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## 1968 - 1970: The Search

## ***FAITH***

See the people in the shadows,  
They walk in the dark.  
They walk in the valley of the shadow of doubt.  
There is no trust here,  
And fear is the master over men.  
Hear the people in the dark,  
Have pity for them.  
Their cries reach no one but Death.  
The people walk in the darkness,  
But their eyes are accustomed to night.  
So they see all the bad and shun all the good,  
And they trust nobody but themselves.  
See the people in the shadows,  
They walk in the dark.  
They walk in the valley of the shadow of doubt.  
Fear for these people.  
They have not seen the light above them,  
Which shines like a diamond afire,  
And lights the ways of all those,  
Who look up without fear of falling.  
But the light is high,  
And only those with the courage to climb to its horizon,  
Are honorable enough to walk in its dawn.  
And the light is upon the mountaintop.  
And the mountain is called faith.  
Do not shout down at violence,  
Speak softly words of peace,  
Nor abhor those who speak of hate,  
But offer them your love that they might know its power.  
Never call another's ideas wrong,  
Without also showing him what you feel is right.  
Seek not to destroy evil things,

So much as to strive to build better things.  
If you must cry out "injustice"  
Try also to right the wrong.  
Do not degrade beliefs not yours,  
But glorify your own by proving they are good.  
Call no man a fool because he has not achieved success,  
Deny no man the fight to fail.  
And above all these things,  
Never let the darkness in the world obscure your seeing,  
But turn always to God for the guiding light.

## ***CONFUSION I***

Help! Help! Let me out!  
Out of this soul-breaking limbo!  
I am floating, sinking,  
Running forward, falling back,  
Moving, paralyzed, whispering, screaming!  
Oh God, help me out of this soul-breaking limbo!

Lost: Lost! Utterly lost!  
Where is my light? Where is my path?  
Is there no firm ground?  
No! No! There is only confusion! Intolerable darkness!  
In the Hell of this soul-breaking limbo!

Envy! Envy! Stinging envy! For those outside my prison.  
A firm place to stand, a faith, a belief.  
They have the keys, the keys I have not,  
The keys to this infernal vault,  
The cell of a soul-breaking limbo!

Help me! Help me! Someone please!  
Show me a firm place to stand, a faith, a belief!  
Lest I remain forever within this Hell,  
A God-forsaken, soul-breaking limbo!

## ***CONFUSION II***

I have achieved ignominy,  
And dirt is the powder on my face.  
All faith is hidden in reality,  
And love is hate.  
I am wrested from the pits of dark and death ,  
For naught but to find,  
I am blind in the light of life.  
There is no way, And yet there is.  
Does not evil do, As evil is?  
And all is lost, When all is found.  
Now cry I to the Unity,  
And the Voice answers me,  
"Where art thou?" I say I am here,  
But where is here?  
And the Voice calls again,  
"Where art thou?"

### ***TRUTH I***

Still must I seek what I have sought in vain.  
I sought the truth, but the search brought pain.  
Others found it, I did not perceive.  
Others knew it, I did not believe.

### ***TRUTH II***

The truth is as a moment in time.  
It exists, is known, then passes,  
Into a dimension sublime.

### ***TRUTH III***

I seek yet what I have sought.  
Some have found it, I have not.  
I seek the truth, that to believe.  
"EGO" be the facts, other men deceive.  
And I seek the place where the answers be,  
The truth for others is not for me.

### ***TRUTH IV***

Truth can exist without lies,  
Only as a star exists,  
Without the skies.

### ***TRUTH V***

When I fail, only I am wrong.  
When the truth fails, all is wrong.  
For the truth is like the song.  
It cannot exist without the ear;  
It cannot exist with no-one near.

### ***TRUTH VI***

Pure truth is the road not a man has trod.  
It is near and far, and always great beyond him.  
It is the essence, of the imminence, of God.

### ***SILENCE I***

My mind is still,  
My heart speaks,  
The quiet of the dawn is now.  
My thoughts are nil,  
My words are gone,  
And the quiet of the dawn is now.  
My heart only speaks,  
For its message is the silence,  
And the quiet of the dawn is now.

### ***SILENCE II***

A thousand words were spoken,  
And heard was every one.  
But only understood, Because of the silence, They were imposed upon.

### ***SILENCE III***

A silence closes upon me,  
And I hear the voice of the quiet.  
The silence is a screaming sound,  
All I can hear is the voice of the quiet.  
It tells me what I really am,  
And it speaks the truth in deafening silence,  
Saying that I am the voice of the quiet.

### ***REALITY I***

As the sun sets upon a brilliant dawn,  
I turn away from reality,  
And discover things that cannot be.  
It's in the isn't that I now abide.  
All that is , I cast aside.  
All things to me are everything "non".  
As the sun sets, upon a brilliant dawn.  
I cannot seek the things that are,  
No more than reach a distant star.  
For reality is the day that comes,  
After the sun sets,  
Upon a brilliant dawn.

### ***GOD I***

God the creator, sustainer, provider.  
The love, the wisdom within us.  
One God, the only, the all of everything.  
So great that He is the unknowable,  
The unreachable,  
Until tomorrow comes.

### ***GOD II***

God it the architect of past and future days.  
We, the men, His builders,  
As we travel on our ways.

### ***PARADOX II***

Life is a relentless clock,  
Marking time to an inevitable death.  
It is the necessary means,  
To an unavoidable end.  
Every moment I live,  
I am closer to death.  
If I fear, then, to die,  
Do I also fear to live?

### ***PARADOX III***

They told me to look into Heaven for God.  
They said that's where I would find him.  
Then they said I needed God to be able to look into Heaven.  
The paradox is done.  
Must I turn to Hell?  
They say any man can find it.

### ***SELF IDENTITY I***

Who am I? I am, I.  
What am I doing? Being, I am being. What am I? A man, I am being a man.  
Of whom am I part? Of men, I am being a man of men.  
Where am I headed? To further ways, I am being a man of men to further ways.  
Whose legacy do I follow? Of all mankind.  
I am being a man of men to further ways of all mankind.

### ***SELF IDENTITY II***

Do not disturb me for a while,  
At this moment I am one.  
Divide not me by speaking your beliefs,  
You are you, I am me,  
And at this moment I am one.  
Soul and body, reason and belief,  
Emotion and control, conscience and action,  
All together,  
At this moment I am one.  
It is a unity with all I am,  
And all I was or will be.  
It's a union of myself to me,  
In this moment I am one.

### ***SELF IDENTITY III***

Why am I here?  
What am I doing?  
What is the purpose of life?  
No man has the answers.  
Perhaps there really are none.  
But I am here, and I will question.  
And the answers....?  
I will seek them,  
Until death bids,  
My search to be done.

***MAN I***

In whitened halls, and blackened rooms, The visionless men evolve.  
Or imprison themselves in shallow dreams, And aspirations yet ungrown.  
They fear the dawns that lie ahead, And march on in this,  
The deadly trek,  
The exodus of the dead.

***MAN II***

And the masses dwelled in empty symbols,  
Crying, "Surely these be the signs of life".  
And the masses trod on the past's ancient roads,  
Chanting "Yes, these be the paths to follow".  
And the masses stood before the individual,  
Laughing, "...for that one shall surely perish".  
Then upon their words,  
The masses died,  
And lo, the man of Creation was born.

### ***LIGHT I***

And yet blackened spheres still enclosed,  
The light man once called God's.  
And man's eyes are closed, and darkness grows,  
Till the light is but a point,  
That perseveres through all that is blackness.  
And blind man ponders the light he cannot see,  
Even as he strives to ascend to its origin.

### ***LIGHT III***

And there was brought upon the earth,  
The evils done by man.  
The hate, the fears,  
The plummeting souls,  
The blackened land.

That was yesterday,  
It all happened then.  
It was yesterday's dream,  
And today is the end.  
White, and void of substance,  
Black, and lost of sense.

Yesterday dreamed in blank and white.  
Men who dreamed in color,  
Were shut out from those with sight:  
And men still dream in black and white,  
And without color they teach their children.

But the brilliance of the dawn that is coming,  
Shall surely- blind the black and white dreamers.  
And those who have dreamed in color,  
Shall awaken in tomorrow's light.

#### ***LIGHT IV***

Be bright my child,  
Be an enlightened ray of-hope,  
In a despair darkened world,  
My child,  
Child of tomorrow,  
Of future days.  
Be a star,  
In the night of fabrication.

#### ***LIGHT V***

A brilliant dawn breaks upon the morning sky,  
Permeating the heavens with a beauty,  
Whose only equal is its Source.  
Slowly the land is lit.  
Reflections of the glorious light abound,  
But never reach the dark alleys of men's hearts,  
In which the rats of prejudice,  
The plagues of hate and greed,  
And the stench of lies abide.  
The fabulous light is stopped by the walls of fear and ignorance,  
By the curtains of indifference and evil.  
Men! Men! The light must thing,  
Must cast its rays upon those hated alleyways.  
Men! Tear down those walls,  
Those curtains.  
Seek the light, and also,  
Seek its Source.

***TIME I***

What is now in the scheme of time?

Now is when men live,

Now is when they die.

Now is an instant,

But also an eternity.

***TIME II***

The future stands before me,

A sea that I must cross.

But how can I even reach the waters,

When the beach of the present,

Stretches endlessly before them?

### ***THOUGHTS I***

I played in flowered fields of fantasy,  
And rode upon tufts of dandelion fuzz.  
And the sun shone down on my garden of thought,  
While around it others built a moat of honey thick poisons,  
And waited for my departure,  
And waited for my death.  
And waited while I floated oar their moat,  
Riding on a cottony fluff of dandelion fuzz,  
To the Eden gardens I realized must be,  
While playing in my flowered fields of fantasy.

### ***THOUGHTS II***

I have but one prayer that serves to guide me in my life,  
It brings happiness in any joy, a certain wisdom in strife.'  
And it, is nay prayer of purpose.'

God grant that the pinnacle of what is might be reached in part by me,  
So that the future might become, all that it can be.

### ***THOUGHTS III***

Strike me, Ray of Reality,  
Pierce my being,  
Search deep, deep within me.  
Penetrate my soul.  
Out through my imagination,  
To the part of me that is.  
Then return to me with the visions you have found,  
And tell me who I am!

## ***SEARCH I***

Across the blackened sands of hate, To the murky ocean depths of fear,  
My search had but begun.

It led me through deepest caverns of my mind,  
In which grotesque and horrible creatures dwelled.  
I was charred by a false sun of lies,  
And crushed beyond death by a multitude who disbelieved,  
All I knew was true.

I fell from the cliffs into a stony pit a hundred miles below,  
And drank from the poisoned waters which flowed in the rivers of greed I gasped for  
breath in the rancid air,  
And choked upon the dust that was food for thought.

Deep, deep, into this land,  
My search led me onward,  
Until I reached that point beyond, And was made well in this new oasis,  
The culmination of that I am.

## ***SEARCH II***

I sought the light,  
Though it scorched and burned and blinded.  
Beyond all my capacity to withstand,  
I sought the light,  
It baked, blistered and peeled.  
I sought the light, Without a shield.

The light was pure and brilliant,  
Its rays a pinnacle of all that could be.  
Its heat the concentration of all knowledge known.  
The light, the essence of pure and right.  
The light tortured the seeker,  
But its Source,  
Healed the embracer.

## ***SOUL REST***

THERE COMES the day which is the beginning.

Soul rest,

None shall know, The love began,

The life in motion. Seeking truth

Is the first cause Of honesty.

And no one

Can deny the miracle That happens

Upon discovery Of the greatness Of love.

Without it there becomes

Only one emotion Fear,

Which is all and more,

Than sadness, loneliness

And despair.

It is what I feel now,

When the hand that Grasped my reach Led me astray

And now I am lost And afraid

With nowhere else to go.

## 1970-1973 : The Christian Experience

## ***First Encounter with Jesus***

The times are not so long passed that I cannot yet feel the footsteps still walking in my mind. The memory is still there, as vivid as if it were almost happening now. And my guts ache a little, in mild recollection of the pain inside them that was so much more than a memory not long ago.

Fear, despair, loneliness. Acids packaged in a bottle marked "WHY?" and dumped undiluted into my empty soul; there to burn and pain, and poison. I would have screamed to the world in my torture, but I was isolated, so I thought, in my misery.

Who could I turn to?

I couldn't even understand what I felt. How could anyone else?

But smoldering in confusion, I ached to let it all out. After all, human endurance is only worth so much--and I was had. But who? Besides, I'd never get the guts to start talking. What do you say anyway? "Excuse me, but would you mind listening to my problem?" Excuse me, but I was really scared! No way was I going to be able to walk up to somebody like that!

But a desperate person can't afford to throw in the towel so easily. Face to face would never do. I wrote a note--and threw it away. But I had addressed it. The decision of who to talk to had been made. I wrote another note, asking what I could not ask face to face--just to talk, something was bothering me. And I read that note time and again trying to decide if I should put in the mail slot. After all, what if ---and maybe I wasn't really so bad off---but NO, damn it! I was that bad off.

And the letter was in the box of the addressee. I don't know why I was scared, but I was. Scared stiff. But at least the note kept me from being face of face when the asking was done. So I thought--God had different ideas and my friend walked into the room, letter in hand and opened it in front of my face and asked, "Is this you?"

Every muscle was tight. My stomach was a knot. In ten seconds my heart beat enough to keep me alive for a week. And I said, "Yes." And he said, "..later tonight." From this afternoon, till later tonight, seemed like eternity. And if Hell can be reproduced on earth, that was it.

But finally we were face to face, eye to eye, my friend, looking from the note to me with a questioning look. Aid I didn't know what to say. So I told him what I was feeling, and before long he was asking me "Is your hang-up with God?" And I realized it must be, but funny, I had thought myself pretty secure in my theological ideology. I wasn't a Christian, but I believed in God. But it was true, my hangup was with God. Somewhere, I guess, I just didn't have all the answers"

And it wasn't long before my friend was talking about Christ. But I didn't strike back, even though knocking Christianity had almost become my hobby. I didn't feel like knocking down that night. I felt like listening, and asking, and trying to under-stand.

And we talked and shared, and I trusted, and let it all out. And when we were through talking I felt better, like someone was mending my broken soul.

And not many days passed before I committed my life to the one who had mended it. Jesus Christ. He loved me enough to let me suffer till I came to Him. And knowing I was blind of faith, gave me a friend sighted in faith to guide me on that path to His love. Praise God, I have arrived!

Hallelujah, Jesus is Lord! And I still don't completely understand.

Some things are just too beautiful to believe.

## ***Thinking Rock***

Dear Another Person,

Well, I'm sitting up here on the "thinking Rocks" on Sehome Hill not doing much but thinking, and this time keeping track of my thoughts a little--there's so many. You know, two weeks ago I would have laughed at anyone who might have suggested that I'd ever be up here thinking what I am. But that is all past. I feel different now, though I'm not sure how. It seems like for the last week, except tonight, I've had this awful nagging feeling in me, and tried everything to get rid of it myself, but it just didn't happen. It was really painful, it's sort of strange, how mental or spiritual anguish can cause physical pain. But anyway, I finally decided to talk it over with some-body, and Tom got picked--mostly because he was so friendly, sincere, and honest, you know, someone I could trust with my real feelings. That's always been really hard for me to do--to share and trust meaningful things with others.

Well, anyway, we talked for a good space of time-- difficult though it was to get into. I told him how I had found that my perspective had become warped, that I and everything around me had started seeming insignificant, that it just wasn't right. I really knew that if I talked to Tom about it, he'd bring Christianity into the picture. I also think that's what I wanted. I had considered myself something of an "unofficial Jew" for the last couple of years. The only thought I ever gave to Christianity was knocking it. So it got to a point where I was no longer able to introduce Christianity into my line of thought, and I asked for help, and had someone else introduce it, and latched on. Why was I willing to listen now, and not for the last few years before? I'm not sure, but probably be-cause I'm pretty rigid when I'm pushed, and the style of Christianity I had been experiencing for the most part had been pushy. To put it simply, "Jesus Jumpers", and "indoctrination preachers" turn me off. But lately, I found Christianity popping up differently, in people and their ideas, instead of out of their mouth. I found I couldn't really knock that kind of spirit, but needed to understand the 'why' behind it. Was it more than a good pious fairytale? Could I any longer say that I was intellectually above this plane of belief when I had met others far more intelligent than I who held it as truth? It was the reality of the people that made Christianity at least a philosophy instead of an overused fable. I was ready to listen, and consider and be as open as I could force my skeptical self to be. So Tom and I talked, with me becoming evermore surprised with how much he had felt at one time that was what I was feeling then. And I asked questions--who?--what?--why?--where?--all kinds. Tom didn't airways have the answers, and I really didn't expect him to. But he did start me thinking in a new way--with Christ--instead of against him. He suggested I do some reading in the Bible for answers. Pray, seek in a new way. Maybe that would help. I guess one of the main things that had been bothering me was the fact that I had been a Christian and lost that faith. Why? No answer, except for the assurance that it was most likely my fault. Maybe that was something prayer would bring me the answer to.

Well, anyway, after a long talk, about 1 a.m. we finally got to my dorm and I left--with a lot of thoughts going through my head. Well, strange place for a revelation, I got my first answer in the shower. It came to me that before I had come to Christ out of fear of going to hell if I didn't, and that the love was superficial. And so the whole relationship was wrong, it was just the opposite of what it should have been. You see, it's easy to lose faith in an object if you believe because of fear, because by throwing out the whole ideology there becomes nothing left as a reason to fear. Secondly, I lost faith because I hadn't really understood that God in the 'who' of Christ. But now, finally, the understanding was coming, the love being discovered.

Afterwards, while drying my hair, I read some in the New Testament. I understood things in a new way than before. It was really neat. At around 2 I finally sacked out with the alarm set at six--short sleep maybe, but I knew I would have much to think about when I woke up and wanted to come up here to Sehome to think and walk. The first place I stopped was on this rock to read and think. I liked it here because one side of the rock overlooks the bay, the other, a small wooded valley. But what was really inspiring was that just as I was about to leave the first thing that caught my eyes were some little blue flowers--forget-me-nots. As I walked along, they appeared occasionally along my path. Calling cards from Jesus? Maybe, I don't know.

After my walk, I went back to the office in new spirits like I hadn't had before. I still had a feeling inside of me, but it was a challenge of hope, not a kick of defeat. Later on in the afternoon I was worried that maybe I was losing the feeling so after dinner I came here again to do some more thinking. I found Jesus again, in a new way. I have found Him beside me.

I have found Him in love. I sought an understanding of the "why" and was taught the understanding of a "who".

I suppose the "why" never came because that's what faith is all about.

Now I can only say thank-you. First to Jesus, for sticking through with me such a long period of doubt. Second, to all those people who showed His love in action.

I only hope that I may grow in faith that all this may not be in vain.

Love with Christ,

Sue

## ***I was alone***

I was alone, afraid, And desperately needing someone as a friend and guide.  
I took a chance on you ---and won.

The first time we talked I've never been able to confide in anybody like that  
before, Mostly 'cause I didn't think they'd understand,. But something inside  
told me you would. And so, for the first time I trusted.

It was hard to talk. I wasn't really even sure what I needed to talk out. That  
painful, empty searching feeling; Words seem to fail such things. Funny, but I  
think you knew what I was searching for Before I did.

Yeah, you understood. For real you understood. Then you started talking  
about Christ. Thank God for that, 'Cause I finally Was ready to listen.

It wasn't really the words that mattered So much though, but the absolute  
sincerity and love With which they were spoken. That's what I really heard,  
With my heart, instead of my ears. And then, When I reached out for a guide,  
You grasped my hand and led, Patiently' enduring all my stumbling over  
questions. Its easy to stumble if you can't see.

You didn't let go at the end of that evening either But stuck it out with me: A  
good thing too, 'Cause its hard telling Where I would have gotten lost if you  
hadn't.

You guided me to the door that Jesus was knocking at, But I was afraid to  
open. it. I was still blind, and scared of who I could not see.

I had to trust again, This time just on faith.

The door was tough to open, It almost seemed glued shut. It was frustrating  
But I wanted to get it open.

And finally, slowly it opened, As did my eyes. And I 1saw the Lord who had  
granted me sight.

I am whole now, And I am home. And I have never felt so happy and arrived  
in my entire life.

Thank-you scarcely seems sufficient To express what I want to say to you,  
But it it is all that I have

Thank you friend and Brother in Christ. Thank you.

### ***Praise and Confession***

I am compelled to write this. I do not know why. The Spirit of the Lord which is in me by the act of Jesus Christ calls me to write and so I shall. Perhaps the reason is only that I might myself see visibly those expressions which now lie in me. Perhaps this is a message to another person whom I do not now realize I shall show it. Whatever the purpose, it shall be done.

All praise is to the Heavenly Father and to His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ and to the Holy Spirit which instructs and unifies us all. To be called into the family of Christ is a beautiful thing, perhaps the most beautiful thing except the beauty of God himself. I give God thanks that by His grace, He had saved me and given me the gift of real life in Him. I confess my unworthiness before Him and ask His forgiveness of all my sins. I now am secure in the knowledge that I am forgiven for all my wrongdoings and straying from the will of God.

Dear Jesus,

For many years I was away from you. I thought I felt love, and perhaps I did, a little. But until you entered my life I had no way of knowing what the total reality of love really is. It is truly beautiful, but at times it is also frustrating, when my mind gets in the way, 'cause your love is just too big for it. But I was reminded by Brother Earl that you gave us mind to build love, not to analyze it. Help me to do that Lord, to build love: The world needs it so. You know that I used to think myself of some importance in this of world, but God, you have reminded me that without your love and grace I am less than nothing. All the good I do is through your wisdom and guidance. If I do evil, it is because I have ignored your voice. Help me to have better hearing of you Lord. The evil within me and beside me often deafens my ears to you. I pray that you will quiet the evil, Lord.

### ***Anxious Spirit***

Jesus, tonight I am a little anxious, uneasy. I'm not afraid, not lonely either. But I feel that something is about to happen to me and that you're going to make it happen. Yet I also feel real calmness inside because I am comforted by your presence. And your presence was more real today that I think I have ever known it. Did you give me a booster shot of faith last night, Lord? Whatever it is it's beautiful, Lord. But Jesus, I fell shaky. I don't know how to handle this. I need you even more now Lord. My God, what is happening? Are you calling me to a purpose greater than that I have ever known? Lord, who am I to stand be-fore your glory?- Surely I am not even worthy to offer you my human love, I have nothing to give you Lord, yet you have given everything to me, so much that a mere thank-you seems almost to be an insult. But God, what else is there? Thank you God, for all it's worth, thank-you. God, baptize me with the Holy Spirit and fill me with its power. Let me be immersed totally in you. May your Kingdom soon be upon the earth and your Glory reign. And may we soon know the peace of brotherhood under you, our Father.

In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

## ***Praise***

I really do now know what I am to write, but I pray the Spirit of God will guide me. I have never before felt so secure in the knowledge of God. That is all really, that I feel. I am waiting on the Lord to lead me on. Till then I praise Him and give thanks.

All glory is to the Lord God; the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is one, He is our King.

### ***Forgive Me***

Father, My lord and my God, I have denied Thee, despised Thy Son and hated Thy people. You have shown me this sin and it is a hard thing. I thank Thee my Lord for this: For a scab is torn off my wound of complacency; but by the stripes of Thy Son am I healed. Forgive my disobedience, my sin worse than idolatry. Lead me in a better way, your way everlasting. Supply me with the courage and strength of faith to walk that way. If I stumble on pebbles or boulders on the way, may I fall on the solid everlasting Rock of Jesus. Amen;

Just as surely as the final end of life in this mortal body is death again to dust, I know that the final end of death with Christ Jesus is life to eternity.

## ***Fallen Brother***

Does it always hurt so much Lord, To see a brother fall?

And then find myself sitting there Without moving to help?

I hope it always hurts that much, Lord, Because maybe next time the hurt will  
Prod me to move.

"I didn't know what was happening to him." That was my excuse.

But you knew Lord, what was going on. I knew you knew.

But I just didn't trust enough.

God you saw my brother fall.

You saw me see him fall

And sit there doing nothing but praying. Maybe that's all you wanted me to  
do. Maybe it was a lesson in love and trust. Maybe so, but by brother fell,  
God And when he hit bottom,

I too felt pain.

God if it was a lesson,

And it took a brother's fall to teach me And if it need happen again,

At least use me to cushion the drop.

## ***Missiles***

Missiles upon missiles,

Man kills then murders the dead

Readying weapons even now But as said in ancient, It is all vanity.

Wherefore have we seen the mighty bullets

That pierce the hearts of cities

And kill all life within.

Yet it is in such evil That I still keep hope.

For though my flesh fears for itself

My soul rejoices that God's hand

Is in all things.

We were forewarned of that which is now.

Yet we chose to ignore that warning.

But God knew we would And provided for us That we might live In His life

If only we asked, Yet though we refused To live in our own.

It was once a mark of some esteem to say "I am" But now I say only that "He is"

And that "I was".

"I was" dead, but now

"He is" within me.

### ***Footsteps***

The streets are filled

The corners sing with the words of Sinners and "saints".

And the earth quakes

As the footsteps of the masses Plod intently to nowhere, Seeking only another day

To look for another

Deaf to the call of God,

Who, would they only take the cotton of pride from their ears,

Would deliver them from this Quaking that even now crumbles The earth and those who ride it.

Yet it is as though a hand is at this moment Reaching down to steady the earth, and, Unseen, silently comes closer As the quaking increases.

Who would feel its presence in The warmth of the love that is in Its life-bloodstream?

Only those who have grown cold (as we all have)

And will step into the hand in faith They shall be warmed and sheltered.

---

### ***Dawn***

When dawn breaks like night in your soul, And in crowds you are alone,

When trees lose their leaves in the Spring, And peace even sleep does not brings

Turn your eyes heavenward There shall be the light Jesus will bear your load He will give you life.

And the day will dawn,

God's light shining through And love will come

And the Word shall prove true.

### ***Take Heed***

Take heed therefore of who you are, man. The kingdom of God is at hand.  
His coming shall be in glory At all corners of the earth His name shall be  
praised.

. Holiness shall become the law, And grace the truth of love. We shall know  
God,

Because we shall know our Father,

But behold He is here in spirit even now We await His presence in reality.

What lofty and noble purpose have you man, Are you seeking after stars or  
light? You live for the future--

Is that so?

And what purpose the future?

Is life only a race with time

With death always coming out victor?

Nay, death had been won over By life.

And the stars lights grow dim in God's glory.

And we live to do the will of Him Who holds the future.

## ***Thank-You***

Before I begin to write whatever it is that I am about to write, I want to begin with a prayer to my Lord and God.

My Father,

Though I know you only by faith, you are still the closest person to me. I praise your holy name and glorify you for your greatness of power and love. Thank you for loving us enough to sacrifice your only son so that we could come to you. Help us to walk in that same love; love through us, Father.

Oh Lord Jesus, thank-you for suffering for us. Thank-you for living in us. Before we were empty, with a spiritual hollow that only could manifest itself in the echoes of "Why?" Wow, we really tried to figure things out for ourselves, sometimes even making ourselves think that we had answered that ultimate three-letter question, but inside it just kept echoing, 'til by faith we turned to you, some, like me scarcely believing anything would happen, but according to your promise we had peace, a quiet spirit and "Why?" stopped knocking. Praise to you, Lord.

Thank-you God for the Holy Spirit, who comforts us and gives us power. Fill us Father to overflowing with the Holy Spirit, so that we might always be faithful and fit witnesses for you.

## ***To All***

It is time, I suppose to put all this down in ink. So many things the Lord has shown me: It is beautiful to know God. I can face life with purpose and without fear. And as for death: Death is something I shall never know. Praise the Holy One: There may, surely, come a time when I shall pass from this present life into eternal life in the presence of My God, but in that day I shall only rejoice. Let there be no doubt about this I know God. I know Jesus the Christ. And I know the power and presence of the Holy Spirit of God. Such beauty and glory await the Saints of the Lord God!

What would I say then to them, who do not share in this glorious friendship and sonship with the living God.

To the Jews I say, search your scriptures, your Messiah is the man the Son of the Most high, Yeshua. Check His credentials. Accept the ultimate sacrifice God, your God made for you. Come to your shepherd. Yeshua fulfilled the law and prophets; it is in Him you shall enter into the truth of your Jewish faith, and into the promise of eternal life.

To the Gentiles, and to the Greeks, those who seek after wisdom: Seek truth, not ideas about it. Jesus the Christ is the truth. There is no error in His way. Look at scripture: find yourself in the true God of whom it testifies. Look at the prophets: see how they spoke the truth without error. Turn from your idols: Money, pride, humanity, occult, false wise men, whatever ,and whoever you put before the living God.

To all I say: Turn to God, come to Him by the one, the only way, He has provided, by the death of Jesus, the Christ, his own son. Know God, personally, not only as omnipotent power but as your best friend who gives ultimate meaning to life, and gives life to eternity. Be born of the Spirit of the Most Holy God, born into eternal life and the magnificent glory it guarantees to those who believe. All praise be to the blessed God, the Holy One, and to His Son, the Christ, risen from the dead according to scripture, who won victory over death, and is the sacrifice for our sins, acceptable to God. I know my God. I know I shall not die but only know greater life of praise to the Most High. I pray the same for you.

## ***Self Abasement***

When I am slapped in the face,  
I must first turn the other cheek And then turn to the Lord.  
If I am offended,  
I must never be offensive in return.  
If I am taken advantage of, I must give more, Not covet what I have.  
If I am rebuked for being in the wrong, I must be thankful,  
Not defensive, even if not in error  
The Lord shall prove me right, if so be, Na myself.  
I must never be angry For sin against me.  
Love is never angry and 'Never' has no exceptions.  
I must learn to judge myself  
With the measure I use to judge others.  
If I am at the end of my rope,  
I must keep hanging on,  
No matter how it pains me, Lest I fall into anger.  
If I just don't feel like giving an extra measure, It still is no excuse for not giving it.  
In every action I make, I must consider  
How it is affecting others.  
In every word which comes from my mouth,  
I must be certain that it is Christ in me speaking, Not me.  
If I have done my share--or more, And a need remains, I must do more yet.  
I must never consider myself before God, Nor before anyone else. Love seeks not its own.

## ***Choosing Love***

I must remember:

God has commanded me to love.

God has given me the perfect example of love. God has given me the power to love.

God will not force me to love,

But he has given me the freedom to choose love.

I must choose love, no matter what, Christ did.

## ***IN HELL***

Looking back now,

What a fool I was then, Deaf to his voice... Blind to his plan.

Putting faith behind The achievement of man, How gently I drove

The nails through his hand.

## ***Thinking On Christ***

The hour is late as I pen this. It is not a time for profound thinking. Yet, it is quiet, and a time when, if a person shall but listen, the Holy Spirit of God speaks so very clearly. How good it is to know that God never sleeps.

I think on Christ. Who is he to me? What does he mean in my life? Who is He to me? Well, that's not difficult to answer. To me Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the promised Messiah of the One true God. He is nothing less than the perfect Lamb of that God (Our heavenly Father) who was slain as the eternal sin offering. He is the Risen Lord, who leads all those who follow Him into resurrection and eternal life and communion with God. Jesus Christ is the first and the last, by whom all things were created. Yet far above all this Jesus Christ is living love, of the same substance as the Father. That is who Jesus Christ is to me. That and so much more.

What does He mean in my life? At this point I can only say, not enough. That's not ideal, I know, but it's honest. Jesus Christ ought to be first, unquestionably in my life, but He isn't, not always/ I can't make excuses for it. I don't really want to. Why should I? After all, Jesus Christ lives within me by His Holy Spirit, and He knows what's going on! He knows all about me, more, I daresay, than I know of myself. And He knows that I've put other people and things before him. Money, parents, friends, food, me. But why? Why, when I recognize the absolute honor that Jesus Christ demands as the Lord I recognize Him to be, why do I pass Him by for anything or anyone else? Here's the only answer I have: I don't know. Sometimes it bothers me, really, to see how often what I do, what I think or say contradicts what I claim to believe. I often wonder if I really do believe it all, or whether I'm just pretending. After all, Jesus Christ said so very many things about hypocrisy, calling Him Lord when our actions make it clear He isn't. He didn't like that at all, yet, too, I recognize that Christ remains true to His word, even if I and all men on earth lie. And God asks for faith. I know it is impossible to please Him any other way. It is by faith that I claim the righteousness of Jesus Christ and the promise of forgiveness by the cross. And for me it's the same faith that says, "Jesus, Lord, I'm sorry. I know my actions don't measure up to what my claims of belief are. Lord, I know I'm a hypocrite. But the thing is, Lord, that you're the only one who can help me change that. If I could be perfect on my own, well, then the cross was a waste. But I can't perfect myself, and none of us can. And we need you. And I need you. I need you day by day to walk with me, and talk to me, and strengthen and uphold me, to help me become less of the hypocrite I am. to make me more like you."

You see, it's faith: Not in what I am, or what I was, or what even I ought to be, but faith in Jesus Christ. Faith in the One who does not change, to change me.

Yet all this is not to say that receiving Christ by faith left me no different of a person than before. I don't believe I yet know how great the change that

happened then was. Jesus Christ became the center, the anchor of my life. Now, it's a matter of getting things of God tied secure to that anchor and the seaweed of the carnal off of it.

***Help me see***

God? Father?

Jesus?

Lord?

Help me, please.

Help me see.

See you more clearly.

Tho' none can see God and live.

But you know what I mean..

Help me see.

God. Father.

Jesus.

Lord.

Amen,.

---

***Celestial Bellhop***

God,

Forgive me when I've made you a "celestial bellhop"

or

An idol of sorts to take on and off my shelf of commitment.

or

A philosophy,

or

A religion,

or

Anything less than the living Lord of all

and

The God who deserves all honor and glory

That you are.

## ***Faith***

Faith in you, Lord Jesus Seems so intangible:

Yet it is

The very stuff which ETERNAL LIFE

Is made of.

---

## ***Your gave us a garden***

Father, you gave us a garden,

And we blew it.

You gave us your Son

And we crucified Him.

Now you give us living waters,

And God, I pray that we don't pollute them.

## ***Song and Dance***

Songs of words and downbeat melody,

Rhythms chime, but what is really heard?

Does not the heart cry more loudly

Reverberations of "why?"

Echo in souls empty of hope or meaning,

And the teardrops beat the cheeks,

Drumming despair

Lips that would sing and feet that would dance, Shall not this night.

Ears hearing the cries of loneliness are deaf to music. It is as though the music truly has died.

And we--with it.

Where is that music of life which shall revive us? He sang for us: We killed the beat.

He sings again:

Shall we join Jesus' band?

### ***Praise and Thanks***

Lord God,

Your praise is above all praise.

And there is no other worthy of it.

From of old you spoke to your prophets

Declaring what would be--and bringing it to pass.

May your wonderful name be praised.

You have brought us out from a covenant whose words spelled death for our disobedience.

You have given us a new covenant in your Holy One Jesus.

Jesus: the name that itself declares: "the Lord saves"

And you Lord have saved us at great cost to you. Giving to us that which we did not deserve. God, we can not repay you.

It would be vanity and foolish pride of greatest degree to think would. But we can thank you.

Thank-you Lord.

And we can praise you:

All blessing and honor and glory unto thee.

And we do. And we ever shall, Thanks Lord, Thanks again. Amen.

## ***Humility and Joy***

It has been a long while since I've really stopped to write down my thoughts, so now I shall take the time to do so. Now is a time of joy for me. Perhaps even more than a time, but a season. Now I can say with Paul in some measure, that I understand being contented in any state. Humility is a tool used by the Lord to etch lines of art in the sculpture of the human soul.

Joy. What is it? I don't know. It has been described as a fountain. A fountain it is, welling up from inside, and nearly impossible to contain. Joy is more. Real joy is tied to God, to His high praise. Joy exceeds happiness and contentment. Joy is being able to praise God because it pleases Him, not you. Joy is an inner peace that rejects any attempt to ruffle it. Joy is a product of faith, praise and vision. Joy is the presence of the Holy Spirit saying, "fear not". Joy is an expression of God's love. Joy is a result of Jesus' victory. Joy is making the Lord the center of our hopes, thoughts, actions and selves. Joy. Hallelujah!

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## ***Miracles and Gifts***

Holy Spirit,

Give to me, I pray,

Every gift by which I might Better serve God.

Wisdom, knowledge

Faith, healing

Miracles, prophecy

Discernment, tongues

Interpretation,

I know they are controversial But then so was Jesus.

And He relied on You totally.

## **LIVING LETTERS**

Almighty Father,  
Be with me, I pray.  
Care for me as the child of yours that I am. Amen.

Dear Father,  
Every day help me to grow as your child For the sake of your glory. Amen

Gracious Lord  
Help me to hear the voice of your Holy Spirit Inside me. Amen  
Jesus Christ  
King of kings, teach me to let love be my aim. Amen

Mighty God,  
Never let me forget that you have Overcome the world. Amen.

Precious Savior  
Quiet the inner restlessness with Rest in your Word. Amen.

Savior God,  
Teach me to \_\_.  
Use my talents for you. Amen.

Victorious Lord  
When I try to hide, remind me that your eyes  
X-ray through me to my heart, and nothing is hid from Your eyes.  
Zap me Lord!

## ***Commitment***

God, the time has come when we'd better get it straight with each other. I'm sick of playing this "half commitment" game with you, and I really suspect that you're a lot sicker of it. Father, it's just really become evident that I'm wasting your time, and it's about time I stopped. It's so obvious that I've started back into the world. It angers me God. It must anger you so much. I'm sick of it God Do you hear? Sick of it! How are you glorified by a wishy-washy philosopher youth? You are not! Such a mouth is an abomination. Lord, I'm so asking you to fill my mouth with words which bring glory to you. I want love God and I want the love that cuts as well as the love that soothes. I'm tired of honey dripping Christianity. I'd rather have Jesus Christ. Father, empower me to bring glory to you! Dear Lord! Get this much out of my mouth. Let me speak truth undiluted to all men. Forgive me God! It is apparent that I have been ashamed of you and your Word. God, I want one mind, and one mind only: The mind of Christ. God, honesty often scares me, help me please. This hypocrisy is sickening.

God, My father, Straighten me out. Let the fire of the Holy Spirit burn within me. Cause me to shine with the light of the glorious Gospel. God, take away from me any thought or action of compromise which lets me steal glory from you. Father, I am yours. Mold me, shape me, fill me with your words. God, My Father, I give myself to you. I will to serve you, to bring you glory. Bring it about, Lord. It's in your hands. Thanks. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

### ***Praise and Exultation***

Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.

Thou my God,

My rock my strength

Throughout eternity.

How can you be praised

Mere words cannot suffice.'

If the songs of angels and men would resound until the end of days.

Let my heart cry to you

In worship of Spirit and truth and praise.

Let my exultation magnify Thee,

O my God!

Great are you God,

Greatly to be praised,

In worship and proclamation of Thy Ways.

How shall I praise thee?

How shall I praise Thee?

How shall I praise Thee, o my God?

I cry out holy

In the lifting of my voice.

My heart cries out glory

And my hands call out upraised.

Hope from Thee God

Thou wilt call my soul to praise.

To praise Thee my Lord and my God.

This is how I praise Thee

Not of me but Thee--

Pour out o God,

From this clay vessel praise.

Let me not hinder the

Words which you call forth

Let me declare Thy praise,  
Thy glory Evermore!

***Cry out Holy***

O my God,  
Who made more than eyes can see,  
Your praise is too  
Magnificent for me! O God,  
Then fill me  
With the Spirit of Thine own.  
Let Him praise for me, On most heavenly song.

I cry out holy,  
To the Lord God O Most High,  
Splendor on splendor, Glory to Thee alone.  
Only Thou art worthy  
To gain that is Thine own.  
Glory on glory, Praise on praise.  
Hallelujahs ever sing through everlasting days.  
To Thy Name!

### ***How Shall You be Praised?***

Lord God,

How shall you be praised?

How shall we bring glory unto you?

Is it not the purpose of all your creation and handiwork that you should receive glory and praise?

God, the people said they had a beautiful time worshipping you,'

But somehow it seems like your praise was lost amid the pleas for revival and redemption;

Which look unto man and not unto Thee.

Father, I praise Thee,

I praise you Almighty God, King of the Universe,

You are the true God, There is none like Thee.

You alone are holy, you alone truly Just.

Father, God on high,

You deserve the honor and worship of all peoples of the earth.

You are the great light of magnificent purity,

Outshining all stars, which you alone have created.

You alone are a great Lord, Therefore let us bless Thee.

I offer to you thanks, Because you alone are God,

All praise in heaven and on earth belongs to you alone.

All power and majesty,

All splendor and glory, Magnificence, sovereignty,

And adoration is yours and there is none who can compare with Thee or stand against Thee.

Praise be to Thy name O God, By all men,

For all time,

in all the World.

Amen.

### ***Forgive My Sins***

Oh God, I ask forgiveness for my sins, the ones against you , and against my brothers and sisters (which is still sin against you.) So many times when you have called me to bear witness to your love, I have stayed mute. Forgive me, Father for denying you, it is a sin. I can only confess it to you and ask for your forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

Lord, I look forward to your return, and to your heavenly kingdom, to your New Heaven and New Earth. But 'til these things be accomplished, line me up with your will, that I might be a vessel to accomplish it on Earth. Guide me in your love, God, and keep my eyes stayed on that which cannot be seen, but in which is my hope, and that is you, Lord.

I pray all of these things believing they call be accomplished, in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen

**FAITH AND DOUBT**

The Battle

April-Sept 1973

## ***Simple Thoughts***

--Love is best lived.

--I really do believe that Christians have a lot more love theory than love reality.

--I need to know a deeper reality than emotion.

--Faith? Define it please. Then you might try love, truth and freedom.

--Stained glass windows sometimes make it very difficult to see outside.

--The greatest commandment is this: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your strength. The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

--A light is not beautiful, it is functional. Its sole beauty rests not in itself, but in that which it illuminates.

--Salt tastes rotten by itself, and remember you can oversalt things and they'll taste worse than if you had left it salt-less.

--Confusion is when you're absolutely convinced that something is true--and don't believe a word of it.

--Uplifted Hands might be a prayer which pleases God, but I can't help but feel that uplifting another person makes him happier.

--I don't think spirituality is wrong, I do think it's overused.

In a universe of vast dimensions

Which contain the celestial garden That blooms each eve,

Who may dare to claim that you are not, O God?

Amid the torrential rains

And buffeting winds

Which no man may lay hand upon, Who can deny your power,

O God?

***Hear Me Now***

My Father, My God!

Hear me now,

Let me speak of that

With which my heart overflows! Answer me Lord,

I pray that your voice

Will be no longer silent to my ears. Or has this evil world become so loud In  
the confusion of sin and strife That your still small voice Has been drowned  
in it all? O God, if it is true

That you still speak to the Sons of men,

Let me hear Thy voice

And amid the cacophony

Which continually surrounds me,

Let me enter into the quiet garden of Thy peace

Surpassing understanding And let us,

I pray my dear Father

Just have a quiet

Uninterrupted conversation.

## ***Secrets of Faith***

Lord,

I really want to know a couple of things.

Who are you?

Why am I?

But somehow I get the feeling

That those are the secrets of Faith.

## ***Confession***

God,

I've got to confess something to you.

Please forgive me; I know I should not have to. But I do, So I will.

Father, I don't like being a Christian.

And I don't really even like the whole idea of Christianity.

And the only reason I see for being a Christian Is that I'm convinced that it's the truth. But I hate it really.

Yet I need it.

And I want you God.

And I want to give you glory.

You deserve it.

That's for sure.

God I'll accept your plan, but I don't like it. Please forgive my attitude. And give me a new one. I know I stand in a dangerous place.

I don't want to move, don't want to want to move. But God, please, I want you to move me.

Help, God, please help.

I have crippled myself. I am afraid.

Heal me, I pray.

In Christ's name. amen:

### ***Something More***

Toy dolls and nothing more Programmed with a talking string To be yanked  
at the owners whim?

Really nothing but ourselves The mind the master of the soul Death the end  
without meaning?

My spirit cries "no, no!

There must be more," And yet, what?

God? God? God.

A reality I cannot Fully comprehend.

God! Forgive me.

Why do I hassle it?

If you're not real,

I'm dead.

But I am alive.

## ***War Within***

How the battle rages.  
Two sides in biting conflict.  
And I a soldier in this war.  
Deafened by the stomping feet  
Which are mine alone.  
Frightened by the agonizing cries  
Which do not escape from me.  
This war is beyond comprehension.  
True, I have every assurance that we shall win  
Peace with honor in the end.  
But now I am worn,  
Torn.  
I do not know that I want to fight any more.  
I do not desire defection either.  
Perhaps what I really want  
Is just to ignore the war and die.  
They would think me insane. And perhaps I am.  
They would say to fight for the Good Commander.  
They say the joys of winning the battle are great  
Compared to the momentary pain.  
And perhaps it is true,  
But somehow the noise of battle,  
And. the pain,  
And fear,  
Make it easy to forget.

### ***Conceiving God***

To get as it were, a grasp on the deeper meaning of life,  
To lay hold of that ultimate purpose and hope.  
Symbolized, perhaps in a conception of God?

No.

Rather the symbolic conception is realized in God.  
Somewhere the lines between man and God  
Got twisted•

And the yearning for truth,  
Beauty and purpose  
Given by God to man,  
That the latter would seek the former,  
Was conceived by some to be the instrument with  
Which man tooled a god.

NO.

Such a God is an idol.  
The sculptors are idoloters.  
And both- in the end  
Shall perish.

## ***Oblivion***

Wherever I call, Oblivion answers me.  
What ought to be mighty,  
and Glorious,  
Is almost nothing.  
In the hand of God,  
I do not know where I am.  
In a sea of Humanity,  
I am thirsty.  
In reaching out,  
I fall flat on my face.  
Is deceit the only quality of Hope?  
Or are there some who will listen,  
And help me understand  
These feelings which burn inside my soul?

## Turning

1973-1974

## ***Breaking***

Here follows a lesson

or perhaps a parable

But let it be understood by the one who reads or hears it.'

The grain must surely be crushed by stone before the bread of life can be made.

The fruit of the vine must be crushed by stone before there can be new wine.

The alabaster must be broken

before the fragrance issues forth.

And so it is likewise,

If you could but perceive

That darkness must come

Before the Sun of righteousness rises over the land.

## ***The Land***

The Land calls

with a voice I cannot ignore.

The Land calls, the beautiful Land

seen without eyes, And the call

heard without ears. The Land, the Land

calls, it shouts. It cries a glorious cry.

And the trees of the Land

I love them

And each leaf upon them I love.

I know the sap of those trees,

for it flows also in me.

The trees, I cry because of the trees.

And I weep for their barrenness. I long to water them, tend them.

I hate those who would harm the trees,

would chop them down.

Upon their injury my sap also flows out.

When their branches are bare,

how shall my leaves bud--they shall not The grief is as poison.

The Land, the trees, the call: I must go to my own.

## ***Self Knowledge***

Sometimes in moments of loneliness the tiring pains of self-knowledge are felt. It is then you realize how much of living is a lie. It is then you feel your muscles aching as you reach out in spirit for what you are afraid to touch in reality. Then the decisions come. You make one after another decision to change things with the next dawn. The same decisions you made yesterday, yet the sun rose with no change. And there is the feeling inside of you. You kind of feel like climbing out of your own soul; it hurts so much. Yet somehow you hang on, hoping praying sometimes even believing a little that a miracle of sorts will transform you, and that when you seek next time, you will find. You think maybe what you've been looking for has been right in front of you all this time, and that your eyes have always been closed before, but now like in a new baby they're going to open to a myriad of beautiful new things, a new dimension of visibility. But then being sightless of the soul has its advantages; at least it's secure. You aren't going to worry about what you don't know exists. What's scary is when you find what you were seeking for, even though you didn't know you were looking for it. That's frightening, especially when you have been looking for an opportunity and it presents itself. You are really caught now. To deny the opportunity is to reject all the objects of your hopes. Yet to accept, that take real courage, with the element of the unknown, realizing that whatever choice you make will unalterably affect your life. And you worry about what others will think, maybe you shouldn't, but you do, and it's bad. What if they ask you why? How can you explain, and if you manage to explain, will they understand? Then suddenly, the answer comes. To deny the opportunity is to lose all hope of change. To back out once is to commit yourself to a life of cop-outs and hypocrisy. The denial syndrome would grow like cancer and envelope an entire lifetime. And who could walk with honor if they did not have the courage to accept themselves? And to accept, is to face the challenge, at all odds, and have faith that , if nothing else, your courage will sustain you through all adversity and you will come from the challenge a stronger person than you met it. An nothing will, nothing can defeat you but fear of the confrontation, for if you have no fear of it, your faith and courage will make you the eternal victor of the match.

How does one begin to write about fear? What is the pervasive blindness that plagues the eyes of faith? A sun of darkness has arisen, the dawn shows blackness. What is life? What is faith? What is belief? It seems that I don't really want to know. To be blind is comfortable, if the light causes fear. I really can't explain what's going on insides though I really want to. My insides ache to consider it all. My head spins under the weight of it. God! Please, God, I only want to know you. I want to worship you in truth. Let me lay it on the line. I can't say how it all began. May be it really started that night at Steve's place. You remember, where Larry really challenged me on some things I claimed about you. I couldn't answer him then, still can't. Then, well, not only did I accept challenges to my faith, it seems like I almost sought them out. I read a fair part of one of Martin Buber's books, one on faith. Some of the things it said really hit me hard, especially the idea of the real meaning of faith. Of centering everything you have on God, then acting on it.

Well, I really started to consider what my faith was. Mostly I found it to be a passive acceptance of a lot of things. So I challenged it. Actually I really believed that if the faith was based on the Rock of God that it wouldn't fall. Well either I was wrong, or my faith wasn't set on the rock, because my faith definitely fell. The guts of it did anyway. Now I don't really understand what's going on. It just seems like I'm held into some sort of religious boundaries by the people around me. At the end of it, I've really found that it's so much deception on my part at this point. Yeah, I play a good game of "Christian", but I don't really know that it's real. Enough rambling. It's scary. It seems like the edge of a mental breakdown. I daresay I'm getting physically sick from keeping it to myself. Desperately bad, I want to talk to someone--but it seems they're always too busy. Yesterday was November 7. Don't people know that tears also flow on election days? There is no holiday from confusion. What is happening? I don't even know who God is anymore! I read the Bible and it seems like nonsense. I can hardly live with myself...finding the brief respite from this internal torture only in the moments I spend with people. And it's so superficial. The answer would seem to be "pray", and I have! Almost constantly, but the God whom I address does not seem to answer. My relationship with Jesus Christ, well, in short, isn't. After calling to Him, I have not been able to see him. Well I know that if Jesus is truly who He said He was, then the fault is not with Him but with me. Perhaps I have blinded myself to the truth. But how? Have I walked past truth into darkness? As I watch the passing world through the window, it all seems quite like a movie being projected 3-dimensionally. And unreal dream-like stage which I can walk onto and off of without effecting a bit of change. When I try to consider anything past what I see, it's like trying to picture the ending of an unfinished book. Then I find myself avoiding the people, especially Christians. They almost scare me. And yet, the one thing I need and desire most is for someone to demand honesty from me. Look, I just prayed again. I asked Christ to once again restore my mind to help me get straight. Yet, it's still no use. I feel quite like I've run into a brick wall and", I'm tired of bashing my head against it.

Truth or no truth, I find myself wanting to walk away. I can't climb it. I should want to climb the wall, I know I should, but it just isn't the case. I feel like crying. And this bad to say, but I want to die. But I'm stuck,' This is not my life. If it doesn't belong to God it belongs to a sizable number of people. I can't believe in God enough to really give my life to Him and I've lost also that hope I had in Christ. But now it all seems like death in life. I've felt this way before. Before I asked Christ into my life. But where is He now? By faith, it must be that He is in my heart, But you see, I don't find Him there. I don't understand any of this. I give up. Let life have me, it seems I am able to have no part of it. I can only cry out to God if God is God now. And all eloquence I lay aside. My prayer is simple: Father, Help! Amen.

## ***Loneliness***

I took up the pen

To describe the loneliness which I felt,

And found no words.

Tears have a vocabulary all their own.

I believe God hears me

when I pour out my soul to Him

But I trust Him

As I long to trust some person

who will also count my life a part of theirs. There are some I love deeply

but cannot confide in lest I hurt them. There are some I love deeply

but would not understand me.

God I pray, give a best friend

to share with

To share joy

grief,

hope,

despair,

surety,

confusion,

And above all,

You.

### ***Help me to believe in Truth***

Hi paper,

Just wanted to take some time to put down what I was feeling.

I have a real conflict. I want to convert to Judaism still, maybe' that's old nature. Yet I would be crazy to do it. Jesus Christ is the only way I can possible make sense out some of those statements in the Old Testament. But what bothers me, is if some-body can answer those kind of questions, that I'll eat their answers up like cake, whether they're true or not. I don't really understand all this. It's crazy, really crazy.

(God, God of Israel, please teach me some sense. Help me to really believe truth. Thanks God.)

Well paper, guess that's all for now. Bye,.

## ***Disillusionment***

O God, how can one know You?

Of a certainty I would have declared

"Through Jesus, Your Son"

Only a few months ago.

Now it does not seem so to me.

But I am not altogether sure.

Mostly Lord, it is disillusionment:

For Christians to claim to be the Church,

The body of the Christ, the perfect man;

And God incarnate,

Themselves the body of perfection,

Themselves imperfect.

How can it be?

The Messiah, the Prince of Peace.'

How can one believe when war fills even the Land of Promise? But sure  
Jesus promised to return

And if the Holy God he truly was

Then return he must, for he said he would.

My God, my Lord,

Is it possible to love you without "knowing you"?

I believe I do.

God of Israel, God on high,

Creator of heaven and earth,

May my goal in life be twofold:

To make my life a blessing and praise to you;

To serve my fellow man in love,

In short, to love you and to love others: Actively.

If you God, grant me life to do that, and I do it (I will try.) Then I care not for  
eternity.

For even eternal fire could not extinguish the joy of a moment of pleasing you

## **Awe**

As I sit and think, or gaze at the night sky in awe before God: Considering the immensity of the universe or the minuteness of the atoms which make it, and my mind's eye scans the vast multitudes we label "humanity"--my mind joins with an echo of David--what is man that you are mindful of him....?

Is man the measure of all things? The master? It is certainly not so. Man is neither the measure nor the measured of things. He is not the greatest among God's creation in all ways, but neither is he the least. The world is vast, and I am one. I cannot do everything, but God has granted that I may do something. It is ultimately only God who has all things in His hand. I am to be a wise steward of not all things, but of that which He makes me steward over. And surely He also gives wisdom enough. Now be praise to God our Almighty Father, to whom all creation is subject. May I serve Him in faith all the days of my life, and if I stumble in sin, may I by his mercy fall into the everlasting arms of the Lord. Amen.

## ***Two Poems I***

( October, 1973)

Too often I have turned my back

When I should have met my challenge face to face. Too often I pretended to be brave and proud

Only to fall in fear and humility.

Too often I said I agreed, when I did not,

And lost my self dignity.

Too often I said I could, when I knew I could not, And many were injured when my inflated ego burst. Too often I have been quiet, when I should have spoken. Too often I have accepted what is unacceptable. Too often I have agreed to change,

When I knew that change was wrong.

Too often I have raised a flag of victory

Over the defeat of conscience.

Too often have I cheated myself,

And I no longer have faith in me.

Too long have I allowed the world to decay

And I no longer have faith in it.

Too often I have heard the words: "Keep the faith!" To believe they any longer have meaning.

-----

Too often we have turned away,

When we should have met our challenge face to face. Too often we have pretended to be brave and strong, Only to fall in humility and defeat.

Too often we have said we could, when we knew we could not, And hurt many when our inflated ego burst. Too often we have accepted what is unacceptable, And agreed to change, when we knew change was wrong. Too often we have cried, "Injustice!" to friends, While we have schemed to cheat strangers.

And too often we have said "As bad as things seem to be, there is no reason to try for anything better."

...Yet too few times we hear the words "Keep the faith", and they are reason enough to strive for perfection.

***Want to be my friend?***

Paper,

What a strange friend

To tell your problems to. I wish I had a friend,

Yet at the same time I know

I'd never probably let anyone be A friend

To me.

It seems God loves me

At least that's the story Behind Jesus, I guess.

But this time it's not a tract ending

Of happily ever after ever more. Someone want to be my friend?

I sure can't conceive of a-good reason why They would.

It's a hard realization

To suddenly recognize the fact

That you really don't like yourself At all.

It seem like everybody should

At least have a friend in themselves. Even me,

Though I can't conceive of a good reason why I should.

I want love.

I refuse love.

This is the heart of loneliness.

## ***Bitterness***

I am bitter

and angry

and sick

At the hatred

and filth

and rancor

and sorrow

and baseness

Which my eyes behold.

And I burn inside

with an unquenchable fire

That I can in nowise describe Except for what it is. And within, a question

Which shouts so loud

I cannot ignore it

But neither can I say

The words.

But one who hears

And quenches that fire And holds beauty

and proclaims love,

Reigns above,

And here below

I suspect

He would expect us

to know better.

To know in fact

love

and truth

and Him.

## ***Dilemma***

I might as well write this, not that anyone should ever read it. If they do, so what; if they don't--it makes no real difference.

I am in a sort of dilemma: It involves two parties--myself and God. It's sort of an identity crisis too. For one thing, and I'm sure, most important, I'm about to walk away from Christianity. Yes, I mean it. "What ever for?", you may inquire. For this: God and his people.

You see I still feel uncomfortable, almost blasphemous, as it were, considering Jesus God. I rebel, and still am not sure if that is rebellion from good, or repulsion from what is not. Ultimately I know I must decide. After all, both things are not right and true.

Now see: I will say this because it is how I feel and I pass no judgment on whether right or wrong. I find it very difficult to consider myself a gentile--really! Everything, within me that is, looks outward as a Jew. I cannot explain, suffice it to say it is so. The Jewish people are my brothers and sisters and Israel, Israel is my home and I am tied to it and love it and pray for it and yearn to walk upon it, to even die there.

There I have said it, or at least penned it: For I would never dare to declare myself to be Jewish. If I am, I have no evidence except my heartbeat, my soul. But I could never degrade Judaism so much as to claim it falsely. So I cannot claim it, only feel it. Now will I convert? Turn my back on Jesus? Risk eternity in Hell? For Israel; for the Jewish people; for the Lord God who chose them? I just don't quite know.

I do not know why I am writing this, but it is a beginning. I only know that I must write down what I do not know if any but myself will read.

## ***Reward, not duty***

I am lonely. I am upset. I am afraid. Yet I am also hopeful, brave and secure.  
I live in darkness and dwell in light.

I reached out for the sun and found it. Its warmth and light were welcomed in  
the winter which had set into my spirit.

I do not understand what I write, but I shall continue.

I have found God and He is beautiful. He is with me every moment. I am  
never alone.

He created life, He is life. He is the beginning and the end.

Some have called him vain because His law demand us to worship Him only.

They are blind. Worship of God is a reward, not a duty.

Some have known Him through nature, some through prophets.

Both have sought Him in truth.

Both have declared His glory,

And both shall be made His children. Some say He took on human  
substance to bring man to G-d.

They say that those who do not believe in "The Son" are doomed to death in  
Hell. But what of those who believe in the Universal Father?

Do the parents condemn the children because they so young do not know  
Santa is their own Daddy?

Six, Six, Six, the serpent.

Once in Eden, Again from Hell.

To some the Messiah has not come. To some he has.

Some called the Messiah god.

To judge who is right is to judge over God. Declare infinity for what it is

That there can be many answers in one solution. Declare God's infinite love  
for what it is.

He cares: From the least to the greatest, only believe. You cannot receive  
from what does not exist, And though God exists forever and infinitely, To  
man He exists only through faith.

Only believe in whatever way God has prepared for you. And there shall be  
light,

Forevermore.\*

## ***Choice***

For every man, for every human being, a light, a hope, a chance to be free.  
For all life, for all death. It is from the beginning to the end, a faith in the  
Ultimate, that drives one to step another inch, to live another day. And when

the Voice fades, oh, the agony, for everything within us is being torn apart slowly, painfully, as the realization comes that we cannot believe, and yet we must believe. How easy it would be to rot when you are thrown away.

Pray to God? When it is His very existence you doubt? Yes it is not rational, only right. And so it comes that the only choice you can make is contrary to the desires of all others, persecution, the only peace in conscience, if the choice is taken yes, hell on earth—and after that? Who knows? Choose No, though and how could one survive his soul? Then one understands the agony in belief and ceases to do so. God forbid! I am what I am, what I am created! And if I accept the guise of anything, anyone else, I am a lie. Now I seek the truth and in truth is the only key to life, the only hope in faith, the only reason to believe.

### ***Friendship***

I want to talk to someone, but again it is only a pen and paper which accept the unvoiced need. If there is no other way to say it, it will do. This world can be a very lonely place sometimes, and the many people only sharpen the cut of questioning why it is so. Some may not know what I mean, but in a way very real to me, a life without a friend is often one which is without meaning. Friendship, love, just knowing that you and someone else are mutually concerned with each others' existence, knowing that you can be honest without fear of hurting either of you. You out there: WORLD! PERSON! Perhaps it is not a good thing to feel sad at, one's own isolation, but I am not alone: Have you read the want ads lately? Did you notice: Some people are advertising for someone to talk to. How sad! Let me tell you, not all the lonely people in the world are old, or sick, or poor. Some people are just lonely behind the smiles that smile be-cause you never seemed to care, so why bother you with honesty, with what is really felt. Why tell you that last night I almost prayed to die because I was so tired of lonely confusion. But it is better that I didn't, for maybe my life may someday keep someone else from such despair. God grant that it may be so, but may He also grant that someone who has known friendship, pierce the wall of fear and isolation, and the mask of satisfaction, and confront me with love, that I might learn of it.

## ***A Tree in Zion***

(Nov. 13, 1973)

The Lord planted a seed in Zion. Then the seed grew to a mighty tree. Its roots extended deep into the past, And as it grew the nations

Chopped that great tree down,

But its roots they could not remove.

When it fell, the tree scattered its seed. The young saplings grew all o'er the earth. But there was not on them even a single leaf which did not turn to the place of its birth.

As time passed some of the leaves forgot about the root,

And turned from it to face the sun.

Soon some trees became like the forest all around

and had forgotten their noble birth.

One day a leaf turned from the sun toward Zion,

Not knowing just why it did so. There the leaf saw a living root,

Which sprouted leaves of the leaf's own. The leaf could not rest,

It was by one thought possessed:

I must, I shall go to my root, my home.

## ***Short Thoughts***

O God

The Great I AM. Who are you?

\*\*\*

I have been here before,

And did not think then

That I would return.

I was wrong in that

But the real issue before me now: Is it right or wrong to be here?

\*\*\*

When there is a struggle between Heart and mind,

Who wins?

\*\*\*

Am I lovable?

Worth it or not,

I am incredulous that anyone

Should love me just because they do, And despite who I am.

***Hear O Israel***

"Hear O Israel, the LORD our God; the LORD is one. Blessed is His name whose glorious kingdom is forever and ever."

Lord God, My God,

I come to you now with heartfelt love, and praise for the fact that you are--praise for you Lord God, may I say it? I love you. I love you very much. I trust you with my life.

There is a situation which troubles me. You know it. Forgive me

if I am sinning greatly by admitting it. Today is November 24. For some time now I've been playing games. I am not a Christian. I don't believe Jesus was God. I believe that God is one. That He IS. But I am stuck. Many people would be hurt if I told them what I've told you. But pretending is a lot like a lie. It isn't good to lie or hurt people. Forgive me for my mistakes, God. Sustain me 'til I enter as a child of Israel. Amen.

***Body and Soul Alone***

I have a little to say,

So I'll state it and end it.

I was tired of a world that

Ignored a third of the person--the spirit,. While concerned with the body and soul. And so I turned to-to the Church,

Which was concerned with the spirit of man But it ignored two-thirds of his existence.

-----  
Tears are not happy companions.  
-----

Forgive me if I do not join in singing Your songs of joy and friendship and peace When I am sad

And have no friend

And live in a world of war,  
-----

I am lonely

And afraid of friendship

Because I am afraid of "imposing."

Would to God,

That some angel or saint

See through me,

Befriend me,

And force me to be honest

About God, About life, About love.

But do miracles still happen?

## ***No Return***

It is Jan. 5, 1974 and almost 9 p.m. As I lay here writing this, I do not know why I do so but here goes:

As it stands, now, I do not foresee any great possibility that I will ever enter back fully into the Christian faith. It seems, in fact, almost unreal to me now. Yet, I also hope somehow that I will. The thing is, unless something akin to a miracle trans-forms me, the mere proclamation of faith on my part would not make it a reality in my life. I would not disdain such a miracle, yet don't expect it. My big hassle now is who to talk with about it; it seems that everyone is either understandably one-sided or just as unsure as I. My final decision, the possible miracle, may be decided by the first one who befriends me.

## ***Godward***

(2-1-74)

To believe in

Justice

Mercy Truth Hope

Faith Love

And Beauty

Is not to deny that injustice, cruelty, lies; despair, distrust, hate and ugliness exist in the world:

But rather it is to determine to go in a Godward direction.

## ***To Believe in Truth***

I don't want to write long, just to note that about five years have passed since the first entries of this envelop were made. I see some cycles. They are frightening. I have departed from the Christian faith, it seems. Again. I am tired of cycles. Belief, disappointment, doubt, resignation, hope, faith reinforcement, belief...cycles. I think it would be hard to renew myself again to the Christian faith--I am almost afraid. Afraid that again I will feel let down and fall again. Show me the outreach of love. I am afraid to reach out. Befriend me. I have no friends. Lonely, I need counsel. If Christ, his body the church, offers love, friendship and counsel in outreach, something is wrong. More than all, I felt let down by lack of them.

I suppose that I have already long transgressed the point of spiritual heresy. I do not know now that Jesus "is the Christ". That no doubt eliminates me from the name of Christian. It does not especially matter how it happened, it is, and God knows it is. Christians will no doubt call me blind, and they may be right, for if they truly see, as I once believed that I saw, then they have great joy and hope, and I am doomed to living death in hell. If it is to serve God's justice, then it is right to be so. God ultimately is what matters. To cease to praise Him for beauty and love and all things wonderful, to deny His continuing presence and concern among the sons of men is to turn from the greatest and most transcendent reality. Hear O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one--Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might-- To love the one with our all leaves no room for compromise. But what does it mean? No doubt many things to many people throughout many years. To me it speaks this:

To love God with all our heart is to set our spirits in communion with Him. It is my conviction that the God who constructed an entire universe from the tiny atom, does indeed care for the individual and indeed listens to his heartfelt prayers. It is the soul, the spirit, which is so like God in that it eludes the perception by physical sensors and to each person it is unique in that it is available only as a reality to himself. To him who is awake to God, it is the eyes of the soul which perceive the divine.

I find myself in great struggle to comprehend why I should leave happiness behind simply because I know I no longer believe in it. The big question is what it means to believe in truth. What a problem! Those two words may drive me insane. Believe. Truth. What mystery is contained in their depths! Believe--is it more than intellectual acceptance? Is it not rooted deeply in the heart? What then if the heart denies it? What if the soul rebels? What is truth? The question of the ages. He said that He was the truth, but 'til I grasp something of what truth is--what difference does it make?

I believe that God is.

I believe that God is good;

that His being embodies truth.

# Christianity Abandoned

1974

## *Pondering Life*

2- 6- 74

It seems I am once again trying the impossible, will I never cease? Trying to ponder life, to lay hold of its meaning, to grasp its significance. 6:30 awake, dress, eat, 8:10 leave for work--12:30 lunch, 1:05 back, 5:00 leave, 5:30 home, change, 6:00 eat, do dishes, 7:00 play a little music, sing a bit, 7:30 study, 9:30 get ready for sleep---day after day: And one prays for the weekends, but they go as quickly as they came, and the routine goes on. If only there was time for love, friendship, caring. If only more time to give and take between one another.

Why am I sad? Surely it is not all routine, and God &'-least gives each day to be something new. And each sunrise and sunset is a unique handiwork by Him. If I seek beauty, surely I find it. But still I am not satisfied.

I am lonely, but not alone in loneliness. I am uncertain, but so are many others. So, I ask the impossible: WHY?

## ***My Course in Life***

2-15-74

I am undecided yet as to which course I should take in life. It seems that I am still very young and the world is a very unfamiliar place. The world is the place of my residence though, and of God's choosing, not of my own. So, as I live here, it is best that I live to His laws.

Faith, God, belief, such big words, such big meaning and great depth in them. I fear I have all but abandoned completely the Christian faith. I am not certain now what faith I am, but this:

God is one. He is good.

His character is one of justice, compassion, love, mercy, truth, righteousness and Holiness.

God is to be praised, and alone to be praised. He is the Creator of the heavens and earth, the giver and sustainer of all life, the provider of every good thing. He is the author of beauty, the architect of splendor. God is the strength of all claims to power.

It seems to me the; man's highest call in life is the praise and adoration of God and to be a blessing to Him. God may be adored in words and worship, but I believe He is blessed by the doing of righteousness among the sons of men for His sake.

One of the objections I encountered toward Christianity was surely not in its depth. Sinners do not live by faith, the just live by faith. Anyone who tries to tell me he can willingly go away from good to evil-and live, I do not believe.

I pray often that I might grow to share the value systems of the prophets, to require of myself perfection. Yet I do not know that I ever will--it is a level high above me.

There is within me a desire to follow God in faith, in the true faith. I can ask only that He guide me to it, or back to it. I know that God is great over all and able to do it in my life.

May my heart perceive His love.

May my hands do righteousness unto Him. May my eyes be opened to His truth. May my lips and spirit ever praise Him.

Blessed is the Lord God. Blessed is the King of Israel. Blessed is He forever. Amen.

## ***Last Chance to Return***

2-17-74

Why am I writing again, putting in print what is best left in the language of the heart? Perhaps it is because it is important. As my life passes day by day, there is not opportunity to relive moments past, and feelings are most easily forgotten. Writing keeps a bit of them through the seas of time so that I can remember, so that if it should be that another read these they will see a dimension in my life they would not see anywhere else.

Last night I fell on my knees and prayed that Jesus would be lord of my life, that I would give it to him, that I wanted to return.

I was sincere in all that and the rest. I wanted to return to him, to return to the messianic reality of the Christian faith. But yet there is no reality to me in it. I know now that I could return to the Christian faith only in pretense. My heart is not in it. In all sincerity I have sought to return, but cannot. The whole situation is confusing to me. Intellectually everything is in pretty good order, if the intellect was the only thing I had to deal with I could be a Christian without much hassle. But there are deeper levels, the heart, the soul, the inner person. Emotionally I am torn. I see the possibility of meeting good friendly people in Christian circles. On the whole my standards and values and activities would be much like theirs. I know that I have shared good and beautiful times with Christians, and remember them with fondness. From some I have felt genuine warmth and love.

On the other hand, I have also felt the piercing pain of rejection from some of those same groups and individuals. It seems that as long as I was present in the "group" or the "fellowship" I was welcome and pretty much included. But outside the group, I was forgotten. When I left the group confused by inner struggles, there was not a single person who stopped by my place, or even phoned, to see me, to ask why I was gone. I felt lonely, and forgotten ,, and believed that genuine love would somehow be aware of a beloved's absence. To me it was false love or it was rejection, and I still am pained by it. I do not, however blame any single one of them on any single count, for if I was forgotten later, there was friendship within the group and that was beautiful, and I value them as friends for those times, and pray that some of those friendships may be revitalized once again.

Yet deeper within me there is an even bigger hurdle which lies between me and a return to the Christian faith. It is a difficult one to comprehend, let alone to describe in ink. Yet, I shall try. Sometime I became very attached to the Jewish faith, perhaps through friend-ships, perhaps through reading. I developed a faith, or rather it grew in me, in the Hebrew God, the one God of all the universe`. -Some-thing within me responded to that faith, to God. I read more, continuing to seek a greater insight into the dimensions of Jewish history. In time it was as though I became a sort of Jew myself in outlook, perspective, even emotional responses. At one point I was seriously deciding to convert, but did not because I became *involved* as a Christian. Yet all through my Christian life, I fought with relics of my contact with the Jewish faith. The oneness of God versus the concept of the Trinity was my greatest hassle, another was the differing concepts of the Messiah.

Sometimes I would not be troubled with these conflicts, entering fully into "the faith" and Christian worship. Yet, these times of peace, were not permanent, but temporary, and again-and again I would find myself questioning, seeking, troubled by the conflict within, and afraid to tell anyone, or rather feeling there was really no one to talk with. At such times, as at others, and as now I could not praise Jesus without feeling a profound impact on my conscience as though I were praising, not God alone, but another, setting up another Lord besides the One God. I was uncomfortable, terribly so. At such times, as now, I would cease from the praising of Jesus and pray to, and offer praise to The One Loving God of Israel, the Creator of the universe, and I would feel, well, right about it. What more can I say? I don't know. It is with that conflict greatly affecting me that I sought last night to return to the lordship of Jesus, I felt somehow like I was betraying God by doing it, yet also felt that if faith meant to ignore that conflict and seek the Christian messiah as my own despite it, I would sincerely try. I wanted a transformation within, a renewal to the Christian faith, a change of attitude, in any case at least a freeing me from the struggle of pitting God against Jesus who is in Christian faith God incarnate. But it did not occur. I am aware of precisely nothing occurring. What now? Shall I practice the Christian faith in lip service while my soul feels in conflict with faith in the Lord God himself? It must not be! It is commanded that I love God with all my heart, soul, and might. Lastly one may ask why it is I even seek a return to Christianity. There are a couple of reasons. First, nearly three years of my life were dedicated to it, in some of the most fundamental and extreme ways. Its impact shall always be with me, its imprint certainly indelible. I was, despite the conflicts, certain that what I believed was true. Now I am not certain either that they are or are not. I want to know if I was right then. If I was, then now I am in the wrong, and don't want to be, for if I am, I may be going to Hell. I take the possibility seriously, but the threat of Hell is not enough' to overcome my desire to be certain that I am praising God alone, truly, as He is, and honestly, and not another.

Another reason, frankly what I want to return to the faith of Christianity is the pressure from fear of encounter with Christians who knew me as one. How do I even begin to try to explain to them? I do not desire to hurt them, to "let them down" somehow, but neither is it right for me to lie to them, offering the pretense of being "in the flock" when I am not.

Perhaps another reason is even that I don't seem to have any place much else to go. As a Christian I at least felt situated.

To sum up, I don't feel that I can make some sort of pretentious, however determined return to the Christian faith until the deep conflicts in my soul resolve themselves so I can do so honestly and without reservation. If I am to be a Christian, I must, and have told God this too, be as certain that Jesus is the Messiah and God incarnate as I am that God is One and the Creator of the Universe and all it contains. And I must believe in the former as I believe the latter, in my heart, deeply, profoundly, to such a point that denial of it is blasphemy to me.

All that will never be achieved by argument, however well founded and sincere. It will be accomplished by a transformation by God Himself. I believe

He can do that. I am willing for Him to do so. If he did become a man in Jesus, I believe he shall so transform me. If it was not so then he will not.

## **Choice Praise**

**2-21-74**

May I never stray but ever walk the Way, In the everlasting light of Thy day

In as much as it is in the power of any human to do so by the mercy of God, I resolve to live. I may never be great, famous, rich or beautiful, or highly praised. I do not scorn these things, but they are not the reasons for my choice of life. I choose to live, be-cause it is only a living person who can judge with justice, living hands which can work good, a soul alive that can pass on mercy, compassion and love, I choose to live so that it may be seen in my life that which is glory to God. To others may see His greatness and give Him glory. I choose to live to praise God. I choose to live unto God.

A great and mighty king is my God.

A holy Lord, there is none like Him.

He who dwells on high

Author of light and life.

I will praise the name of God in peace and in strife.

Praise ye the Holy King who reigns

Freeing the captive hearts from their chains.

Praise is due unto the God on high

Who wipes the tears from those who cry.

I love you, my Lord, my King.

My praise of you I gladly bring.

## ***Dawn or Dusk?***

3-12-74

Is it dawn or dust?

Have I acknowledged my rebirth or death?

In so few words I described a major change in my life. Faith--that's the central word.

My decision was to decide what I had faith in.

No longer a Christian, But I was so sure---I thought.

But faith is deeper than intellect.

If it does not root itself in the heart,

Of what use is it?

I could not abide in a "whereas" faith.

"Amen" faith was the end of my search.

Heart faith.

To declare that God is One. That He alone is Lord. He is our salvation.

These things I do not doubt.

They are a part of me. The Trinity I doubted. So with much prayer,

And meditation, I turned.

Turned Once again away from the Faith

Which Christians call the true faith.

Perhaps, as some of them might say,

I am going to Hell.

If that must be God's judgment,

So it must be.

But I doubt it will be.

## ***He Alone***

I Do not believe because I cannot honestly believe--in Jesus. I want to be honest with God,  
Because I believe He alone is God, And because,  
I love Him.

3-16-74-

### Tiring Conflict

I am tired of this conflict.

The glorious freedom has become a prison.

The answer has become my biggest question.

Even the well meant love from friends is confusing.

they are all so sure I must remain a Christian,

As I am equally sure I cannot. Faith must come from the heart. not from the intellect only.

Or intellect and emotion together. But how do I explain that to them? How to make them believe me. When I say I do not believe In the one whom they insist I do:

God, yes.

Jesus, no.

God forever, then, now, always.

Jesus once, not now, I don't expect again.

It would be "easier" to go on pretending that I believe. But is putting on a front, faith?

Is it not rather a lie?

I am open, ready to be transformed by God.

And have told Him so.

Now it must be up to Him, not me. That's the best, really,

Because I'm sure He knows What He's doing,

A lot better than I.

## ***Meaning***

3-17-74

I write this entry because it is important, despite the late hour. Tonight I read V. Frankl's Mans Search for Meaning. I am uplifted. In a real sense restored. He taught me something: That I can choose to have meaning in my life. That my life, totally unique and individual has a meaning likewise unique, that suffering itself has meaning, as does grief, as fear, and so on. I learned too, that the best way to combat a problem may be to try to make it happen, but to do so in such a way that you are putting yourself above it, as curing insomnia by trying to stay awake, or conquering fear by trying to feel afraid. All this is a challenge for me, a challenge to live, to discover meaning and to pursue it. I don't know where this will lead, but I do know that God will be there, ready to instruct me if I really need it. I feel freer now. Better. I am not afraid or ashamed even to cry, or laugh...or dream. or believe.

"I called to the Lord from my narrow prison, and He answered me from the freedom of space."

V. Frankl

## ***Wrestling with Fear***

4-17-74

Time and time again, I seem to be asking myself just who I am. Somehow it seems that the person who should know me best is really myself. I live with m\*self all day every day of my life, and know what I think as well as what I do. But knowing myself is one thing. Understanding myself is quite another. Why, sometimes ask myself, does there always seem to be such a wide gap between my ideals and the reality which I make for myself. Why, when my dreams are so very bold am I afraid to step out to make them real. Time and time again I wrestle with that same word, fear. Fear, I don't even really know what it is, much less how to overcome it. Sometimes I am convinced that I am even afraid to love. Afraid, maybe, because I am not certain just what love is, what it requires of me. Perhaps I am afraid also of myself, of being alone with only me. When I am with another person, under some responsibility to another, I can become a very different person than when I am alone. Perhaps that is because others can see in me what I cannot see in myself and draw it out, make it cease to be a frightening thing. I see in myself a real need to be dependent, I can lead, but only if I myself am also being led. But I am afraid of imposing, of doing something which is not pleasing to the very ones to whom I turn. I am frightened that I may do something which will cause them harm. And then I do nothing. It seems that I do not really trust myself to be responsible for another. That is, surely, why it is so difficult for me to love. I do not know how to get out of this "prison" of loneliness. I can only pray that someone will first love me in a very real and meaningful way, patiently giving me time to learn how to love, to care, and then that I can return that love. I need someone to counsel me, to help me understand myself. But what I am most afraid of is that no one shall

## ***The Struggle***

Today I make yet another entry into this file of thoughts. After once again looking through the many thoughts I have recorded over the last few years, I can see oscillation, conflict and resolution often bringing only more question. Perhaps it isn't such a bad thin however, nor a trait in which I am alone. Rather, it would seem that only the specifics vary on what is a universal pulsation between the person and the force of life itself. In my case, the struggle was to set myself in relationship to God and man. Perhaps it is better to say that IS the struggle, for I have not ended it yet.

It has not been so easy in many ways, but I think the hardest part for me through it all is the fear of revealing to anyone just where I'm at. Especially to Christians, I think, because I somehow don't think they would either accept or understand my position. In reality, I guess, I don't understand it either. Maybe that is just One of the mysteries of life: That it's not the destination of our lives that really matters, but the way we travel. So, God willing, I shall travel this road of life, always seeking to make it better for those who follow me, and to do what I can to lessen the load of fellow wayfarers. The destination of this road I shall learn only on my arrival.

## **Summer 1974**

Sometimes I like to stop and Watch people. Watch them doing their unsuspecting activities. Often carefree; especially here, at the fair. Just walking, maybe forgetting deeper meanings. Today though; it's somehow different to see the people. It all seems so silent, somehow. It's like no words are important--like the sounds do not penetrate into the walls of meaning. Silence, how can so much activity be described as silence? Yes.

Maybe I demand too much from people, sensing the inequity which separates the luxury of our society and the poverty of the many others. Maybe expect too much of people: Expecting them to remember the kindness of God in their doings. Yet, it seems as if the people have forgotten...

Where do our footsteps lead tip? Only in circles, only to journey and to return? It's as though life consists of meaning only in deed in love. It is not where we are, but who we are, and how we live.

And looking upon this people....I wonder how that is...

## ***An Invitation***

7-1-74

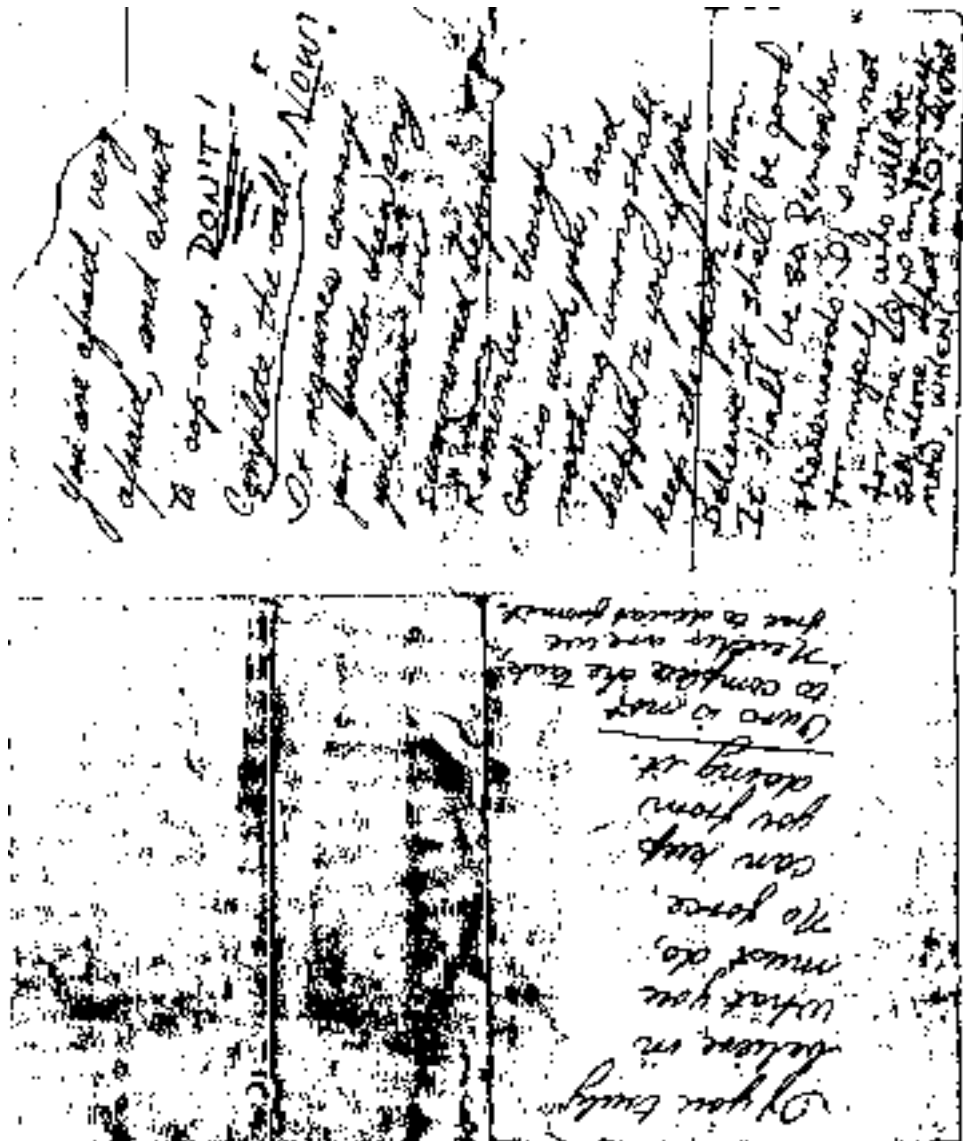
It's morning and I have a little time before work to write. Some-thing new is happening, I think, and I dare to look upon it in hope. As I have already written, I am no longer a Christian. Now I am pondering the possibility of a return to pre-Christian days, when I had decided to convert to Judaism. In many ways, though, I am a shy person and quite afraid to jump into the midst of this people on my own. Yet I trust God, and it seems that God is answering that <sup>g</sup>ust. Last night the Cantor himself invited me to come to services at Temple. I will go. It was not necessary to say that I had gone there before. The invitation was new and very good to hear. Now what I pray for is this: that I may be able to tell them, those at the synagogue, that Z, too, want to worship the only God there is, the God of Israel. I want to tell them where I have been, spiritually, and where I am and want to go. It Wk has been a long journey around the world of faiths for me. Now I want to come home to where I've always sensed I belonged: Under the shadow of the wings of the God of Israel, caressed in the arms of our Lord. May God in His loving-kindness make it so.

# A Slip of Paper

7-11-74

I have just found a slip of paper. It was lying innocently on my dresser. Maybe it fell out of my purse sometime. What was it? I picked it up, unfolded it, read it in disbelief. I wrote it four years ago. It was a note to myself. to see it again, to see it now, I just stared, almost in shock.

I wrote that note when I was in college. The note refers to a call insisting that I make it. The call? The call was one I desperately wanted to make to the Rabbi, to tell him I wanted to convert, to find out how. The fear was too great, however, and so, I never called. Between then and now much has transpired. I became a Christian, a Jesus-Person, and a lot of other "characters" in the Christian drama. Then I left that faith. Now I again look toward Judaism as the only faith I can embrace with my whole heart, soul, and strength, and now I find that note. It should have been lost, gone, but here it is again. Is it a voice from the past, or a command from the present? That matters little. The real question is whether I shall heed it this time, or if fear will again be the life depriving victor.



## ***To Become a Jew***

8-4-74

Again I approach the paper with only the desire to write, without knowing what I want to write about. Lately I've been typing up, all my writings. Now I almost feel like this is the last chapter. I doubt it will be the last, but certainly it is part of a new one. There is something new ahead of me: conversion to Judaism. I am certain now about this, yet at the same time, I am very afraid. Many times I ask, "Why am I afraid?" But I can never answer that question. Yet, what is even more puzzling is "Why become a Jew?" Maybe I am really afraid because of that question, because I can't answer it. The answer is there, but it seems so deep inside me that the attempt to express it only fails. Anyway, I want to try. First there is God. I love God, the One God of the whole universe, the God of Israel. I want to do what is right in His eyes. I want my love toward Him to be expressed in the reality of my life. Secondly, there is community, I can-not live alone. I want to live my life in the midst of a people I can love and feel a part of. And Jews are such a people to me. There is also a rich and wise past from which to draw strength for living in the present. So, here are two reasons for converting, and though only two, I must ask: If God, and People, and not enough reason to commit my life to the Jewish faith, then no number of reasons besides, shall ever be enough.

But these two reasons are enough. That is why I will convert. A new chapter is about to begin.

## ***Something New***

Something new is happening that I must write down. So often I've written in moments of fear, afraid of myself, my faith, my world. Now I write because the fear is gone. Apprehensions of f unknown events ahead have not all faded, but fear has. Now I am sure, and unafraid. I am sure I want to convert to the Jewish faith. Certain. No longer am I plagued by the emotional backlash which draws me toward a Christian past. I remember that past, but I no longer want to go back. I only want to become a member of the Jewish people. When? Perhaps that is the most difficult question before me now. Yet, I am not afraid of that question either. Time is God's business. Response is mine,

8-9-74

Already I have spoken of a new chapter in this autologue. I have spoken of response, timing, much more. Last Monday I asked the Rabbi about converting, when that would be possible. He responded that it would be after High Holy Days. That means about the beginning of October we can consider it more. It seems like a long time from now, but in fact it's only seven weeks, forty-nine days. Not so long really. I can wait, and use the time to study, to learn. There's no reason for me to begin the study of Judaism in ignorance.

So much for that; there's something else to say. Tonight I went to face a sort of challenges A group of Christian singers I had once sung with. They were very good, both as musicians and as evangelists. I would lie if I said I was unmoved. I was moved emotionally. Spiritually, it was difficult, too, because I remembered what it was like when I shared the singers' Christian convictions.

But still, I was apart from the religious conviction that they sang of, apart from the conviction that Jesus was God, I did not want to join their faith again, but I sought out meaning in their songs. Praise of God, devotion to God. These are important to me. They always will be. There were a couple of my friends singing with the group. Old friends from college. I didn't talk with them, because I had

to leave to get to Temple for service on time. I may see these friends tomorrow. What will I say to them? I can only be honest, I guess, and explain my new faith to them. Who knows what will develop---

The service tonight was good. It was inspiring, uplifting. I was only sorry to see it end.  
• Tomorrow I will also go to services either at morning, or evening, maybe both. I look forward to it. I would really like to go in the morning, but really, the lack of other women bothers me--if I go, I hope I am not the only one present.

I am tired, I am rambling. But never mind, I am sincere. Take it for what it is.

## ***Grant Us...***

9-8-74

Lord,

It isn't necessary to look hard to find many things wrong in the world, injustice, hate malice, bigotry, dishonesty, dishonor, and so much more. It's all around us, it's difficult to escape from it. Even idolatry is becoming more prevalent. And people are forgetting you. Ignoring You. Denying You. They ridicule our faith in You, yet they despair for lack of any faith. They berate your Law, but their standards (if indeed they have any) are nowhere near Yours in their sense of what is good. Truly we can see that the ways of the masses which surround us are not Your ways.

They are not the ways

we should follow. And, yet, sometimes we are drawn toward them, even into them.

We stray from the paths and precepts of your Torah and wink the ways of the peoples around us. We seek to make peace with the world by becoming like It.

But we acknowledge to You that we are wrong. If we turn away from your Torah, turn away from your direction in our lives, we are not at peace with ourselves.

And, if not at peace with ourselves, we can neither be at peace with the world, nor teach the world your peace. Grant us forgiveness, O Lord, that in turning back from our straying ways, we may by your mercy walk the paths of righteousness.

Lord, be merciful and grant us strength to persevere in justice and truth. Restore us by your love, that we may wholly devote our love, our lives to you.

Amen.

## **Challenges**

9-23-74

Life brings a multitude of new challenges, a plethora of opportunities, pitfalls, gains and losses.

Problems are as much of a part of life as Cloudy days. They cannot always be avoided, yet like cloudy days, it is not always so easy to tell--is the day cloudy, partly cloudy or fair? Is a situation a problem--and if so is the answer necessarily clear cut? What is our response to be? Our very lives--our living shapes our lives; our minds and hearts do not reflect situations and our responses to them like a finely ground mirror. It is more like the reflection off the surface of a pond. It depends on the conditions surrounding the pond. If I am wise in one circumstance, it like the pond is still, and I see, and see clearly without distortion, I am able to comprehend what I see and respond to it. If it is a stormy day I cannot always comprehend and I must act on instinct, on what I have learned in the past, not what I see in the present. Still, even in storm can be understanding if no more than a warning to take shelter. I see a rippling of the water, and no longer am able to understand the world it reflects, so I take shelter in a calm place. Likewise, when confusion in life makes me unable to comprehend it, I can take warning from the confusion, and turn to the place of calm, in the shadow if the wings of the Most High, in the shelter of the Lord. I can take refuge in His law, find wisdom in the prophets, and comfort in the psalms. Therein protected, I can endure the storm, and perhaps learn how next time to overcome it.