**JESUS KNOWS MY NAME**

In 1978 I had been saved less than two years. I had done my best to witness to all those with whom I had run as a lost teenager. They had followed me anywhere before I came to Jesus. I was sure they would follow me to the Saviour. Not one did. I wrote this song to express my sorrow over their rejection of Christ, and me, and in it one can hear the determination of a young Christian to go on without them.

In the Bible God said they would not understand

Friends they would mock, and then turn away

But there is a foundation, and it standeth sure

For my Lord heard the words I once prayed.

Jesus, He knows my name

In a world ever-changing He’s always the same.

Others may question and doubt and condemn

But Jesus, He knows my name.

How often I’m met with words bitter to taste

By those who must feel they know inward parts.

But Jesus, my Savior, knows I’ve claimed His blood.

His peace is the strength of my heart.

Jesus, He knows my name

In a world ever-changing He’s always the same.

Others may question and doubt and condemn

But Jesus, He knows my name.

Now I’m no longer the talk of the town

I’ve no longer access to fortune or fame

But the things I’ve forsaken I count them no loss

For Jesus Christ, He knows my name.

Jesus, He knows my name

In a world ever-changing He’s always the same.

Others may question and doubt and condemn

But Jesus, He knows my name.

**THE SECRET OF THE LORD**

From 1981 to 1983 I labored with the help of two good Christian men to plant a church in my home town. After being ignominiously dismissed from that pastorate I devoted a good deal of time to songwriting. The contacts I had in the music industry spoke very highly of the material but rejected it as too complex and not commercial enough.

In response to their appeal for songs sweeter and more shallow I wrote this number in August of 1983. Short enough for radio (anything over three minutes is too long for modern Americans to concentrate upon) and upbeat in its message, this song was turned away. The head of one Christian record company said, “Great song but it has too much scripture.”

The piece is taken from Proverbs 30, Ecclesiastes 11 and Psalms 25.

How do the bones grow in the womb

Before the baby is born?

How does the whippoorwill know when to sing

Or the morning star to greet the dawn.

Who knows the way of a snake on a rock

Of the eagle that rides on the wind?

And who understands the a poor wretched man

By the grace of God is born again?

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him

He teaches them the truth each day.

The secret of the Lord is with those that walk near Him

Learning about His love along the way.

Consider the ant, diligent, strong

Working with none to guide

Or the spider that clings to the walls of a king

Where no valiant man would dare be spied.

Who knows the way of a ship on the sea

Or the way of a man with a maid?

And who understands the law’s every demand

In the blood of Christ is fully paid.

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him

He teaches them the truth each day.

The secret of the Lord is with those that walk near Him

Learning about His love along the way.

**I SEE A ROARING LION**

We used to preach on weekend nights in front of the Glass Bar a block from the ocean in New Smyrna Beach, Florida. To keep myself from being distracted in between witness opportunities, I would sing in my heart to the Lord. This song captures the sights and sounds of the nightlife so appealing to those living in that darkness. This was written in the spring of 1982.

No longer do I marvel at the beauty of the lights

The sepulcher is polished and disguised

But I know what lies beyond the glitter and the glow

The back beat ever muffles terror’s cries

Oh I see a roaring lion; and he’s looking to devour you

My boy, won’t you flee unto the light

The devil He’s prowling this street tonight.

Sonny’s got the shipment. He’s the travel agent here

Can send you where you never want to go

Smoother than any viper, the venom from his lips

Will con you to the short end of the score

Oh I see a roaring lion; and he’s looking to devour you

My boy, won’t you flee unto the light

The devil He’s prowling this street tonight

Pandora waits for you boy, and her skirt slit up the side

Will hook your eye and poison your hungry bones

A painted nail is pointed, with a finger she draws you near

Yet you’ll find within her spell you’re so alone

Oh I see a roaring lion; and he’s looking to devour you

My boy, won’t you flee unto the light

The devil He’s prowling this street tonight.

The master of deception with his oils and with his brush

Has painted this old graveyard in pastels

And the colors will send you spinning till your senses he controls

Boy, keep from where that lion ever dwells.

Oh I see a roaring lion; and he’s looking to devour you

My boy, won’t you flee unto the Light.

The devil He’s prowling this street tonight.

**A WAY IN A MANGER**

This is a literary allusion to Martin Luther’s famous hymn. Telling the tale of why Christ Jesus came into the world, this song was composed in March of 1984. The first two lines came to me one morning while I was walking my mail route and I sang them over and over again through the next five hours and the rest of the song eventually fell into place.

Scripture hath concluded all men under sin

And the law once given held no hope therein

For all of a man’s righteousness never could avail

His every effort to atone, it could only fail.

Blood was needed A sacrifice

Only perfection Could pay the price

Who’d have ever thought

That God would make a way in a manger.

Cursed is every one and all who continue not

In all things written in the law, each tittle and each jot

For Adam fell and thus his seed, his seed became corrupt

And from the heart of every man rebellious streams erupt.

Fount of cleansing Was the need

There was none Of human seed.

Who’d have ever thought

That God would make a way in a manger.

In the region and the shadow of darkness all did dwell

And every man at his best state is vain and bound for hell.

No one moral. No one just. No one worthy. None to trust.

All men guilty. All men lost. All men blind among human host.

Full redemption Blessed prize

Hope of glory Lasting life

Who’d have ever thought

That God would make a way in a manger.

**THE PATIENCE SONG**

In the early days of my Christian life, I often wondered if I would ever have an opportunity to be of service to the Lord. Assured by His word and comforted through prayer that His gifts and calling were without repentance, I studied and prepared for a day when He would open a door of service for me.

In November of 1983 I wrote this song which tells the tale of the truth revealed to me about waiting on God for the changing of the seasons in our lives.

God’s people were in bondage. Egypt was the place.

But in the sandy desert Moses sat.

Forty years a-wondering’ just when his day would come

Oh my friend can you imagine that.

Well you may be nobody, and then you may be great

But everybody’s gonna have to wait.

David was anointed with oil upon his head,

Yet on the run in caves he had to hide.

He had praise and honor. He had mighty men.

Just think what running did to that man’s pride.

Well you may be nobody, and then you may be great

But everybody’s gonna have to wait.

Jesus brought a message. A kingdom He would preach.

The whole world sat in darkness till He came.

Still He was building houses for close to thirty years.

Yes even for the Christ it was the same.

Well you may be nobody, and then you may be great

But everybody’s gonna have to wait.

Now in an upper room there was gathered quite a host

One hundred and twenty folks in all.

They were there for many days continuing in prayer

Just hoping for the Holy Ghost to fall.

Well you may be nobody, and then you may be great

But everybody’s gonna have to wait.

Who are you man or lady, that’s called to go and tell

May as well accept what I repeat.

There’s a great inheritance, great victories to be won,

But God can’t make you strong until you’re weak.

So you may be nobody, and then you may be great

But everybody’s gonna have to wait.

I’LL BE PRAISING YOU

It seems so silly to complain or speak of burdens when God has blessed us in a million ways. When we look about us at what our brothers and sisters are suffering in lands where Christians are persecuted and killed, when we think of saints with broken bodies, failing health and the like it is a marvel that we consider ourselves in trouble. Yet, our pain is so real to us that it is rarely kept in a proper perspective.

Habakkuk tells the tale of a preacher overwhelmed by the trouble in his world. In his despair he called on the Lord and emerged with a marvellous perspective and testimony. This song is drawn from the words of Habakkuk 3:17-18.

This song was composed during the summer of 1989. Included here is the bridge which was not used on the Desert project but was used in the alternate version*.*

A D A

I’ll be praising You when I see no cause for cheer.

A D A

I’ll be praising You when the path has grown so drear.

D E

When the night does fall And the mountain wall

F C

Stands before to block my view,

F G

When I cannot see Proof You care for me

F G C

I’ll be praising You.

I’ll be praising You when I’m standing all alone.

I’ll be praising You when evil fortune I have known.

When my gold does rust And my prayers they just

Don’t ever seem to make it through,

To Your throne of grace To Your holy place

I’ll be praising You.

I’ll be praising You when the crops die in the field.

I’ll be praising You when the fruit trees bear no yield.

When my hopes and dreams Fly away and it seems

A few of the promises weren’t true,

When my joy is gone And I can’t see beyond

I’ll be praising You.

D Eb D Eb

Show me, show me some direction Show me, show me some way out

D Eb D

Give me, some cure for my infection

D Eb

Before I’m eat up with the canker of this doubt

I’ll be praising You when You’ve destroyed everything of worth.

I’ll be praising You when You shake the planet earth.

When the fire does burn Everywhere I turn

Purging everything right through

With the smell of smoke On my easy yoke

I’ll be praising You.

I DON’T HAVE TO GO TO KNOW

In the early days we would go to shopping centers and public events and distribute gospel tracts through the day. Then we would come home and build a fire out doors and sit around that fire praying, reading the Bible and making up songs. Charlie would strum his guitar and I would come up with words and tunes on the spot. Lilian and Linda Wilson would work out harmonies as we went along. I think we could have written a new song every night – and we often did.

While Charlie was fine tuning the chord sequences and the girls were working out the harmonies I was not content to sing the same verse over and over again. A lot of the songs written during those seasons had a dozen verses or more.

One of my favorites from those wonderful days is *I Don’t Have To Go To Know*. This song testifies to the fact that one need not wait for heaven to enjoy the bounty of God’s salvation. It seemed a perfect sentiment for inclusion in the *Desert* project.

This song was written in October of 1981. I really like what the crew did with the harmonies on this recording.

I hear men speak so fancifully – a teardrop in their eye –

about a home they look unto somewhere beyond the sky.

Well, I was long in darkness, but Jesus gave me sight.

So I don’t have to go to know, the Lamb He is the Light.

I hear men speak of brighter days when no more tears shall fall

For God, who dwells in saved men’s hearts,

shall wipe away them all.

But I’ve a friend who comforts whenever I’m distressed.

So I don’t have to go to know, Jehovah is my rest.

I hear men talk of golden streets as though they are amazed

And wonder at the sounds they’ll hear

when Christ is truly praised.

But I’ve a heart which once did moan in agony and gloom.

So I don’t have to go to know, there’s joy beyond the tomb.

I hear men speak of sitting down and speaking face to face

With the author of all truth, and He who saves by grace.

But I’ve a friend so trusted, who’s with me to each end.

So I don’t have to go to know, the Most High is my friend.

I hear men say that war shall end, how that thrills their soul,

To think that ne’er a shot shall sound

While all the ages roll.

But long a battle rage-ed within my selfish heart

So I don’t have to go to know that peace He doth impart.

I hear men say that someday soon they will be going home

And no more shall their weary feet

This pilgrimage have to roam.

But Jesus lives within this one born sentenced unto hell.

So I don’t have to go to know that I’ve a place to dwell.

I hear men speak of no more death, as if it were far away.

I hear them marvel at this truth within the songs they play.

Yet, I was born a sinner and Jesus paid my price.

So I don’t have to go to know

He gives eternal life.

**I’M SO GLAD**

The paradox in many of these songs is quite evident. A dark lyric with an upbeat melody expresses the Christian life as I have experienced it. There is so much sadness and hurting round about us and all the while there is so much cause for rejoicing.

This song from April, 1982 was another heart-felt plea to those who had chosen to stay in the world rather than join me in walking with Jesus. I wanted so badly to tell them how they were hurting themselves, how their self-inflicted wounds hurt me and, most of all, that I had something far better. I did not like the world I lived in, but I could live above it, while they were drowning therein.

We got a pretty good recording on this but failed to capture what I heard in the song when I wrote it.

There’s a multitude of souls on the broad road

Who, sadly, don’t know their way

And ambition for things that they never have seen

Takes them farther from Jesus each day.

I’ve seen violence and strife in the city –

Folks who don’t know who lives next door.

But the saddest of all

is the mamas and dads

That don’t know the kids on their floor.

But I’m so glad that I know Jesus

I’m so glad that He knows me.

I’m so glad that He walks beside me

To keep me company.

We can sit and talk it over and He’ll tell me how

That He wants me to be.

Oh I’m so glad that I know Jesus

And I’m glad that He knows me.

Well sufficient for today is the evil

Of tomorrow there’s no guarantee

And what may or may not lie beyond the next dawn

Is really no matter to me.

I can’t trouble myself with the questions

That have answers no mortal can know.

I’ll just trust in the Lord

in the light of His word,

As moment by moment I go.

Oh I’m so glad that I know Jesus

I’m so glad that He knows me.

I’m so glad that He walks beside me

To keep me company.

We can sit and talk it over and He’ll tell me how

That He wants me to be.

Oh I’m so glad that I know Jesus

And I’m glad that He knows me.

In the rear view if I stopped for the turning’

Would I see all the ones left behind

The friends and the foes who got tangled up

In discovering’ their own heart and mind.

Ah they tell me I can’t know their pleasure

As I toil with my hand on a plow.

Though I know but in part

there’s such peace in my heart

that nothing can stop me right now.

Yes I’m so glad that I know Jesus

I’m so glad that He knows me.

I’m so glad that He walks beside me

To keep me company.

We can sit and talk it over and He’ll tell me how

That He wants me to be.

Oh I’m so glad that I know Jesus

And I’m glad that He knows me.

Well I’m pressing along to my homeland

And continually I seem to pray

That every time that old sun comes up

This wound be that golden day

When my troubles and labors are ended

And I enter into my rest

When finally I know

In the way I am known

The One who has known me the best.

Oh I’m so glad that I know Jesus

I’m so glad that He knows me.

I’m so glad that He walks beside me

To keep me company.

We can sit and talk it over and He’ll tell me how

That He wants me to be.

Oh I’m so glad that I know Jesus

And I’m glad that He knows me.

**ANY MORE ALIVE**

This is an inward look taken when I was a young man who was being stripped of his pride and self-righteousness. I had done much for my God in the years since He saved me, but there was a proud and haughty spirit wrecking most of it.

After many double-minded years I began to realize that I was no better and no more important than any other child of God. He did not need me. I needed Him. If He chose to use me, hallelujah. If He did not it would be no loss to His majesty.

I had come to see myself as the Lord saw me. I was just another pitiful creature whose best option was to abandon all pride and live wholly dependent upon the Saviour.

We recorded the slowest of three versions of this song, which was penned in June, 1985.

If you came unto Your own

And Your own were just like me,

Would they receive you?

If you spoke unto the multitude

And the multitude was like me,

Would they believe you?

Am I any more alive than they.

If You shone Your light in the darkness

And the darkness was like me

Would it comprehend?

If you told your disciples to follow You

And they followed You like I do

Would you be alone in the end.

Am I any more alive than they.

Oh I hear men boast of their righteousness,

I must confess,

I’ve a different point of view.

I hear men talk about all that they do for God

I find it odd

They’ve so little to say

About all the things that

You alone can do.

If you bore a people to praise Your name

And they praised You like I do,

Would the rocks have to cry?

If you sought a righteous sacrifice

And every man was just like me,

Would Your Son have to die?

Am I any more alive than they.

**JESUS THE NAME**

This hymn came to me while I was pushing a lawn mower in July 1989. The words and music flowed into my heart in this very order.

Jesus the name that excelleth all others

Name of our confidence, name of our praise

Name on the lips of the child with its mother

And of the saint at the close of his days.

Jesus the name that excelleth all others

Name of the grace that once dwelt among men.

Name of the Lamb that was slain for our sinning

Name of our hope, our redeemer, our friend

Jesus the name that excelleth all others

Spoken through tears when the heart it is torn.

Name of all comfort, rest and consolation

Name that for ages our sorrows has borne.

Jesus the name that excelleth all others

Name that is whispered in effectual prayer.

Name that bears witness our heavenly Father

Knows every need, each desire and each care.

Jesus the name that excelleth all others

Name before which every knee soon shall bend

Name that is worshipped by all things enduring

Name ever holy. World without end.

**WHY DON’T YOU TURN**

During the winter of 1984 a former classmate died of a drug overdose. A man I had won to Christ had fallen away. I had gone to see him in the jail where he was locked away. Friends of our family, with whom we had gone to church, were headed for a divorce court.

I have spent my life pleading with these people, and others like them, to let the Lord Jesus satisfy the longing of their tired hearts. It kills me to see them destroying themselves while thinking that somehow Christianity would make them unhappy.

The words and music to this piece, from the fall of 1982, have always been a personal favorite of mine. It was chosen to close out the *Desert* session and, thanks be to God, it spoke to the hearts of many, many men and women. Charlie did a grand job capturing the mood of the song with his guitar.

When your pride is stripped and scattered by the tyrant winds of time.

When the mount of aspiration’s proved too difficult to climb

And you turn in disappointment, longing only to forget

The failure and the emptiness which selfish aims beget

When the lady, who lay by your side is lying’ with your friend

And the man in whom you did confide betrayed you in the end

And no one stoops to lift you as you fall broken at their feet

Then you find only ice, and harlotry, but no help on the street

When the needle plays a phantom dance upon your trembling arm

And you find the dealer’s promised highs were only false alarms

How the craving drives you lunatic. You’d kill, but you’d rather die

Yet you curse the one deliverer and damn the God on high

Oh in this world of stocks and bonds where gain is turned to loss

Midst empty stares and live night mares the shadow of the cross

Falls silently upon the hearts of poor, deluded souls

Who scorn the path of grace and truth for make-believe paroles.

Why don’t you turn, Turn to Jesus, in your need and in your grief

When in pleasures and in playthings you have found no sure relief

From the fear and the doubt which cripples

from the constant inner strife

Oh why can’t you turn to Jesus and find Him, to be, the life.