**THE EMPTY TOMB**

This is a hymn written on the mail route in January, 1988. It seemed to me at the time that gospel preaching properly held forth the cross-work of Christ but did not speak loudly or often enough about His rising from the dead. This song was written to set forth the fullness of the gospel message.

G D G D G

I realize that He bore my transgressions And I know that He bled for my sin

D G D

And the cross lifted high was essential Eternal salvation to win.

G D G D

But ‘twas not until three days passing Brought news from the garden so grand

G C G D

That the one who had died was arisen To give life to the poor sons of man.

G D G C

I believe Jesus died. I believe that Jesus cried,

G D

It is finished, through Calvary’s gloom.

G D G C

But if the tale ended there I’d still be in despair.

G D G C D G

My hope is the empty tomb. My hope is the empty tomb.

Oh I know that the world will not look past

A great teacher who gave up the ghost.

But the death of a martyr, though noble,

Could never redeem human host.

Had faithful men laid the body away

And the stone remained sealed on the grave

Our souls would yet be without ransom,

With no victor with the power to save.

-c-

Oh the old brutal cross with its terror

Was the place where our sin debt was paid.

And there lifted up from His own earth

The Lord Jesus our offering was made.

But the sun was gone dark and refused to shine

The world’s hope fell to blackness of night

But the rising of Jesus come morning

Proved His promise that He was the Light.

**COME AWAY**

I was going to, and probably should have, led off the album with this song. It is a simple call to worship which dawned on me during early morning Bible reading in the fall of 1990. The third verse and second chorus were added during the recording session to fill out the number.

A E A

Come away from the world for a time if you would

E A

Come away from the world for a time cause it’s good

D A D E A

To be separated unto the Lord.

Come away from the world for a time if you would

Come away from the world for a time cause you should

Be separated unto the Lord.

E

He made a way, through the veil of His flesh,

A

into the holy of holies for me.

E

He made a way, when He died His great death,

D

that in the presence of God I might be.

Come away from the world for a time while He’s near

Come away from the world for a time do not fear

To be separated unto the Lord.

Come away from the world for a time while He’s near

Come away from the world and be of good cheer

Be separated unto the Lord.

He made a way through the shedding of blood

into the throne room of mercy for me

He made a way, when He rose from the dead,

that a true child of God I might be.

Come away from the world for a time if you would

Come away from the world for a time cause it’s good

To be separated unto the Lord.

JESUS, WONDERFUL FRIEND

This is song came to me while walking from house to house in May, 1989. I have lost many songs which came to me in the midst of some activity. Before I had a tiny hand-held recorder, or a cell phone (call home, leave the tune on the machine), songs that arrived while on visitation or at work often slipped away.

The melody to this one is so gentle that one could put a thousand verses thereto – and still tell but a little of the wonder of our Lord.

D A D G A D

Jesus, wonderful friend whom have I beside thee

D A D G A D

Jesus, wonderful friend in thy arms do hide me

G D G D

Safe and secure I know I’ll endure

G A

Because thy love knows no end

G A D

Jesus, wonderful friend.

Jesus, wonderful friend see my frail condition

Jesus, wonderful friend be my great physician

Sick in my soul I long to be whole

In mercy my every ill mend

Jesus, wonderful friend.

Jesus, wonderful friend I bow my knees before thee

Jesus, wonderful friend in gentleness look o’er me

Lord you know my heart Its deep inward part

So I would not dare to pretend

Jesus, wonderful friend.

Jesus, wonderful friend when desire is calling

Jesus, wonderful friend keep my feet from falling

Full well I know That all snares below

Fly when my knees I do bend

Jesus, wonderful friend.

Jesus wonderful friend, hasten thy appearing

Jesus wonderful friend, I feel glory nearing

The darker the night The greater thy light

Shines when the blessing You send

Jesus wonderful friend.

**HANGING ON A TREE**

This is a pure guitar song from March 1982. The idea is obvious, tying the fall of the first Adam to the triumph of the last Adam.

D G

In the garden was a lady And a man that God did make.

A

They didn’t have a lot of rules To keep or else to break.

G D G D

All the loving Father asked Of that first family

G A G D

Was that the couple please not eat The fruit from off that tree.

A G D

Hanging on a tree. Hanging on a tree.

G D G A

The balance of eternity Was hanging on a tree.

D A G D

Hanging on a tree. Hanging on a tree.

G D G D

The balance of eternity Was hanging on a tree.

The serpent he was subtle Said, “Eve why you look so blue?

Did your maker try and keep The sweetest fruit from you?

Must be He don’t love you. Oh lady, can’t you see,

You’ll be a wise old woman If you eat from off that tree.”

c

All men fell that tragic day For Adam had no strength

To refuse his blinded lady. And so we find at length

That all of his descendants Are cursed eternally

Unless someone of sinless blood Could make a remedy.

-c-

Scripture calls a curse upon All who the law don’t keep

And pictures every desperate man A lost and helpless sheep.

But cursed also is the one – How grand this thought to me –

Who gives His life for mortal man By hanging on a tree.

-c-

WHEN THE CLOUDS ALL ROLL AWAY

When I got saved in 1976 I had never heard a quartet sing a gospel song. I quickly grew to love the harmony and joy of that genre. I have only been able to write a few songs in that vein and this is one, composed in the spring of 1980.

This was recorded late in the session, everyone was tired and we lost the rhythm we desired and did not get the song the way I wanted it.

D G D

Have you ever watched a sunset with skies of gold and red

A

and marveled at the beauty of that sight?

D G D

As you looked did you ever wonder if this could be the eve

A D G D

when all God’s children take their flight?

G E

Oh, I find myself a looking every chance I get.

G A

And I find myself a wondering if He’s a coming yet.

G A D G

Oh what a sight to vision Oh what a happy day

G A G D

I sure hope I’m a looking’ when the clouds all roll away.

Have you ever watched the gathering

of a storm from out the south

and watched the billows mounting in the sky?

Did it ever cross your mind, friend,

that before the hard rain fell

we could bid this sinful world goodbye?

Have you ever looked in the morning

at the hanging powder puffs

and felt that tingle running through your bones?

And you knew just any minute

You would hear Jesus call?

Well, brother, if you have you’re not alone.

NOW EVERY DAY IS WORTH LIVING

This rollicking number was written in Daytona Beach, Florida in June of 1987.

I wandered with no destination

And no hope of finding my way

Marching along the road to despair

I was farther from home each day

Then a light began to break through

The sin clouds that covered my heart

And Jesus said I’m the way, the truth

And a new life I can freely impart.

Jesus, oh Jesus, You’re a wonderful Savior to me

And I never shall forget the day You came to set me free

Now every day is worth living

At night I can lay down to sleep

Knowing there’s joy in the morning

Knowing that my soul You’ll keep.

Now I walk on a narrow way

But the footing below me is sure

For in the perfect will of God

I know that my soul is secure.

A new song it rings in my heart now

And that Light it still leads on my way

I can hardly wait to see His face

When He comes on that glorious day.

Jesus, oh Jesus, You’re a wonderful Savior to me

And I never shall forget the day You came to set me free.

Now every day is worth living

At night I can lay down to sleep

Knowing there’s joy in the morning

Knowing that my soul You’ll keep.

Now every day is worth living

At night I can lay down to sleep

Knowing there’s joy in the morning

Knowing that my soul You’ll keep.

Knowing there’s joy in the morning

Knowing that my soul You’ll keep.

**THANK YOU LORD**

I had been saved a little over eighteen months. I had stopped writing songs when I got saved, unsure if I could use my former craft in my new life. On a February weekend in 1978 our church took a group of young people to a place called Camp Horizon. Friday night and Saturday was filled with play and flirtation and there was a little bit of watered-down Christianity worked in after the evening meal. These church kids ridiculed my desire to talk about the Lord and wanted nothing to do with conversations centered on scripture. I’d had my fill of their activities before I got saved and wished I did not have to wait for the church bus to drive me home at the close of the Sunday meetings.

Early Sunday morning I wandered away from the camp and sat along a train track watching the sun come up. There I earnestly prayed and asked the Lord to deliver me from a shallow, frilly, form of Christianity that made no mark upon the world. I was so happy to have a life of meaning and purpose. I did not want saved people (some of them must have been) to put a damper on what Jesus had put in my soul.

The following week I wrote this song, the first I ever composed after my conversion. “The horizon.” Get it?

C F C F

I feel a gentle breeze, blowing at my back

C F C F

While I’m here upon my knees, beside this railroad track.

G C F

And as the gray mist falls The first faint rays break onto the horizon.

G

But I fear no cold, for well I know My waiting will soon be done.

C G F C

I thank you Lord, for the wind That goes blowing through the sky

G F C

Reminding me of Your blessed Spirit That hearkens unto my cry.

C G F C

And I thank you Lord, for the sun Which each day shines down on me

F C F C F

Reminding me that the Light of the world Came to set me free.

High on Calvary God gave His only Son.

There to ransom me, one lost and so undone.

Oh, such a tale no man could forge I know it must be true.

One need not even open their eyes Lord, it’s so easy to see You.

-c-

Oh what a blessed hour of fellowship was this.

Dear Lord to feel Thy power and Thy tenderness

One need only to live the dawn of another glorious day.

Cause when I start the morn with You I’m sent singing’ on my way.

**PEACE IN THE VALLEY**

We could have recorded a softer version of this much-criticized song but I doubt that would have made much difference. This literary allusion to the gospel standard *There Will Be Peace in the Valley* began with a folk song feel. The stern preaching in the lyrics seemed to dictate the harder edge but the critics choked on Ed’s intro.

I wrote this sometime in 1980. There are several other verses but they were over the edge; okay, farther over the edge.

Day’s finally breaking

All night I been thinking

‘bout the snares that you lay at my feet.

No one’s more certain

‘bout the fact that you’re hurting

than this boy who was raised on your street.

Did I become your foe when I told you the truth?

Did I shake you from your reverie?

Well curse me at will

Reject me, but still

There’ll be peace in the valley for me.

Profligate lawyers

And angry destroyers

Followed my Lord as He walked.

Seeking’ a reason

To hang Him for treason

They twisted His words as He talked.

And now that I’ve chosen to follow His steps

The same contradiction I see.

But I’ll keep pressing’ on

Cause I know before long

There’ll be peace in the valley for me.

Making a living

And perpetual giving

Is the curse of the poor working man.

Socialist dreamers

And black tied redeemers

Take every third hour from his hand.

I see his rebellion. It boils in the pot

As he thinks how he wants to be free.

When that tea kettle blows

There’ll be blood on your doors.

But there’s peace in the valley for me.

Practiced I love yous

And I’m thinking’ of yous

From hearts that do shift like the sand.

Some so audacious

So purely outrageous

As to tell you that they understand

The depth of your sorrow and the height of your joy

And the people that you’ve had to be.

But your heart ain’t my throne

So I’ll go it alone

Till there’s peace in the valley for me.

Public opinion

Holds quite a dominion

O’er foolish and fainthearted men.

Shaping’ a nation

With vain conversation

And lies they set forth with their pen.

But I’d always thought you were much stronger than that

And I’d hoped that you’d stand with me.

Though your turning around

Will for sure bring me down

There’ll be peace in the valley for me.

Nations are troubled

And price tags are doubled

So men steal what their money won’t buy.

Heartless defenders

Those master pretenders

Will sell you some sure alibi.

Cause judgment is winked at the hearts of young men

Are full set to work wickedly.

But Jesus well said

There’s a price on your head.

But there’s peace in the valley for me.

Rumor and riot Men try to deny it

‘neath robes, behind pulpits of gold.

But the wages of sin

Are fast coming’ in

As sworn by the prophets of old.

I claim opposition to your plans and your aims.

It’s a heavenly vision I see.

Your new world I abhor

With its famines and war.

And there’s peace in the valley for me.

There will be peace in the valley for me.

Peace in the valley for me.

When this wandering’ man

Lies down with the Lamb

There’ll be peace in the valley for me.

## THE END OF THE WORLD

While preaching a meeting in the Northwest in June, 2001, I met up with a friend I had not seen in many years. Upon asking why she was home from the mission field she told of her husband’s fall and the subsequent ruin of their home. She was still serving Jesus, but bearing wounds that would not heal this side of heaven.

That afternoon I had time to take a walk in the woods and found this song along that pathway. The bridge was added a month later. This is the most popular of the songs we have recorded. I have included the alternate lyrics here. They are used in live renditions of the song.

C G

She married a preacher and followed him out to the field

F C

Then to the lust of his flesh he began to yield

G

He gave up his honor, his family, and all that he had

F C

Now she’s left alone With a guilt not her own

F G

And a heart so incredibly sad.

Am G F

She’s been to the end of the world

She’s been to the end of the world

She’s been to the end of the world

G C

And Jesus was there.

He knew, when he looked out the door and the sheriff was there

He was about to be handed a burden that he could not bear

He said, “Sir, I’m so sorry, but there’s been a crash on the bend”

And he heard nothing more as he fell to the floor

And knew he’d never see his boy again.

He’s been to the end of the world

He’s been to the end of the world

He’s been to the end of the world

And Jesus was there.

F G Am C F G Am C

He knows all about sorrow. He knows all about loss.

F G Am C G

He knows all about sadness. Look at Him there on the cross.

F G Am C F G Am C

He knows all about heartache. He knows all about grief.

F G Am C G

He knows about betrayal He will provide blessed relief.

He was my best friend. He taught me so many ways

To preach and to witness, to pray and to give God the praise.

Without warning or reason the bright light inside him went black.

And I had the whole armor For the foe in my front

But none for the friend at my back.

I’ve been to the end of the world.

I’ve been to the end of the world.

I’ve been to the end of the world.

And Jesus was there.

*Alternate verses*

He knew, when he looked out the door at the officers there

He was about to be handed a burden that he could not bear

He said, “Sir, I’m so sorry, but there’s been a death in the war”

And he heard nothing more as he fell to the floor

And wondered what all the fighting was for.

###### He was my teacher as I flew along in the daze

Preaching and singing and too young to know of his ways.

But my best friend’s knife, rescued my life

From the pride that could kill off the truth.

**THY WORD**

Written for a Sunday school class in October, 1983 this is a lot of fun when sung as a round.

A D E A E

Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee.

A D E

Thy word, by faith in its power I live eternally.

A D E A E

Thy word, as I continue therein its truth shall make me free.

A D E A

Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee.

**HOLY, HOLY JESUS**

One night in early 1984 I was reading through Isaiah and came across the first line of this song. I am sure I had read it before but had never noticed what an awesome title that was for God. I began to think of other things He was called in the word and got quite a blessing. Over the next few days as I meditated upon the names and titles of our great God this melody formed to support those ideas. We had a real hard time getting the timing right on the recording but the ending vocal Ed and Lilian worked out saved the piece.

D G A

I’ve heard Him called the high and lofty one who inhabiteth eternity

G A

I’ve heard Him called the great deliverer who sets the captive free

D G A

I’ve heard Him called the fair Immanuel God born out of Mary’s womb

G A

I’ve heard Him called the resurrection as He triumphed o’er the tomb

D A D

But I call Him holy, Holy, holy Jesus Lord of Lords.

I’ve heard Him called the scepter rising out of Judah for to reign

I’ve heard Him called the glorious hope by those

Who look for Him again

I’ve heard Him called the prophet like Moses

speaking truth to every man

I’ve heard Him called the everlasting Father, Savior and great I Am

But I call Him holy,

Holy, holy Jesus Lord of Lords

I’ve heard Him called the bread of life to feed the children in the way

I’ve heard Him called the living water refreshing the weary day

I’ve heard Him called the promised Lamb of God

Who takes away all sin

I’ve heard Him called the blessed Comforter moving like the wind

But I call Him holy

Holy, holy Jesus Lord of Lords.

I’ve heard Him called the Daystar dawning, the morning on the rise

I’ve heard Him called the awesome man of war

that nations do despise

I’ve heard Him called the lowly servant the prophet, priest and king

I’ve heard Him called the Alpha and Omega

Children let us sing

For He is holy

Holy, holy Jesus Lord of Lords.