

THOUGHTS
HERE & THERE

*A Collection of
Musings and Meanderings*

Mack Hoover

Thoughts Here & There

Copyright 2014 Mack Hoover

Note: the Scripture verses referred to in the following pages are not always quoted verbatim. While writing the poems, verses come to mind, and they are written down in the moment as memory recalls, but they are sometimes paraphrases rather than literal renderings.

Over the years, these are the translations and versions I have used.

KJV – Most of the verses I've memorized are from this version.

NKJV – I wore out a couple.

NIV – This is my present “go-to” version.

MSG – The Message, which offers me new perspectives when thinking about the others.

Thoughts Here & There

Introduction

At about five I drew a tree that actually looked like a tree. And I could sign my name in long hand.

Sometime later I heard or read:

Trees

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

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

A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

Joyce Kilmer (1886-1918)

In the first grade they put me in a suit and I read for a play introduction:

“The story you are about to see is purely fictitious.
The names and places have been changed to protect the innocent.
And any similarity to persons living or dead is purely coincidental.”

In the fourth grade I loved Hiawatha and anything Indian, and my favorite thing to draw was Indian profiles of beautiful Indian maidens and chiefs and warriors.

“This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks...”

In the fifth grade The Highwayman came riding in--

“The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas.”

In the sixth grade I got an A for a story I wrote that had a plot within a plot. I don't know where that idea came from. Radio maybe?

Thoughts Here & There

Mom taught my four sisters and me songs. Pop recited his memorized poems, some the real version and some his own silly parodies.

“The boy stood on the burning deck...”

“Under a spreading chestnut-tree the village smithy stands...”

My sister recited poems...

“‘Twas the night before Christmas, when all thro’ the house...”

I guess poetry permeated my life and still does.

In high school I had a couple of teachers who encouraged and nurtured my love for poetry and music.

But for college the order was for engineers or teachers. I took and forsook engineering but had enough math courses to qualify as a math teacher. I chose to teach science and shop (and one remedial math class). That was before realizing that teaching school was not for me.

It was from carpentry I retired. During those years little poetry happened. It didn't die though, for I joined a poetry club and did pen a few. But now, after many years, and after retirement, poems are pouring out. And this book has come together with the help of the wonderful gift of Steve Mugglin.

Here are my poems. Well, part of them anyway. (Some are just too personal for the public.) These are the ones we selected to share. Some are really poems. Some are simply ramblings and chains of thought. Many are in fact prayers. Some are my rephrasing of Scriptures. Some are sermons preached to myself that may have some meaning to others. That is my hope anyway!

Here they are, Thoughts Here & There.

Mack Hoover

April 2014

Quotations from:

“Evangeline” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

“The Highwayman” by Alfred Noyes

“Casablanca” by Felicia Dorothea Hemans

“The Village Blacksmith” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

“A Visit from St. Nicholas” by Clement Clarke Moore

Table of Contents

A Better You	9
After Easter, Life Goes On	10
Alien Thinking	11
All Work and No Play	12
Be Attitude	13
Because He Lives	14
Believing is Seeing	15
Blinded	17
Breath of God	18
Church	19
Consider This	20
Crystal Chalice	21
Dawn	22
Dusk	23
Dead Reckoning	24
Deity and DNA	25
Donkey Dream	26
Doctor's Appointment	27
Easter Approaches	28
Effective, Not Affective	29
Faith	30
Faithful God	31
Finished Yet Incomplete	32
Finishing Touch	33
Forgiveness, Not Time, Heals All Wounds	34
Forth with Joy and Peace	35
Freely Give or Hand Out	36
Grace	37
Granddads Are Grand Dads	38
Gray Areas	39
Heart Copy	40

Table of Contents - (cont.)

His Story	41
How Can It Be?	42
Humility	43
I Know I Count	44
I Resolve	45
Judge Not	46
Just Give It Time	47
Know This Person?	48
Later	49
Letting Go	50
Living Water	51
Lost but Not Forgotten	52
Ma Said	53
Mac!<	54
Monkey Miracle	55
Quit Crying ‘Cause You’re Not Flying	56
Read My Quips	57
Making Whistles—Art or Craft	58
Nickle for Pickle, Dime for Pear	59
My Hand in His	60
Never Fails	61
No Foolin’	62
Obsessed	63
Ode to a Wind Watcher	64
Old Age Benefits	65
Omnipresent	66
Overruled	67
Performance	68
Philosophy and Theology	69
Plowing Straight	70

Thoughts Here & There

Table of Contents - (cont.)

Poems	71
Brine vs. Whine	72
Problem with Prayer	73
Procrastinator's Prayer	74
Race to Save Face	75
Real	76
Reasonable Person	77
REMiniscence and RAMbling	78
Restore Them	79
Rhyme	80
Salt, Light, Aroma	81
Security	82
A Sort of Sonnet for a Self-Conscious Soul	83
Skills and Art	84
Some Guy, Without Question	85
Stop, Look, Listen	86
Summer Morning Dialogue	87
Test Me	88
Thanks, Lord!	89
Thanksgiving Prayer	90
The Love Chapter	91
The Ship's Bell	92
The Visit	93
Timely Treasure	94
Trinity	95
Unlimited	96
Unproductive Prodigal	97
Up and About, Not Down and Out	98
Workload Prayer	99

Thoughts Here & There

A Better You

Choose your side effect and then decide
Which dysfunction you care to hide.
Wrinkle free and perfect hair?
For more vitality... do I dare go there?
And risk the possibilities of where
Some part of me may go... I don't know!
Is it an option just to grow old gracefully?
Just go along with the flow,
And take your medications faithfully!

--Mack Hoover, 06/04/2013--

After Easter, Life Goes On

We go on and still there is strife and pain,
but not without new life and gain!
Redemption of our souls is what we gained;
not the world—that remained the same.

But on the cross of Christ remains our sins
and the bill of sale He paid in full
for every sin of every soul.
On every road He paid the toll,
not His fair share but the whole
for all mankind.
The cross and grave remain to remind
that God so loved the world He gave His only Son
that every soul may believe
and every soul can receive
what was done on Easter!

“It is finished!”

--Mack Hoover, 04/09/2012--

Alien Thinking

Maybe man was more smart from the start of his time here
And got less so because of abuse.
Might he have taken for granted what was implanted
And lost it because of misuse?
It's just a thought, but were we not taught that if we don't use it
Or if we abuse it a gift can be taken away?
And we may get it back one day if in fact our bad habits dissipate.
If we come back and show we are willing to know
With sincere mind and heart what we were from the start
And what we can be once again with far more potential
By returning to Him Who provides all that's essential.

If we were put here by smart aliens from space who taught us to make
all the wonderful things we uncover and discover again,
then how did they get started and become so smart?
Just accept them without question? That's some faith!

--Mack Hoover, 12/28/2011--

All Work and No Play

"I want to play the harp, Dad, like the one father David played."
"You've got better things to do, Son, lots of practical things to be made.
You're a carpenter, not a musician. Such foolishness, banish the thought!
Chairs and tables and gates, Son, these are what things will be bought."
"If I make it and learn in my spare time, it will never cost you a cent.
I'll accompany myself in the Word, Dad. I do hope you will relent!"
Though music was something he thought was not needed,
Joseph felt something higher than his opinion, so heeded.

The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save,
He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love,
He will joy over thee with singing.

I don't know if it happened this way or not.
(Sometimes I reach higher than what I was taught.)

I think it's logical and it's fair to assume;
That in Jesus' home music filled every room!

--Mack Hoover, 08/08/2005--

(Reference - See Zeph. 3:17)

Be Attitude

It both blesses and saddens me when folks laugh and mock and scorn.
Sad when they refuse to see what it means to be reborn.
The blessing is more hard to feel, though Jesus said I'd be blessed.

The rebuff is what seems real, but it will pass, the blessing last.
The scornful deny, and so do I. The difference is what it's toward—
One will live and one will die: deny one's self or deny the Lord.

I'll stand my ground while all around laugh and scorn and mock,
Saddened at their loss, blessed by what I've found:
Blessed to sit with Jesus; blessed to walk the walk!

--Mack Hoover, 08/15/2005--

Blessed is the one who doesn't walk around in Godless advice,
or stand around with sinners, or sit around with scorners.

Ps. 1:1 Paraphrased

Blessed is the one who gets scorned for staying faithful to God.

Matt. 5:10 Paraphrased

Because He Lives

What if Jesus had not risen and the grave were still His prison?
Then preaching life would have no reason,
 without spring and summer season,
 with only winter after fall.
There would be no joy at all,
 no Comforter on Whom to call,
 no One to lift me when I fall.

I often think of why I'm here and why my death I should so fear,
And why these inner voices hear, and why is my existence dear?

It has to be that Christ arose or thoughts like these I'd never pose.
The door of life would surely close. No, I'm alive because He chose
To take my place and bear my guilt upon the cross that I had built.

So I may bloom and never wilt, he took my judgment to the hilt.
My penalties each one He's taken
 into the grave which He's forsaken.
 Death's prison walls He has shaken.
 Because He lives we will awaken
 On resurrection morn!

This the reason I was born: to offer hope to the forlorn,
My life with love and joy adorn!

--Mack Hoover, July 2005--

Believing is Seeing

I try to imagine a God Who has breath
that can blow out a sun like a child can a candle,
or can take the Big Dipper in His hand by the handle.

Who can close a black hole in His almighty fist,
make a super nova with a flick of his wrist,
fling out a galaxy with a back-handed toss,
or with His little finger outline the great Southern Cross.

Who can step across time in one single stride,
Who allows not even an atom to hide
from His omnipotent, omniscient mind.

In the same way He knows my thoughts and intentions
like he knows all the plans and inventions
of every genius who was or will be,
and He still has the time to linger with me!

I try to see God through creation's display,
but He's different from that as night is from day.
I have only an inkling of realization
that the creator of civilization
is greater than the best thinkers of every nation.

And that is because every thought ever conceived
Every idea, perception, philosophy, all that is believed
has been received

From a super intelligence, super natural source
superseding time and space and every force
that exists
and He still insists
that no one is missed.

How can He do it? I'm trying to see,
but my vision is blurred
and I must take the word
recorded by faith's inspiration.

(cont.)

Believing is Seeing - (cont.)

What was our origin, our present, our destination?

Like everyone else I've been dealt a faith of my own
with promise to know even as I am known.

Science investigation
lacks revelation
of reality beyond observation
or physical measure.

It misses the treasure of the Creator's affection
that's imbedded in each of us like our DNA
that will one day allow every eye to see,
on our knees to fall
and finally confess He's Lord of all
And that He is the truth and the life and the way.
And that's what I am trying to see.
And that's what I'm trying to say.

But don't just take my word on it;
get a Bible, open it, explore it.
Open minded, open hearted
simply get started
And look for the One
Who long before your search was begun
has been waiting for your arrival.

It's His love and grace, not your fitness,
that gives place to your survival.

--Mack Hoover, 01/06/2012--

Blinded

First they wouldn't, then they couldn't,
 though it was never intended that they shouldn't;
For it had been defined so clearly
 in everything they saw around them.
And until He stood on the very ground
 they knew He would,
And He spoke the Words they knew that only He could,
 they believed.

And then they saw Him in person,
 and the Person they saw was not their version,
And it blurred their vision
 and they thought that reason to ignore
 what could have been in store for them.
They but stood opposed,
 And purposed to dispose of Him
 and closed their eyes to Who He was...and Is.

It is so easy to turn away.
 He wants you to stay but will not make you,
 but if you do He'll not forsake you.
He does ask you to follow Him and if you do
 you'll come to know Him as He Is.

--Mack Hoover, 03/14/2013--

Breath of God

*Breathe on me, breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.*

One breath from God and man became a living soul.
One hint from Satan and temptation took its toll:
One bite from a forbidden fruit she took and he would follow suit.
In one day God perfected all; it only took a day to fall;
Separation was the call on their descendents one and all.

Then one day the sun arose; the price was paid ere its repose;
To die for sin was what He chose: the sinless Son of God.
One day (the third) the Son arose, spoke life to death by death to life:
His death—full pay for all who choose his path away from all the strife
A wayward world would impose. This day is ours to bear our cross,
To let the flame burn off the dross. His gift will more than pay the loss.

One Day the Day will never cease, filled with life and joy and peace.
His sacrifice was our release; His life He gave for our increase.
With His last breath He conquered death; and we'll live on as ages roll.
One breath from God and man became a living soul!

--Mack Hoover, 07/10/2005--

<i>Breathe on me, breath of God, Until my heart is pure, Until with Thee I will one will, To do and to endure.</i>	<i>Breathe on me, breath of God, Blend all my soul with Thine, Until this earthly part of me Glows with Thy fire divine.</i>
--	--

*Breathe on me, breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine eternity.*

--Edwin Hatch, 1878--

Church

The scale of differences we have is tilted.
You think I'm odd and I think you're stilted.
My feet on the ground and your eye in the sky;
How can we ever see eye to eye?
Yet I know that we can and I know that we should;
We're part of one body with one common good.
So let's get together with Jesus our reason!
I'll provide muscle, you provide vision.
As we proceed we'll gather a team:
One body, one Head, one purpose, one dream.

--Mack Hoover, 03/04/2006--

Consider This

Which do you think the worst of the two:
To think a thing you'll never do;
Or do a thing without a thought
To any damage might be wrought?

Don't answer this before you think;
Or say, "I'll think about it," with a wink.
Just give it some thought for a day or two;
And one of these days I'll get back with you.

--Mack Hoover, 06/19/2001--

Crystal Chalices

In my youth I saw* “the mountains as crystal chalices inverted on earth's mantle piece.” They invited me to turn them over and fill them with nature's sweetness and to drink...

And drink I did, but never to my filling.

Why when in their midst, surrounded by their grandeur, could I desire to be elsewhere?

Often only in phantasy would I partake...

Now in old age my longing is indulged in memories. My tireless imagination drinks deeply.

(*At about age 18, I composed this line and added the rest at age 54.
Now at 66 , I am ready to accept anew that invitation as I look
unto the hills from whence cometh my salvation...)

--Mack Hoover, August 2001--

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.
My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.
Psalm 121:1-2

Dawn

I watched the morning come today
with lace of delicate cloudy fan
That opened wide in glorious array
above a densely woven darkened band
That silhouetted ethereal forms, one of which
rose billowing above the rest,
Tinged with bright pink flame along its crest...
a crown.
Then slowly let its glory spread
upon the others all around.

And through the dark band
there came three rays of sunlit flame
That formed three patterns on the lace
and these then blended into one as did the rays.
The dawning had begun.

An angel cloud began to raise his wings
in luminescent praise
Joined by the ever broadening rays
rising ever higher
Heralding the coming day,
a glorious misty choir.

--Mack Hoover, 08/07/2005--

Dusk

The close of day though not as glorious as the dawn
It seemed the angel clouds were trying to hold on
To the day they didn't want to leave.

But slowly rose the gray of eve
And brought along the evening star
Which led the chorus from afar:
The heavens declare the glory of God;
The firmament shows His handiwork!
Evening and morning and at noon
I will pray and cry aloud,
And He shall hear my voice!

--Mack Hoover, 08/08/2005--

(References - See Psalm 19:1 and Psalm 55:17)

Dead Reckoning

Dead Reckoning: locating ship's position by log and compass when stars or sun aren't visible.

I was a sailor (but not an old salt, still just a codger). Most of my poems stay in my journal, but now and then one seems like it might say something to someone, and this one seems so... so...

I reckon it's OK to say reckon if you reckon to say it in the proper way.
But reckoning wrongly won't make wrong right.
You can't reckon it not dark and not turn on a light.
You can't reckon something not sin when God says it is.
You can't say you passed the test when you fail the quiz.
But when the Bible says you can reckon, then I reckon you can.
You can reckon there's a Trinity and that God became man.
You can reckon with Paul that when Christ died HE died once for all;
But in that HE lives, HE lives to God.
And here is the part I love to applaud:
Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ
Jesus our Lord.
So I reckon I can reckon God is good for His Word!

I reckon there's more about this can be spoken,
So just reckon these words only a token.

*Jesus, Savior, pilot me, over life's tempestuous sea...
Chart and compass come from Thee...
Fear not, I will pilot thee*

--Edward Hopper, 1871--

--Mack Hoover, December 2, 2009--

(References - See 2 Corinthians 5:15 and Romans 6:10-11)

Deity and DNA

Spirit and Truth and human genes
Combined by eternal means.
Omniscience... in a baby's cry.
Omnipotence... to one day die.
Omnipresence... in a bed of hay.
Infinite power... Who couldn't even say,
"I AM"

But the prophets spoke it very clear;
And angels proclaimed, "The Savior's here!"
"Good will to men, and peace on earth!"
As they announced the Savior's birth.
"I AM has come: Emmanuel!
God is with us; all is well!"

In the beginning was the WORD...
And the WORD was made flesh...
And we beheld His glory...
He is not here, He is risen!
Lo, I AM with you, even to the end of the age.

--Mack Hoover, 12/22/2000--

(References - See John 1:1, John 1:14, Mark 16:6, Matthew 28:20)

Donkey Dream

Don't be a dimwitted donkey, dear, you had but a donkey dream.
There's not a man, let alone a king that would think up such a scheme!
But Mom, I'm telling you what I saw: they came and led me away;
And I hadn't the slightest urge to balk, nor had I the voice to bray!
And I felt great joy by His weight on my back,
And great peace from the shouts of the crowd,
And the palm branches strewn in our track.
And hosanas they were shouting loud.
And when He rode me into the gate all in me wanted to sing!
My back had never before carried a man,
But I had transported a King!

--Mack Hoover, 04/01/2007, Palm Sunday--

Doctor's Appointment

What do I have, oh physician?
Does it require an incision?
Or a placebo or a pill?
Is it just a minor ill?
Should I get a second opinion?
What, oh please, is your decision?
A decade, a year, an hour, a minute?
Here's some blood, what is in it?
Just how long do I have?
(before I end up in the grave)?
I'm fine, you say, so now I pay?
Eat good, work hard, and play I may?
And come and see you another day?

--Mack Hoover, 06/04/1999--

Easter Approaches

How could it be missed: “Passover Lamb” like a banner unfurled
“Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world!”
That His blood was applied to doorpost and lintel of the doorway to heaven
On the day they prepared the bread without leaven.

And they missed “God with us...a Child will be born!”
They would watch without wondering why (only scorn)
As innocent baby, spotless Lamb, sinless Man
Became sin for all mankind by the Almighty's plan.

Passover approaches, deliverance is near!
Easter approaches, our Savior is here!
Middle wall separating has been removed!
Jew and gentile alike have been approved!

Chains are broken, Truth is spoken! We are all out of prison!
He is Risen! Messiah here, alive! Indeed He is risen!

--Mack Hoover, 04/06/2014--

Effective, Not Affective

Lord make my day effective
All I do constructive
As needed corrective
Always productive
My thoughts allusive to praise effusive
To others be inclusive
To wrongs be exclusive
But wrongs done me excusive
Since You Lord are all inclusive
Make me that way too
Effective

--Mack Hoover, 04/04/2013--

Faith

Most misunderstood is faith, its worth.
Some say it comes to them who venture forth;
Some would choose to call it fate.
Some say to them who wait.
Some measure it by what they do;
Some by what they don't.
Some by faith step into the fray.
Some simply say, "I won't."
What is it now, a mustered deed,
Or is it like a mustard seed?
A small but measured gift to all;
Or only on the bravest fall?
I believe that though my faith is small
I can trust my Savior's call:
"A tiny seed becomes a tree."
I can do all for which He strengthens me!

--Mack Hoover, 03/25/2007--

Faithful God

I go to the psalms to be with real people
Who struggled with the same issues we have now,
And penned them in prayers, pleas, and praise...
To the same unchanging God I claim.

The Lord redeems the soul of His servants,
And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.

David didn't pray without ceasing. He wrote down a lot of
his prayers so it seems like he prayed a lot.
Does it take as much time to write down a prayer
than to commit homicide and to have a lurid affair?
And you have to wait till you're not running to write an
account of it.
He was a man after God's own heart.
He was after a lot of other things, too.
God never left him through it all.

I sit here with the intent of reading the Word and praying.
I drift into a lot of other thoughts.
Some are not of God. Some are not good thoughts.
Some are plans I can hardly wait to get to.
Sometimes I cut my devotions short to get on to those.
But God is here,
And He goes with me.

--Mack Hoover, 09/03/2006--

(References - See Psalm 34:22)

Finished Yet Incomplete

We were putting out the trash this morning without coats in a cold, cold breeze, Tony's widow of 27 days and I. We cried and shivered and remembered the wonderful Christian man who loved the Lord with all his heart, but who died in an alcoholic coma. She seemed years younger, and had completely forgiven him, but missed him sorely. "He's been promoted," she quoted the minister at his funeral.

I had penciled these words earlier this morning and they seem to fit: him and her and me!

He took my sins, but I still sin.
"Oh why, oh why?" I sometimes cry!

Often I think I should die;
And wonder why
He took my sin, yet I'm a sinner still:
He took my sin, but didn't take my will!

And for those sins that still remain
My Jesus cannot die again;
No, dying to them is still my pain.
The cross He bare still mine to wear...
I can (with joy) for He
With me the load does share!

My rights I waive, and will until
I see the grave.
All, then, against me He'll erase
When I see Him face to face,
And understand!

--Mack Hoover, 01/27/2006--

Finishing Touch

If I'm a bit creative it's because God made me so.
There's nothing known to man that God didn't already know.
If you're somewhat talented God gave you that to use;
And He will perfect it if you do not refuse.
He Who made everything and knows how all things move;
He Who began a good work in you will continuously improve
In the likeness of His only Son
Until the day He says "My faithful child, well done!"

--Mack Hoover, Jan. 2010--

Forgiveness, Not Time, Heals All Wounds

"What's done is done. The die is cast. Try to put it in the past.
There is no dye that's colorfast! Do not cry over milk that's spilt.
Time heals all wounds, so just forget it. This, too, will pass;
Just laugh it off and have some fun, for life's a gas."

--the rationalizer--

"But it's a wound that will not heal. A blushing bloom that will not wilt.
Though long hence done, still I feel sad, rejected, and full of guilt.
I've tried and tried to close the lid on the awful stupid thing I did.
I knew better...I didn't want to talk about it!
But my guilty conscience now wants to shout it."

--the burdened--

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to
cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

--the solution --

"Here it is, Lord, I confess it; take it, Lord, I dispossess it.
I didn't lose my peace that day--what I did was throw it away.
Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound!
The peace I tossed now is found!"

--the forgiven--

--Mack Hoover--

(Reference - See 1 John 1:9)

Forth with Joy and Peace

Lord, have Your Spirit move all over our grand valley
where two rivers water the ground and allow rich growth.
Have your love and grace flow and saturate and germinate
the spiritual seeds of every soul.
Have every measure of faith you've dealt to every soul spring up
and those who never suspected You exist
experience You for the first time
and those who have dried up
experience Your renewed refreshing.
May we all go forth with joy and be led forth with peace
and the surrounding mountains resound with praise
and all alive be truly alive.

Have our valley be for Your renown,
have the world know that this is Your town.
Set your plan in motion in every inhabiter,
root out every inhibitor,
make every soul an inheritor,
and every voice a distributor
of Your love and grace and peace;
let the voices that disturb Your ways
desist and cease.

Make each one of us a contributor to Your great and glorious Church;
may we show a seeking world how to end the search!

--Mack Hoover, Summer 2011--

Freely Give or Hand Out

"If you'll just give, God'll give you much more,"
Declares the man with his foot in my door.
"If everyone would just give a dollar,"
Declares the man with his hand on my collar.
"We'd have just enough to accomplish our cause;
Ours is the best cause," he says without pause.
So my conscience he pricks (persuasive his tricks).
Then comes another with much better plea.
"I gave at the office, so don't bother me."
I lie to recover the loss to my purse,
And hope against hope God WILL reimburse.

--Mack Hoover, 2000--

Grace

Relentless grace extreme and strong
that pried me loose from sin;
That made a way where there was none,
caused the dead to live again;
That broke the chains and spread the bars
that held the prison bound;
That sought me out when I was lost
and searched till I was found;
That restored sight to blinded eyes
and sound to deafened ears;
That gave walking, running, dancing legs
that were lame for many years;
That gave cowards courage
and made the timid bold!
In every case and hopeless cause,
in every time and place.
What is to come, is now, or ever was—
time will not erase
Your relentless, merciful, powerful, pure and true...
Amazing Grace!

--Mack Hoover, 07/12/2011--

Granddads Are Grand Dads

His memory's short and his fingers are stiff.
I'm sad to report he'll confuse when and if.
But when something needs doing, he'll take it right on;
But when he gets started his reasoning's gone.

"Was I weeding the garden or mowing the lawn?"
Neither I'd say since they're in an apartment,
Where for doing those things they have a department.
"We'll get it all done; leave your name and your number."
If he'd simply call... (if he could remember).
"I remember the time I could do it myself...
Fix the locks, mend the drywall, straighten a shelf,
Change the light bulb, paint the trim, unstick the door...
Now why am I here at the grocery store?
Was it a plumber's helper or hamburger helper I came for?
Wish I could remember...
I'd call and ask if I could remember the number!"

Maybe he's no longer good at getting things done,
But for being a Dad, he's NUMBER ONE!

--Mack Hoover, 06/18/2006--

Gray Areas

Suppressing a burp'll
 turn your face purple.
Color sky orange
 they will call you strange—
Those regular folks who
 think skies should be blue.

You'll know what I mean
 if your trees are not green,
And you'll be an odd fellow
 if your sunflower's not yellow,
And it's anchors aweigh
 if your ship isn't gray,
And you're out of your head
 if your blood isn't red,
And your bow's not a rainbow
 'less the order of colors you know.

At least that's what I have heard said.

--Mack Hoover, 12/28/2011--

Heart Copy

Elusive thoughts, oh, let me capture you;
Pen is poised and paper here to tie you to.
I heard you so clearly a moment ago;
I hear you still in words I do not know.

Elusive melody, you're like that fleeting thought.
I know you, even knowing you were never taught,
Nor ever played before, nor given human ear.
Free my fingers, flute, and heart so other ears can hear!

Elusive Spirit, I know You're not eluding me.
I know You want with word and song to set me free.
Your melody and phrases have their part
In paper, pen, and ink, in fingers, flute, and heart.

--Mack Hoover, 01/08/2001--

His Story (according to Mack)

God looked around and said “something's missing”
God made the universe and said “it's a start”
God made the solar system and said “let's give this a spin”
God made the sun and said “now that's hot”
God made the earth and said “this is the place”
God made the sea and said “refreshing”
He made land and said “solid”
God made fruit and said “sweet”
He made animal life and said “I like it”
God made man and said “I love it”
He made woman and said “wow!”
God gave them free will and said “oops”
He sent His Son and said “got it covered”

--Mack Hoover, 07/18/2013--

How Can It Be?

Of everything made He is the arranger,
yet He was born a babe in a manger.
"God With Us" our Savior and Friend,
yet a Stranger
Who is in us and with us
in good times or danger.
How can He be God and with God
when there is only one God?
Be a man we can understand
and the Lord we can laud?
How can One Who's eternal
die on a cross?
One Who owns everything
take such a loss?
Yet I know that for all of humanity,
even for me,
He gave all of Himself.
Yes even for me!

How can it BE?
How CAN it be?
HOW can it be?

--Mack Hoover, 02/03/2007--

*Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready my God, Thy will to see,
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!*

--Clara H. Fiske Scott, 1895--

Humility

—Proverbs eighteen twelve B—"...before honor is humility."

What was old Soloman saying when he said such an outrageous thing?
Isn't it about heros, not milktoast men, most of the minstrels sing?

It's the honorable soldiers get the medals; it's the brave hearts not the weak.
We encourage courage and honor, but of humility hardly speak.

Webster gives humility one line, but to honor gives about nine.
Why is something so hard to have so easy to define?

Why does Jesus give it such credence? Why was Moses the most humble man?
It may be that it is a critical part of God's eternal plan!

Do we really mean it when we begin a discourse with:
"In my most humble opinion"... OR
Are we really saying: "Just shut up and give me the floor!
You must honor my honorable position!"

Do I really need to say more?
Except that: "What was that other thing Solomon had to say?"
"Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty." —Proverbs eighteen twelve A—

--Mack Hoover, 12/09/2006--

I Know I Count

I know I count and am accounted for
For every woman, child, and man
 there is a mandate
 and a plan
And a promise I can do all things
 through Him Who authors history
And makes enough of it a mystery
 so every soul
 must come to Him in faith
And even that is given each by grace
 without regard to place
 or race
There's no excuse that's not been used
 nor any promise I refused
Nor any privilege I abused
 or any person has
 without God knowing
And still He is unwilling
 even one should perish
But each should have new life begin
 and never end
And every soul should have a Father
 and a Friend
And a purpose and a plan
 to count
 and be accounted for

--Mack Hoover, 12/06/2011--

I Resolve

I RESOLVE to quit putting things off.

I take on more than I can handle,
Light both ends of my candle,
My desk's a scandal; chaos reigns
Taking over my addled brains!
I can't decide what next to do.
I'm procrastinator through and through.
Idly I sit and wait, and hope the chaos will abate.
But sure enough it grows: the pile.
Then I accept a new task with a smile
And a promise and a wink.
I'll do it tomorrow...I think...

PS—I know this is early, but I might be busy
tomorrow or the next day.

--Mack Hoover, 2006--

Judge Not
or
Think Before You Think

Judge not dear friend before you judge.
Your own unwillingness to budge.
You may be blinded by a grudge,
When he whose eye dimmed by a smudge
Perchance reciprocates a nudge.

Don't be surprised that he surmised
You'd say that he is paralyzed.
It may be that you analyzed
With mind not fully realized
Or with heart that's undersized.

That you can't see into his heart,
Can't realize his inner part,
And judged him poorly from the start
With analysis that's off the chart
And gotten horse before the cart.

So take some thought before you judge.
You may be blinded by a grudge,
Your own unwillingness to budge;
While he whose eye dimmed by a smudge
Perchance reciprocates a nudge.

Oh please don't be a hypocrite
While you continuously sit
In judgment seat without a whit
As whether or not your judgments fit
Your load more, or your brother's bit.

--Mack Hoover, 09/19/2006--

(See Matthew 7:1-5)

Just Give It Time

How did they get to be so smart
 who claim that all life got its start
In some great sea that held the mass
 that would turn to the trees and grass,
And germs and bugs and birds and fish
 and whales and cows and apes who wish
One day to change to man...
 "we just will, no need to plan,
Just give us a home and a lot of time
 and air to breathe and a good clime
And we will climb the steps of change!"
 That's the way they show the range
Of all of life, and so
 weak will die, strong will grow.

That's what they say who are so smart
 with minds so large but small of heart.
I know it breaks the heart of God,
 but they don't care! I think that's odd!
And I may be the odd man out,
 but God made all, I have no doubt!

I think one day, all said and done,
 the smart ones too will bow to One
Who with a thought, a breath, a word
 made the horse and cat and bird,
And all the rest that come to mind,
 and then one day to top His plan:
 He took some dust and made a man.

Now that's the Word told clear and plain!
 I don't know what they have to gain
Who think that since they are so smart
 Need not take God's Word to heart;
And to be sure, it must be said,
 nor will they take it to the head!

--Mack Hoover, 12/02/2006--

Know This Person?

Old codger paid me a visit this morning.

I bumble, mumble, grumble, stumble,
claim to be contrite and humble.
I detest the possibility I could be
a more detestible me,
but unfortunately I am;
And sometimes I just don't give a hoot
about the environment I pollute
With my attitude
when I just feel like being rude.

I'm not the only grumpy soul around;
it seems to me they abound,
so I'm not alone on shaky ground.
Please don't think we want to make the planet worse...
We just don't know how to break the curse.

Lord, I'd like to start with him and her and her and him.
They are angry, ornery, prim, and grim.
I know I'm not as bad as they.
Start with them is what I'd say,
And when I see some changes there
I'll concede that it is fair
To ask for You to work on me.
Yep, that's the way it ought to be.

--Old Codger AKA Mack Hoover, 03/01/2012--

Later

I've put off telling you this and will go into detail later;
But I am...somewhat of a procrastinator.

I know that someone's surely used these lines before,
But put off writing them down till he could think of more.

For you to hear the next verse we must rendezvous;
So just be patient and I WILL get back with you!

--Mack Hoover, 2001--

Letting Go

In answer to a question
that was asked awhile ago:
"Is it hard to let it go,
that one you put your heart into
and intimately know?"
But that's the very heart of it:
to send it on its way!
No doubt denial darkens
that departure day,
But when it's gone the joy lives on,
you've given it your best.
Yet one unsettled thought remains:
will it pass the test?
And while you wait in anticipation,
you start another one;
This one nearer, dearer
than the one before.
This one, too, will soon be gone,
but that's what you make them for!

Yes, it is hard, but oh the reward!

--Mack Hoover, 11/07/05--

I made a whistle from a piece of lilac wood for a friend of my sister. It is beautiful to look at and wonderful to play. I rationalized and justified and figured out how I could keep this one and make her another. In the end I couldn't keep it in good conscience. She loves it, and it doesn't get any better than that!

Living Water

Samaritan lady at a well
had a story she could tell,
just as each of us does as well!

Jesus has no borders. No import or export or transport fees. No language, color, gender, age or intellectual, international, national, state, county, or city limits.

He mixes the spiritual and physical into a clear and pure solution—the water of life, good for everyone, the cure for every ailment, the satisfaction for every human thirst.

He distills it from a limitless ocean, transports it invisibly to every soul, and condenses it into an overflowing cup from which each of us may drink as freely and as often as we choose.

He never pours it down our throats and never ever withdraws the offer.

--Mack Hoover, 02/29/2012--

Lost but Not Forgotten

Can we ever really make up for lost time?
Can a man ever fully pay for his crime?
Can we ever completely get back what is lost,
Though we genuinely regret what we've tossed?
Retroactive we say, and we honestly mean it,
"I'll pay it all back when I finally attain it.
If I had it to give I certainly would,
But don't ask me to give more than I should.
I've given my share!" As I put on an air,
"I'm good and I'm honest and really do care."
But somehow I know that I'm stingy and tight;
To be honest I know my heart isn't right.
The good that I would do I don't get around to.
I continue to do what is not good or true.
Who'll set me free from this tanglesome net,
From this body of death and unpayable debt?
Oh, thanks be to God through Christ Jesus our Lord!
He purchased for me what I couldn't afford!
He paid all my debt at unspeakable cost!
He is not willing that any be lost!

--Mack Hoover, 12/04/2000 (edited 07/12/2005)--

*Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe,
Sin had left a crimson stain;
He washed it white as snow.*

--Elvina M. Hall, 1865--

Ma Said

"If you can't say a nice thing, don't even say it."
And, "Silence stupidity and you won't betray it."
And Ma always said, "Ignorance is bliss."
So I shouldn't even be saying this,
But I get offended when none is intended.
She'd say, "Broken fences need mended."
'Course I took offense at most things she said;
Like: "Go get the coal" and "Make up your bed."
And "Your turn for dishes, you get to dry."
And "Quit your danged pouting, or you will know why!"
But the one that hurt worst was the one she'd say first:
'Bout saying nothing if it wasn't nice.
And she always added, "I won't tell you twice!"
Why she'd even say it (but she always did);
She was the ma and I was the kid.
Now I'm old and I've got the gall
TO SAY
"If you can't say something nice, Don't say it at all!"

Now if you're offended, none was intended,
All MY fences are mended,
No rules were bended,
This poem is ended.

--Mack Hoover, 09/06/2001--

Mac!<

I took on the task
without being asked
to clean out the drawer
Where I randomly toss
old papers to store.

I was thinking after I pass away
my kids might wonder what I had to say;
So maybe today I'd get around
to sorting, editing,
and having them bound.

However as usual a good one I find
that I just can't get out of my mind.
This one I'll share as one of that kind.

(maybe tomorrow I'll work on the drawer again)

--Mack Hoover, 07/12/2005--

Monkey Miracle

A monkey awoke one morning without warning
Smarter than the rest of his clan.
His body was straight and inside his pate
Was the enlarged brain of a man.

He looked his tribe over in search of a lover,
Who possessed like attributes,
To his progeny better and throw off the fetter
That held down the rest of the brutes.

He said, "Here's what I think: we're the missing link,
And we must be ready for change."
She said, "OK Honey, I'll handle the money,
And all else I will arrange
For a race that's superior that will rule the inferior
Who will retain their monkey ways.
Our standards I'll raise. We'll get adoration and praise!"

And that's how it was, and that's how it is,
Indisputable, irrefutable truth.
It's how we think. It's on paper with ink.
It's what we were taught from our youth.

--Mack Hoover, 12/30/2011--

Quit Crying 'Cause You're Not Flying

Eat, eat you greedy worm,
your lot in life to confirm.
Your pleasure now to eat and crawl
(a seeming dilatory call)
Will stand you in a glorious stead:
you will be changed from feet to head;
Assume a beautiful attire,
crawl no more...you'll be a flier!
Repulsive caterpillar now
will have wings (I know not how)
Mysterious metamorphic gains
will let you move in higher planes.
So take your fill, your call complete.
You'll soon partake of nectar sweet,
And freely flit in freedom flight,
and never creep from dawn to night.
Oh, to be transformed like you:
a new creation through and through!

--Mack Hoover, 05/15/2001--

Read My Quips

It wouldn't be fit
for paper and ink
If I were to say
what really I think.
But poems reword
the gristle and grit,
Pleasing the palate
with wisdom and wit.
So I'll clean up my thoughts
with rhyme and a wink;
And you'll think what I'm thinking
Is what you think that I think.

--Mack Hoover, 08/08/2001--

Making Whistles—Art or Craft

Whistle making (be it art or craft)
Is putting holes in a hollow shaft.
Do it well and you're called a crafter,
And you'll be remembered ever after.
Poor ones they'll hang (once you depart),
And then refer to them as art.

--Mack Hoover, 02/21/2002--

Nickle for Pickle, Dime for Pear

It's raining this morning, a misty drizzle here in sunny edge-of-desert, western Colorado; but there is nothing gloomy about it at all. In fact it cheered a poem from my still drowsy brain.

It's nice to have some normal days
between the crisis times;
Nice to have some gentle spray
to cool a desert's climes.

We need a poem now and then
to brighten daily gloom,
To close the tome and slow the pen
of pessimistic doom,
And 'luminate a darkened den
and lighten shaded room.

So may this be a "normal" verse
(with meter and with rhyme)
To negativity reverse
and change YOUR paradigm!

--Mack Hoover, 06/10/2005--

My Hand in His

Grace, mercy, peace, joy, and love,
They certainly don't fit me like a glove;
Still I am wearing them though they are undeserved,
For from the unlimited Hand of God are served
To every needy hand that reaches out to Him
(Calloused, crippled, weak, or fit and trim)
A sure and safe and comforting mode of care:
Unmerited, unearned, unexplainable,
 uncontainable, unconditional,
 perfectly fitting
Covering that from the start of time
 God has been knitting!

That their hearts might be comforted, being knit
together in love, and unto all riches of the full
assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment
of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ...

...from which all the body by joints and bands having
nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth
with the increase of God.

--Mack Hoover, 08/24/2005--

(References - See Col. 2:2,19)

Never Fails

I find it reasonably easy to pray
the prayer that never fails,
Because I know His will is good
and true and eternally prevails.

But there's another prayer that must be prayed
when you appeal to the Divine;
And here is how it goes:
"Father, Your will be mine!"

In this manner pray: 'Our Father in heaven
hallowed be Your Name, Your kingdom come
Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.'

...not my will but Yours be done.

--Mack Hoover, 04/21/2006--

(References - See Matt. 6:9,10 and Luke 22:42)

No Foolin'

now, don't try and fool an old fool
and don't try and use a dull tool
and don't team up ox and mule
but you can milk on a one legged stool
and you don't learn that in school
some of them youngins might say COOL

--Mack Hoover, 2001--

Obsessed

Obsessed with imagined necessities
Distracted from needed realities
Trusting in trite trivialities
Falling for foolish frivolities
Giving nod to notions and novelties
We find our expression
To make an impression
By having more and better than normal
With superior air we dare to call it informal.

Rhetorically speaking of course;
I'm not that way.

--Mack Hoover, 12/28/2011--

Ode to a Wind Watcher

Today I saw a pigeon
soaring over a parking lot.
The air was cool and clear,
and the paving surface hot.
She didn't know how to circle,
and catch the thermal lift;
She had the gift of flight,
but lacked the "other" gift.
But she must have felt the magic
of unassisted glide,
Till she had to resume power
when she reached the column's side.

Oh, to be an eagle
or any other raptor!
To rise and circle effortlessly
above the earth: our captor!
To you, my earthbound traveling friend,
my sympathy and more;
You haven't really learned to live
until you've learned to soar!

--Mack Hoover, 09/28/2000--

Old Age Benefits

The old man I once dreaded to be
has gradually crept up upon me.

I knew he was coming, he didn't hurry,
just kept up a slow steady pace.
I started out strong, but all right along
I always knew he'd win the race.

But I'm growing to like him,
whom I resented before!
I treasure the past, savor what's now,
value that which yet is in store;

I am not troubled by what's yet to come.
If the tale were retold, here is my sum:
have a plan... take it slowly...
and start it out old!

--Mack Hoover, 05/25/2007--

Omnipresent

In a Bible study in a dream last night I responded to a question the teacher asked with an answer that got the class attention and even surprised me. "God is omnipresent so there isn't anywhere His Presence isn't. We just don't sense Him. He presents Himself to anyone who is willing to sense His Presence."

I woke up and got up so I could write it down while it was fresh. It was time to get up, anyway. Here are some other thoughts my morning meditations floated:

Omnipresent, on me present, in me present.

Since He's present: sense His Presence;
Hence no nonsense and no pretense.
And His prescience helps us prevent
Some otherwise unforeseen events.

--Mack Hoover, 01/26/2007--

There are no empty receptacles, just displaced contents.

Overruled!

What matter it that I should fall,
and you in judgment sit?
I gave my all.
Or you a judgment make—
I'll stand the call.

Christ paid in full my redemption's fee;
Jesus died in place of me!
T'was He not I upon the tree.

His blood, not mine, was drained away.
He cancelled debt I couldn't pay.
Now I can ignore what you say!

His Word, His grace, His way I'll take
and endure for His mercy's sake
any judgement you may make!

Sure I may fall and suffer grim—
to not do so the chance is slim;
but when I fall I'll fall for Him
Who will return and forever reign!
By His power I'll rise again
forever free all earthly pain!

Though you sentence me and call my guilt
Or drive vengeance to the hilt,
you'll not reverse why His blood was spilt!

--Mack Hoover, 02/20/2010--

*Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe,
Sin had left a crimson stain;
He washed it white as snow.*

--Elvina M. Hall, 1865--

Performance

Pondering the import of importance I begin to wonder:
Whom is it for, all these "important" things I do;
And who is affected by the things that I don't do?
Certainly not God!

There is nothing I can add to Him, or nothing take away.
He was, and is, and always will be complete in every way.
"So what would He have me to do?"—the question that I raise.
"I want not what you do, but you; not your sacrifice but your praise."
(And He doesn't need that either, but I do.)

Whoever offers praise glorifies Me;
And to him who orders his conduct aright
I will show the salvation of God.

I notice that He SHOWS His salvation, not AWARDS it.
We LEARN it, not EARN it.

--Mack Hoover, 09/17/2006--

(References - See Psalm 50:23)

Philosophy and Theology

Being christian is one thing, being a Christian is another.
No more than being motherly makes you a mother,
Sisterly a sister or brotherly a brother.
Conservative a conservative or liberal a progressive.
Wordiness is not necessarily expressive.
Being president isn't always presidential.
No, it's how you wear the name that is evidential.

--Mack Hoover, 12/08/2011--

Plowing Straight

Don't think tired,
Or look at the furrow,
Or look at the burro.
Aim at an object in the distance.
The furrow will be straight,
The donkey will do the work,
And the credit will be yours!

--Mack Hoover, 04/08/2006--

Poems

It's probably known by a few
That composing poems is something I do.
One problem I have is as soon I get them:
Easy come, easy go—I promptly forget them.
If asked to recite something I've written,
With absolute memory loss I'm suddenly smitten!
My solution to that is I keep them on file
So's to go back and read them once in a while.
My reason for signing them's simple enough:
I'd never know who'd written the stuff!

--Mack Hoover, 02/11/2007--

Brine vs. Whine

*I wrote this about the times where a bit of cheer
pays off. We are admonished to be the salt of the
earth.*

One goal of mine is to bring a smile
to the grouchy clerk in the checkout aisle
Who has spent all day on foot and appeasing
disgruntled folks and customer pleasing.
Who goes home late,
pours out his grief upon his mate,
Telling what a day he had
till some old salt undid his sad
And burdened soul with silly cheer,
with senile jest and old man zest.
Yes, that's my goal! Did you see that dear?
I made him smile. I pass the test!

--Mack Hoover, 02/22/2005--

Problem with Prayer

I sought a wise man's counsel about a problem I was having. He said, "Pray without ceasing." So I prayed about nothing else ceaselessly, but the problem didn't cease.

A second wise man's counsel was: "You simply didn't pray long enough." But the longer I prayed the more the problem prevailed.

The third wise man said, "Pray and fast." I lost weight, but not the problem.

The fourth wise man insisted I didn't have enough faith. So I prayed the first hour each day for more faith and the rest for my problem. My faith increased, but so did my problem.

The fifth wise man said to pray once for every problem that needs praying for and you will be praying without ceasing. When I tried that I forgot what my problem was.

--Mack Hoover, 01/16/2007--

Procrastinator's Prayer

All knowing God, what did I miss;
How did it ever come to this?
I know that things will work out in the end.
Your grace is sufficient...my faith I defend!
I'm ready and able; just let me be heard!
I've stayed up, I'm prayed up, filled with the Word!
I can do all things for Christ strengthens me!
My eyes, they are open; the truth I can see!
So what is the problem; I just can't get through?
"YOU HAVE NEGLECTED THE LITTLE WORD-DO"

--Mack Hoover, 11/09/2000--

Race to Save Face

Some folks see things in black and white, but I'm a shades of gray man.
Some on the pulpit set their sight, but I'll just stay a layman.
Some will hold onto their view as if there were no more;
Analyze is what I do, alternatives explore.
Couldn't we just think it through, and maybe talk it out?
No, this is what we're going to do and that without a doubt!
And he will "win" because a plan his thoughts have formulated:
The completion of the race he ran while the start I contemplated.
And I still think my way is best and I could have done it better;
While he thinks he passed the test by doing it by the letter.

Some folks would a lawyer be and do it by the book.
I'd try most any other trick to capture any crook.
Any Doc will put his stock in Hippocratic oath,
But money gain and patient pain: can he treat them both?
The farmer rises ere the dawn; it's dark before he'll sleep.
I'll get up late and meditate and shorter hours keep.
No one can claim I'm lazy or poorly motivated;
No: to my style of living I'm fully dedicated!
I care what psychiatrists think and listen to what they say,
But I am saner than any shrink and intend to stay that way.
My brain uncluttered, unimpaired, untouched by wealth or glory.
The tale be told this can be named a satisfying story!

--Mack Hoover, 05/17/2005--

Real

I think everything is real;
Else why would it be given thought?
Imagination is (I feel) reality yet uncaught.
Ignore it or explore it: knowledge lost or gained.
Be against it or be for it: ungotten or attained.
You say, "Seeing is believing." I say, "Maybe that is true,
But sight can be deceiving by the lens you see things through."
Reality is reality if you see it as it is,
Clear and pure as water without the flavors and the fizz.
You can spin it and distort it and headline it just to tease;
I'd just like to see you report it: unembellished, if you please!

--Mack Hoover, 12/09/2006--

Reasonable Person

"How much information slips through an 'open mind'?" MH

Seldom do I ever enter the fray,
but this time I do have something to say.
Not addressing anyone up for a fight,
but those intent on making things right.
Reasonable regular folks who know
a minor offense will continue to grow
To rumor, to murmur, to gossip, to slander.
Words spoken carelessly tend to meander
Out of the private and into the street,
stretched and embellished with every repeat.
Then retaliation where neither side budges;
then suing ensues and it's brought before judges
Who never rule to both side's satisfaction
Till you can't say anything not politically correct
'cept "I beg your pardon" and "With all due respect."

Where am I going with this rant and rave?
If we'd settle as friends many friendships we'd save.
If we weren't so defensive and ready to spar,
a slip of the tongue wouldn't travel so far!
'Twould fall by the way and be underfoot trod,
not tossed to the wind and scattered abroad.

--Mack Hoover, 2006--

REMiniscence and RAMbling

My computer doesn't think like me.
Thanks be it doesn't think at all.
For if it could think and feel and see,
into fits of laughter it would fall
Considering my stupidity and hopeless
inability to know the digital.

There'd have to be a computer shrink
to unmuddle the muddled way we think.
"Fatal Error"...it really would die,
and guilt would plague us not knowing why.
We'd need a computer redemption plan
to reconcile computer and man.

Thanks be it's not a living thing;
thanks be my motives it doesn't know;
And accusation against me bring,
and fits of aggravation throw!
Or does it?

--Mack Hoover, 2000--

Restore Them

Bring back our straying children, Lord,
restore what life has taken.
Open their eyes and hearts
to regain what's been forsaken.
Cross their wayward paths
and plot a whole new course.
In Your loving, persuasive Way
apply Your gentle force.
Import into their company
godly, loving friends
Who can do what we cannot do:
redirect their trends.
We taught them young the way to go
by love and by example,
With promise Your unfailing love
is always more than ample.

--Mack Hoover, 02/12/2014--

Rhyme

If it doesn't rhyme, some suppose
It's nothing more than simple prose.
So seeking similar ending sounds,
Assuring onomatopoeia abounds,
Always adding alliteration
For conversational consideration;
Careful composition pose
So's not to be taken for simple prose.

--Mack Hoover, 1999 and 08/04/2001--

Salt, Light, Aroma

I want to be salty enough to enhance the flavor;
The aroma of a recipe anyone can savor;
A light that's just bright enough to show
Where I am going and where others can go.
A sunset at the close of a beautiful day,
A new day expectation: a sunrise display.

Let us pray...
Lord if I get too salty, dilute me.
Please don't let bad smells pollute me.
And if I turn on wrong, reboot me.
Amen

--Mack Hoover, 02/04/2007--

Security

It can be like that today,
for the Lord has not changed in any way.
He has not changed nor has He turned
from anyone whose heart has yearned
To find Him. He'll not hide
but stand beside
each one who'll choose Him,
to take a stand for Him.

How can we lose
but to refuse
His ceaseless love and not adore Him?
But take a stand we must,
without excuse to trust
in Him alone: the just and justifier.
There is no judge that's higher.
Any other claim's a liar.

So set your standards high,
your affections on Him above
all other names, Author of all love,
to do all things through Christ Who strengthens you.

And when your time on earth is done,
set free this planet's girth,
and you may venture forth beyond the sun.
Your life with the Eternal One
only will have just begun!

It can be like that today,
for the Lord has not changed in any way.

--Mack Hoover, 05/24/2007--

A Sort of Sonnet for a Self-Conscious Soul

One thing I've discovered with life in general, and with whistle players in particular (except for the few with exceptional talent), is the fear of what people think. That tends to take over when we play in front of a crowd of even one or two. My very wise wife keeps reminding me that everyone else in that crowd is too concerned with their own self-consciousness to notice mine.

I worry a lot, I agree, about what others think of me;
Until I really think it out: what others are really all about:
They must worry what I think of them.
So here's my thought (I think it's a gem):
We're all uncut diamonds, don't you see, and the polishing is up to me.
I have the tools and the incentive to make a difference, I believe!
(Lord, make me a little more inventive, a lot more caring and sensitive.)

That may sound simple and sentimental,
But how it sounds is incidental,
(Though I do worry about your nod),
The final opinion belongs to God.
I'll do my part, go the second mile,
And keep a fourteen carat smile
(That's the value I've been told)
Set in twenty four carat gold.

A word fitly spoken is like golden apples in silver bowls.
A word of wisdom and encouragement is a gold ear ring to a receptive ear.

--Mack Hoover, 05/16/2006--

(References - See Proverbs 25:11-12)

Skills and Art

Can I share some meditations from my morning devotions?

"God graciously granted me enough skills to let the artist in me function; and enough artist to make use of the skills."—M.H.8/29/01

"May the seemingly simple whistle allow you to share something of its maker, but more than that: something of its maker's Maker, Who guides the use of air and precision, of spirit and heart, tangible materials and expression, emotion and understanding that in every creation there is a Creator and in every gift there is a Giver."

--Mack Hoover, 08/30/2001--

Some Guy, Without Question!

I would like to be there without taking the trip,
and then be back home sans airplane or ship.
I would like to be good without effort or energy;
have only friends and never an enemy.
I could dispense with the ladder if I could spring to the top,
be satisfied without saying, "Stop."
Always the winner and without preparation;
without even trying, be a sensation.
I never would wonder who started the fight,
or of the apple who took the first bite.
I would love everyone exactly the same
and never take sides in any game.
I would start life full grown and happy and sure
and rich and handsome and completely secure.
What a wonderful generous person I'd be...
if I wasn't the apathetic, undisciplined me.

--Mack Hoover, 02/21/2014--

Stop, Look, Listen

Trying to do more than the Lord has called for
Just might undo some of the good to be done.
To keep right on going when the Spirit stops moving
Isn't improving what the Lord has begun.

So, Lord, help me listen and help me be sure
That what I am doing is going to endure,
And all that I do and all that I say
Agrees with your Word, Your will, Your way,
Be creative, productive, positive, true,
And always be reflective of You.

--Mack Hoover, 10/15/2011--

Summer Morning Dialogue

she: "I'm going to the store before it gets too hot;
May be too late already, but I hope it's not."

he: "But the car has air conditioning,
And the store has it, too."

she: "It's just the twenty five feet
From the car to our door,
And the hundred fifty feet
From the car to the store."

aside: (We live in air conditioned luxury
In home and car and store.
To it we are conditioned unconditionally.)

we: "And we wouldn't ask for more!"

--Mack Hoover, 06/20/2001--

Test Me

I've been asked to prove my faith
by passing someone's test.
What if I fail the exam,
and he says it's not my best?
That makes him judge and jury
and makes my vision blurry.
Instead I'll let him test his own;
and let the Lord be Judge alone,
And walk my walk with confidence
in Christ alone from this time hence.

But you may ask me of my faith,
and why I am secure.
And I will answer best I can:
I know it will endure.
It's not determined by a man
nor weighed on human scale.
But on God's unchanging Word
which ever shall prevail.

So look at me and what you see
is only what you get.
But God sees deep into the heart
and He's not finished yet.
But when He's done you can be sure
the final product will be pure!

--Mack Hoover, 07/17/1999--

Thanks, Lord!

I am sure of the Savior's care,
certain that He is aware
of my every need of His constant heed.

Why is it then that I stray
and forget to say
Thank You, Lord, for the details?

What if He one day forgot to say, "I care.
Let him go his way awhile without Me there."

Fortunately His Love never fails!
He has a way of touching me,
not rushing me
Or interfering with my will
but somehow manages to fill
The empty places that occur
when I forget to say, "Thank You."

He makes it somehow so that I
may be able to say
"Thank You, Lord! Thank You, Lord!"

--Mack Hoover, 2013--

Thanksgiving Prayer

Father in heaven, we bow our heads and give thanks.
We would do so if 'twere just canned beans and franks,
But this is a spread that's fit for a king!
Nothing is missing, no, not a thing!
Cranberry sauce, green beans and ham,
Potatoes and gravy and candied yam,
The turkey, stuffed, roasted, carved up and served;
Before us is way more than we ever deserved.
In all things we give thanks for this is your will.
From your blessings to us we now take our fill.
Thanks, Lord, in the Name of Your only Son,
Christ Jesus our Saviour, The Holy One.

--Mack Hoover, 11/24/2000--

The Love Chapter

What good to speak with eloquence
if it's not spoken with love.
If love is missing from prophesy
or absent from absolute faith,
Then knowing deep mysteries and moving of mountains
Missing love, are monumental mistakes.
There is no profit in sacrifice
or in providing for the poor
If it isn't love that's your motivation;
your motives just are not pure.

If love is your motivation,
then here are things you will see:
Patience, kindness, humbleness, generosity,
Unselfishness, politeness and courtesy.

These are the things you will not see:
Rudeness, selfishness, provocation,
Evil thoughts and lying.

These are things you will willingly do:
Rejoice in truth, bear burdens,
Believe in good and endure all things;
And with love you will never fail,
You will prophesy profitably, pray productively,
Mature marvelously and grow graciously.

There are three great gifts from God: faith, hope and love.
Love is the greatest gift of all three.

--Mack Hoover, 03/28/2009--

(See 1 Corinthians 13)

The Ship's Bell

Patterned in wood, molded in sand,
Founded by the Admiral's demand.
It rang pure and true, clear and loud,
There by the helm—bright and proud;
Announcing the time, sounding alarms,
Calling the crew to prayer or to arms.

Many a battle it had survived,
To many a port it had arrived.
But one fated day with cannon balls flying,
Doom and destruction, wounded and dying
Heard its last chime. It went down with the ship.
Its very last chime, its very last trip.

But there on the sea floor's salty environ
It didn't decay like wood planks and iron,
Though silent, alone and very encrusted.
In a pure alloy the founder had trusted.
Its metal was pure, its maker was sure
Even a watery grave would endure.

One day it was raised from mire and sand
And mounted again on a beautiful stand.
All who pass by can see it re-shined
Because its metal was truly refined.
All hear it ring in its purest tone,
Though all those years it was silent, alone.

Don't despair, don't declare that all hope is lost!
The Founder made sure He'd covered the cost!
Don't worry that you might never be heard;
You are engraved with the Master's own Word
On the finest of metal, perfect and fine!
You are a bell of the Master's design.

--Mack Hoover, 11/14/2000--

The Visit

Jesus came to visit us the other day.

— Did he now?

Yes, he came with a lady and a man.

Mom answered the door and said,

“Come in. Can I take your coats?”

“Yes you can.”

“Can I get you a drink?”

“Water's fine.”

“Please have a seat.”

Jesus stood.

—Did he now?

He had no coat and said, “I'm good.”

Then He began to tell us things.

—Did he now?

Well He didn't talk out loud...

but first the man and then his wife

would tell us things of Jesus life.

And Jesus would nod and He would smile.

—Oh did he now?

Yes, and after a while we understood the reason

Why He did not come alone in Person.

—Oh?

He likes for folks to introduce Him.

He came back later and we invited Him in.

—Did you now!

And He lives with us now!

That's good.

--Mack Hoover, 01/30/2014--

Timely Treasure

Long it had lain in the pawn shop case
 awaiting its owner's return.
Dust covered its golden face.
 Its hands had long ceased to turn;
Its works long since were still.
 Priceless, but useless, needing concern
 Its purpose in want to fulfill.

Hard circumstance had prompted the loan.
 The redemption price long since was spent.
The broker was certain to make it his own
 Unless someone paid what was lent
And also the brokers unattainable rate.
 He wouldn't reduce his fee by a cent.
 Thus seemingly sealing its fate.

Yet Someone was watching with infinite care,
 Who knew the true value and worth
Of this abandoned unredeemed ware.
 His aim was to give it new birth.
He would pay whatever the cost!
 He would employ Heaven and earth
 In order to rescue the lost.

The Redeemer came and lay down the price,
 Infinitely more than was fair.
He paid it in full with true sacrifice,
 And took it from that dismal lair,
And by His loving hand was rewound;
 Was polished and set with true loving care—
 That beautiful treasure He'd found.

--Mack Hoover, 09/01/2003--

Trinity

Humans think in time and spaces.
We try to put God into places;
And we try to give Him faces.
What man can't fit in he erases
From his consciousness.

God "out there"—not receivable!
God "with us"—inconceivable!
God "within us"—unbelievable!
It's all just too incredible!
We're unfit for His righteousness!

Three in one: Holy trinity.
Timeless, endless? That's infinity.
One in three Who claims divinity!
Can His Presence really enter me?
Can He give us endlessness?

I believe that it is true:
That what He claims He can do—
Be within me and you,
Forgive and clear us through and through
By His holy blamelessness.

He has even given names
To each One of His astounding claims,
Our wild imagination tames
And fits into our timebound frames,
And shares with us His goodness!

God our Father,
God our savior—the Son, Jesus,
God the Holy Spirit Who gives us understanding.

--Mack Hoover, 09/05/2006--

Unlimited

How many sins of the same stupid kind
before God changes His mind
And withdraws His kindness
leaving mindless
and floundering fools
in filthy pools
of morasses?

Countless the number for He doesn't count them
and neither should you
for nothing you do
will make Him erase
His infinite grace
Which no human effort surpasses.

No, admit them, submit them
turn from and quit them
and let Him forgive and forget them
as He says He will do!

--Mack Hoover, 01/03/2014--

Unproductive Prodigal

I seem to be in a torpor of late.
I don't seem able to incorporate
my ideas into a functional state.

Ingenuity's faded into inconsequence;
creative thoughts are not making sense.

My cognition's hazy,
my ambition's lazy;
I know it sounds crazy,
but passe' plucked the petals
from deliberate's daisy.

I know things will perk up
the instant I work up
some new motivation,
some unique innovation,
and quit procrastination!

Apathy's certainly sure to depart
the very moment momentum I start!
...Tomorrow...

--Mack Hoover, 06/21/2006 (or sometime soon)--

Up and About, Not Down and Out

When I've finished half my cup,
I know it's still half full.
Even when I don't use my tools,
I never like them dull.
When it's thirty percent chance of storm,
it's seventy it won't.
When it seems like I'm going to die,
usually I don't.
When life seems grim, I remember Him
Whose joy's the antidote.

What's true and honest, just and pure,
lovely and of good report,
What's virtuous and causes praise--
these things I'll think upon.
I'll be content in any state
until that state is gone,
And say again and again and again:
"Oh Lord, Thy will be done!"

--Mack Hoover, 01/10/2001 and 01/11/2001--

Workload Prayer

Lord this morning I ask
that You join in each task
that I take on
And when I get to a difficult place
You'll extend Your grace
And steady my hand,
my knowledge expand, my reach extend
So that what I do
would be as to You.
Make my purpose in all that I form
be a function and form
of how You perform
In this empty-of-meaning society
keep me above hopeless propriety.
May the things that I make
and the time that I take
have Your Divine stamp of approval
And unneeded things
and useless effort
be subject to Your removal

--Mack Hoover, 2013--

Thoughts Here & There