds of discord,
It's the word of truth that I've defended -
So just go and take it up with the Lord. :D

Gary Field

www.betweenthebars.org/blogs/1398

I PRAY

24

I PRAY THAT THROUGH MY WRITING
I MIGHT TOUCH THE HEARTS OF MEN -
TO PLANT A SEED THAT MAY LEAD,
PERHAPS, TO BEING "BORN AGAIN".

I PRAY THE SPIRIT GUIDES ME,
NOT JUST TO AMUSE, OR ENTERTAIN -
BUT TO OPEN EYES TO THE PRIZE
FOR WHICH THE LAMB OF GOD WAS SLAIN

I PRAY MY WORDS MAY COMFORT
THOSE WHO ARE FEELING PAIN -
AND HELPS THEM TO KNOW THE JOY,
OF COUNTING LOSS AS GAIN.

AND THEN WHEN MY PEN FALLS SILENT
IF ANY MAN SHOULD TELL MY STORY -
LET THIS STAND OUT, WITHOUT A DOUBT
"HE WROTE TO BRING GOD GLORY."

— Amen.