

THE DESERT OF THE SEA

This collection of songs was recorded for the purpose of witnessing to my childhood and school days pals. I was saved the winter following my high school graduation. It had been many years since I had last seen and witnessed to most of the old crowd and I wanted very much to let them know that the choice I had made to follow Jesus had been the right one. I sought to testify to them that the path I had taken had been blessed indeed. These songs were chosen from those I had written because they best told the tale of the life I had left them to pursue.

The Desert of the Sea was recorded at Slip Shot Studios in Homer City, Pennsylvania. It was mastered by Bill Citeroni who produced the work along with Ed Billock. Ed played guitar and sang harmonies on the record as did Charlie McEnytre. Charlie also played his harmonica and Bill put down some keyboard tracks. My wife, Lilian can also be heard on harmonies.

The style of the album is very simple. These are folk tunes with strong melodies.

JESUS KNOWS MY NAME

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

In the Bible God said they would not understand
Friends they would mock, and then turn away
But there is a foundation, and it standeth sure
For my Lord heard the words I once prayed.

Jesus, He knows my name
In a world ever-changing He's always the same.
Others may question and doubt and condemn
But Jesus, He knows my name.

How often I'm met with words bitter to taste
By those who must feel they know inward parts.
But Jesus, my Savior, knows I've claimed His blood.
His peace is the strength of my heart.

Jesus, He knows my name
In a world ever-changing He's always the same.
Others may question and doubt and condemn
But Jesus, He knows my name.

Now I'm no longer the talk of the town
I've no longer access to fortune or fame
But the things I've forsaken I count them no loss
For Jesus Christ, He knows my name.

Jesus, He knows my name
In a world ever-changing He's always the same.
Others may question and doubt and condemn
But Jesus, He knows my name.

THE SECRET OF THE LORD

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

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

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

How do the bones grow in the womb
Before the baby is born?
How does the whippoorwill know when to sing
Or the morning star to greet the dawn.
Who knows the way of a snake on a rock
Of the eagle that rides on the wind?
And who understands the a poor wretched man
By the grace of God is born again?

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him
He teaches them the truth each day.
The secret of the Lord is with those that walk near Him
Learning about His love along the way.

Consider the ant, diligent, strong
Working with none to guide
Or the spider that clings to the walls of a king
Where no valiant man would dare be spied.
Who knows the way of a ship on the sea
Or the way of a man with a maid?
And who understands the law's every demand
In the blood of Christ is fully paid.

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him
He teaches them the truth each day.
The secret of the Lord is with those that walk near Him
Learning about His love along the way.

I SEE A ROARING LION

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

No longer do I marvel at the beauty of the lights
The sepulcher is polished and disguised
But I know what lies beyond the glitter and the glow
The back beat ever muffles terror's cries

Oh I see a roaring lion; and he's looking to devour you
My boy, won't you flee unto the light
The devil He's prowling this street tonight.

Sonny's got the shipment. He's the travel agent here
Can send you where you never want to go
Smoother than any viper, the venom from his lips
Will con you to the short end of the score

Oh I see a roaring lion; and he's looking to devour you
My boy, won't you flee unto the light
The devil He's prowling this street tonight

Pandora waits for you boy, and her skirt slit up the side
Will hook your eye and poison your hungry bones
A painted nail is pointed, with a finger she draws you near
Yet you'll find within her spell you're so alone

Oh I see a roaring lion; and he's looking to devour you
My boy, won't you flee unto the light
The devil He's prowling this street tonight.

The master of deception with his oils and with his brush
Has painted this old graveyard in pastels
And the colors will send you spinning till your senses he controls
Boy, keep from where that lion ever dwells.

Oh I see a roaring lion; and he's looking to devour you
My boy, won't you flee unto the Light.
The devil He's prowling this street tonight.

A WAY IN A MANGER

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

Scripture hath concluded all men under sin
And the law once given held no hope therein
For all of a man's righteousness never could avail
His every effort to atone, it could only fail.
Blood was needed A sacrifice
Only perfection Could pay the price
Who'd have ever thought
That God would make a way in a manger.

Cursed is every one and all who continue not
In all things written in the law, each tittle and each jot
For Adam fell and thus his seed, his seed became corrupt
And from the heart of every man rebellious streams erupt.
Fount of cleansing Was the need
There was none Of human seed.
Who'd have ever thought
That God would make a way in a manger.

In the region and the shadow of darkness all did dwell
And every man at his best state is vain and bound for hell.
No one moral. No one just. No one worthy. None to trust.
All men guilty. All men lost. All men blind among human host.
Full redemption Blessed prize
Hope of glory Lasting life
Who'd have ever thought
That God would make a way in a manger.

THE PATIENCE SONG

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

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

God's people were in bondage. Egypt was the place.
But in the sandy desert Moses sat.
Forty years a-wondering' just when his day would come
Oh my friend can you imagine that.

Well you may be nobody, and then you may be great
But everybody's gonna have to wait.

David was anointed with oil upon his head,
Yet on the run in caves he had to hide.
He had praise and honor. He had mighty men.
Just think what running did to that man's pride.

Well you may be nobody, and then you may be great
But everybody's gonna have to wait.

Jesus brought a message. A kingdom He would preach.
The whole world sat in darkness till He came.
Still He was building houses for close to thirty years.
Yes even for the Christ it was the same.

Well you may be nobody, and then you may be great
But everybody's gonna have to wait.

Now in an upper room there was gathered quite a host
One hundred and twenty folks in all.
They were there for many days continuing in prayer
Just hoping for the Holy Ghost to fall.

Well you may be nobody, and then you may be great
But everybody's gonna have to wait.

Who are you man or lady, that's called to go and tell
May as well accept what I repeat.
There's a great inheritance, great victories to be won,
But God can't make you strong until you're weak.

So you may be nobody, and then you may be great
But everybody's gonna have to wait.

I'LL BE PRAISING YOU

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

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

This song was composed during the summer of 1989. Included here is the bridge which was not used on the Desert project but was used in the version of this song on *In The Beginning Was The Word*.

I'll be praising You when I see no cause for cheer.
I'll be praising You when the path has grown so drear.
When the night does fall And the mountain wall
 Stands before to block my view,
When I cannot see Proof You care for me
 I'll be praising You.

I'll be praising You when I'm standing all alone.
I'll be praising You when evil fortune I have known.
When my gold does rust And my prayers they just
 Don't ever seem to make it through,
To Your throne of grace To Your holy place
 I'll be praising You.

I'll be praising You when the crops die in the field.
I'll be praising You when the fruit trees bear no yield.
When my hopes and dreams Fly away and it seems
 A few of the promises weren't true,
When my joy is gone And I can't see beyond
 I'll be praising You.

Show me, show me some direction*
Show me, show me some way out
Give me, some cure for my infection
Before I'm eat up with the canker of this doubt

I'll be praising You when You've destroyed everything of worth.
I'll be praising You when You shake the planet earth.
When the fire does burn Everywhere I turn
 Purging everything right through
With the smell of smoke On my easy yoke
 I'll be praising You.

I DON'T HAVE TO GO TO KNOW

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

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

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

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

I hear men speak so fancifully – a teardrop in their eye –
about a home they look unto somewhere beyond the sky.

Well, I was long in darkness, but Jesus gave me sight.
So I don't have to go to know, the Lamb He is the Light.

I hear men speak of brighter days when no more tears shall fall
For God, who dwells in saved men's hearts,
shall wipe away them all.

But I've a friend who comforts whenever I'm distressed.
So I don't have to go to know, Jehovah is my rest.

I hear men talk of golden streets as though they are amazed
And wonder at the sounds they'll hear
when Christ is truly praised.

But I've a heart which once did moan in agony and gloom.
So I don't have to go to know, there's joy beyond the tomb.

I hear men speak of sitting down and speaking face to face
With the author of all truth, and He who saves by grace.

But I've a friend so trusted, who's with me to each end.
So I don't have to go to know, the Most High is my friend.

I hear men say that war shall end, how that thrills their soul,
To think that ne'er a shot shall sound

While all the ages roll.

But long a battle rage-ed within my selfish heart
So I don't have to go to know that peace He doth impart.

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I hear men say that someday soon they will be going home
And no more shall their weary feet
This pilgrimage have to roam.
But Jesus lives within this one born sentenced unto hell.
So I don't have to go to know that I've a place to dwell.

I hear men speak of no more death, as if it were far away.
I hear them marvel at this truth within the songs they play.
Yet, I was born a sinner and Jesus paid my price.
So I don't have to go to know
He gives eternal life.

I'M SO GLAD

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

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

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

There's a multitude of souls on the broad road
Who, sadly, don't know their way
And ambition for things that they never have seen
Takes them farther from Jesus each day.
I've seen violence and strife in the city –
Folks who don't know who lives next door.
But the saddest of all
is the mamas and dads
That don't know the kids on their floor.

But I'm so glad that I know Jesus
I'm so glad that He knows me.
I'm so glad that He walks beside me
To keep me company.
We can sit and talk it over and He'll tell me how
That He wants me to be.
Oh I'm so glad that I know Jesus
And I'm glad that He knows me.

Well sufficient for today is the evil
Of tomorrow there's no guarantee
And what may or may not lie beyond the next dawn
Is really no matter to me.
I can't trouble myself with the questions
That have answers no mortal can know.
I'll just trust in the Lord
in the light of His word,
As moment by moment I go.

Oh I'm so glad that I know Jesus
I'm so glad that He knows me.
I'm so glad that He walks beside me
To keep me company.
We can sit and talk it over and He'll tell me how

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That He wants me to be.
Oh I'm so glad that I know Jesus
And I'm glad that He knows me.

In the rear view if I stopped for the turning'
Would I see all the ones left behind
The friends and the foes who got tangled up
In discovering' their own heart and mind.
Ah they tell me I can't know their pleasure
As I toil with my hand on a plow.
Though I know but in part
there's such peace in my heart
that nothing can stop me right now.

Yes I'm so glad that I know Jesus
I'm so glad that He knows me.
I'm so glad that He walks beside me
To keep me company.
We can sit and talk it over and He'll tell me how
That He wants me to be.
Oh I'm so glad that I know Jesus
And I'm glad that He knows me.

Well I'm pressing along to my homeland
And continually I seem to pray
That every time that old sun comes up
This would be that golden day
When my troubles and labors are ended
And I enter into my rest
When finally I know
In the way I am known
The One who has known me the best.

Oh I'm so glad that I know Jesus
I'm so glad that He knows me.
I'm so glad that He walks beside me
To keep me company.
We can sit and talk it over and He'll tell me how
That He wants me to be.
Oh I'm so glad that I know Jesus
And I'm glad that He knows me.

ANY MORE ALIVE

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

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

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

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

If you came unto Your own
And Your own were just like me,
Would they receive you?
If you spoke unto the multitude
And the multitude was like me,
Would they believe you?
Am I any more alive than they.

If You shone Your light in the darkness
And the darkness was like me
Would it comprehend?
If you told your disciples to follow You
And they followed You like I do
Would you be alone in the end.
Am I any more alive than they.

Oh I hear men boast of their righteousness,
I must confess,
I've a different point of view.
I hear men talk about all that they do for God
I find it odd
They've so little to say
About all the things that
You alone can do.

If you bore a people to praise Your name
And they praised You like I do,
Would the rocks have to cry?
If you sought a righteous sacrifice
And every man was just like me,
Would Your Son have to die?
Am I any more alive than they.

JESUS THE NAME

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

Jesus the name that excelleth all others
Name of our confidence, name of our praise
Name on the lips of the child with its mother
And of the saint at the close of his days.

Jesus the name that excelleth all others
Name of the grace that once dwelt among men.
Name of the Lamb that was slain for our sinning
Name of our hope, our redeemer, our friend

Jesus the name that excelleth all others
Spoken through tears when the heart it is torn.
Name of all comfort, rest and consolation
Name that for ages our sorrows has borne.

Jesus the name that excelleth all others
Name that is whispered in effectual prayer.
Name that bears witness our heavenly Father
Knows every need, each desire and each care.

Jesus the name that excelleth all others
Name before which every knee soon shall bend
Name that is worshipped by all things enduring
Name ever holy. World without end.

WHY DON'T YOU TURN

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

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

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

When your pride is stripped and scattered by the tyrant winds of time.
When the mount of aspiration's proved too difficult to climb
And you turn in disappointment, longing only to forget
The failure and the emptiness which selfish aims beget

When the lady, who lay by your side is lying' with your friend
And the man in whom you did confide betrayed you in the end
And no one stoops to lift you as you fall broken at their feet
Then you find only ice, and harlotry, but no help on the street

When the needle plays a phantom dance upon your trembling arm
And you find the dealer's promised highs were only false alarms
How the craving drives you lunatic. You'd kill, but you'd rather die
Yet you curse the one deliverer and damn the God on high

Oh in this world of stocks and bonds where gain is turned to loss
Midst empty stares and live night mares the shadow of the cross
Falls silently upon the hearts of poor, deluded souls
Who scorn the path of grace and truth for make-believe paroles.

Why don't you turn, Turn to Jesus, in your need and in your grief
When in pleasures and in playthings you have found no sure relief
From the fear and the doubt which cripples
from the constant inner strife
Oh why can't you turn to Jesus and find Him, to be, the life.

ALL THAT REMAINS

For our second CD we tried to expand the sound. Ed and Charlie were back with their guitars. Lilian did some work with her mandolin. Stephanie Novakovic lent her considerable talents on the keyboards. Bryan Reese added some fine bass lines and Wendy Smith joined the girls on harmonies.

As it turned out, we tried to do more than our limited time in the studio allowed. The results were some very good songs, and some which were obviously left in various stages of completion.

Ed Billock recorded and produced the record in beautiful Shaelocta, Pennsylvania over five long, cold and snowy days in February, 2002.

This project was aimed at Christians. We sought to use songs from my collection that would edify and uplift them while magnifying the Lord Jesus.

THE EMPTY TOMB

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

Guitars: Ed Billock, Charlie McEntyre Piano: Stephanie Novakovic
Flute: Wendy Sowers Backing Vocals: Lilian Knox, Stephanie, Wendy Smith

I realize that He bore my transgressions
And I know that He bled for my sin
And the cross lifted high was essential
Eternal salvation to win.
But 'twas not until three days passing
Brought news from the garden so grand
That the one who had died was arisen
To give life to the poor sons of man.

I believe Jesus died. I believe that Jesus cried,
It is finished, through Calvary's gloom.
But if the tale ended there I'd still be in despair.
My hope is the empty tomb.
My hope is the empty tomb.

Oh I know that the world will not look past
A great teacher who gave up the ghost.
But the death of a martyr, though noble,
Could never redeem human host.
Had faithful men laid the body away
And the stone remained sealed on the grave
Our souls would yet be without ransom,
With no victor with the power to save.

-c-

Oh the old brutal cross with its terror
Was the place where our sin debt was paid.
And there lifted up from His own earth
The Lord Jesus our offering was made.
But the sun was gone dark and refused to shine
The world's hope fell to blackness of night
But the rising of Jesus come morning
Proved His promise that He was the Light.

COME AWAY

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

Guitars: Ed Billock

Mandolin: Lilian Knox

Bass: Bryan Reese

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Stephanie, Wendy

Come away from the world for a time if you would
Come away from the world for a time cause it's good
To be separated unto the Lord.

Come away from the world for a time if you would
Come away from the world for a time cause you should
Be separated unto the Lord.

He made a way, through the veil of His flesh,
into the holy of holies for me.
He made a way, when He died His great death,
that in the presence of God I might be.

Come away from the world for a time while He's near
Come away from the world for a time do not fear
To be separated unto the Lord.

Come away from the world for a time while He's near
Come away from the world and be of good cheer
Be separated unto the Lord.

He made a way through the shedding of blood
into the throne room of mercy for me
He made a way, when He rose from the dead,
that a true child of God I might be.

Come away from the world for a time if you would
Come away from the world for a time cause it's good
To be separated unto the Lord.

JESUS, WONDERFUL FRIEND

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

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

Classical guitar: Ed Billock Keyboards: Stephanie Novakovic

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Stephanie, Wendy

Jesus, wonderful friend whom have I beside thee
Jesus, wonderful friend in thy arms do hide me
Safe and secure I know I'll endure
Because thy love knows no end
Jesus, wonderful friend.

Jesus, wonderful friend see my frail condition
Jesus, wonderful friend be my great physician
Sick in my soul I long to be whole
In mercy my every ill mend
Jesus, wonderful friend.

Jesus, wonderful friend I bow my knees before thee
Jesus, wonderful friend in gentleness look o'er me
Lord you know my heart Its deep inward part
So I would not dare to pretend
Jesus, wonderful friend.

Jesus, wonderful friend when desire is calling
Jesus, wonderful friend keep my feet from falling
Full well I know That all snares below
Fly when my knees I do bend
Jesus, wonderful friend.

Jesus wonderful friend, hasten thy appearing
Jesus wonderful friend, I feel glory nearing
The darker the night The greater thy light
Shines when the blessing You send
Jesus wonderful friend.

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HANGING ON A TREE

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

Guitars: Ed Billock, Charlie McEntyre

Bass: Bryan Reese

Cello: Beth Anne Keibler

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Stephanie, Wendy

In the garden was a lady And a man that God did make.
They didn't have a lot of rules To keep or else to break.
All the loving Father asked Of that first family
Was that the couple please not eat The fruit from off that tree.
Hanging on a tree. Hanging on a tree.
The balance of eternity Was hanging on a tree.
Hanging on a tree. Hanging on a tree.
The balance of eternity Was hanging on a tree.

The serpent he was subtle Said, "Eve why you look so blue?
Did your maker try and keep The sweetest fruit from you?
Must be He don't love you. Oh lady, can't you see,
You'll be a wise old woman If you eat from off that tree."

c

All men fell that tragic day For Adam had no strength
To refuse his blinded lady. And so we find at length
That all of his descendants Are cursed eternally
Unless someone of sinless blood Could make a remedy.

-c-

Scripture calls a curse upon All who the law don't keep
And pictures every desperate man A lost and helpless sheep.
But cursed also is the one – How grand this thought to me –
Who gives His life for mortal man By hanging on a tree.

-c-

WHEN THE CLOUDS ALL ROLL AWAY

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

This was recorded late in the session, everyone was tired and we lost the rhythm we desired.

Guitars: Ed Billock, Charlie McEntyre

Bass: Bryan Reese

Piano: Stephanie Novakovic

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Stephanie, Wendy

Have you ever watched a sunset
with skies of gold and red
and marveled at the beauty of that sight?
As you looked did you ever wonder
if this could be the eve
when all God's children take their flight?
Oh, I find myself a looking every chance I get.
And I find myself a wondering if He's a coming yet.
Oh what a sight to vision Oh what a happy day
I sure hope I'm a looking' when the clouds all roll away.

Have you ever watched the gathering
of a storm from out the south
and watched the billows mounting in the sky?
Did it ever cross your mind, friend,
that before the hard rain fell
we could bid this sinful world goodbye?

Have you ever looked in the morning
at the hanging powder puffs
and felt that tingle running through your bones?
And you knew just any minute
You would hear Jesus call?
Well, brother, if you have you're not alone.

NOW EVERY DAY IS WORTH LIVING

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

Guitars: Ed Billock, Charlie McEntyre Bass: Bryan Reese

Harmonica: Charlie McEntyre

I wandered with no destination
And no hope of finding my way
Marching along the road to despair
I was farther from home each day
Then a light began to break through
The sin clouds that covered my heart
And Jesus said I'm the way, the truth
And a new life I can freely impart.

Jesus, oh Jesus, You're a wonderful Savior to me
And I never shall forget the day You came to set me free

Now every day is worth living
At night I can lay down to sleep
Knowing there's joy in the morning
Knowing that my soul You'll keep.

Now I walk on a narrow way
But the footing below me is sure
For in the perfect will of God
I know that my soul is secure.
A new song it rings in my heart now
And that Light it still leads on my way
I can hardly wait to see His face
When He comes on that glorious day.

Jesus, oh Jesus, You're a wonderful Savior to me
And I never shall forget the day You came to set me free.

Now every day is worth living
At night I can lay down to sleep
Knowing there's joy in the morning
Knowing that my soul You'll keep.

Now every day is worth living
At night I can lay down to sleep
Knowing there's joy in the morning
Knowing that my soul You'll keep.
Knowing there's joy in the morning
Knowing that my soul You'll keep.

THANK YOU LORD

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

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

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

Guitars: Ed Billock, Charlie McEntyre

Piano: Stephanie Novakovic

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Stephanie, Wendy

I feel a gentle breeze, blowing at my back
While I'm here upon my knees, beside this railroad track.
And as the gray mist falls
The first faint rays break onto the horizon.
But I fear no cold, for well I know
My waiting will soon be done.

I thank you Lord, for the wind
That goes blowing through the sky
Reminding me of Your blessed Spirit
That hearkens unto my cry.
And I thank you Lord, for the sun
Which each day shines down on me
Reminding me that the Light of the world
Came to set me free.

High on Calvary God gave His only Son.
There to ransom me, one lost and so undone.
Oh, such a tale no man could forge
I know it must be true.
One need not even open their eyes
Lord, it's so easy to see You.

-c-

The Music of James W. Knox

Oh what a blessed hour of fellowship was this.
Dear Lord to feel Thy power and Thy tenderness
One need only to live the dawn of another glorious day.
Cause when I start the morn with You
I'm sent singing' on my way.

-c-

PEACE IN THE VALLEY

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

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

Guitars: Ed Billock, Charlie McEntyre Bass: Bryan Reese

Harmonica: Charlie McEntyre

Day's finally breaking
All night I been thinking
'bout the snares that you lay at my feet.
No one's more certain
'bout the fact that you're hurting
than this boy who was raised on your street.
Did I become your foe when I told you the truth?
Did I shake you from your reverie?
Well curse me at will
Reject me, but still
There'll be peace in the valley for me.

Profligate lawyers
And angry destroyers
Followed my Lord as He walked.
Seeking' a reason
To hang Him for treason
They twisted His words as He talked.
And now that I've chosen to follow His steps
The same contradiction I see.
But I'll keep pressing' on
Cause I know before long
There'll be peace in the valley for me.

Making a living
And perpetual giving
Is the curse of the poor working man.
Socialist dreamers
And black tied redeemers
Take every third hour from his hand.
I see his rebellion. It boils in the pot
As he thinks how he wants to be free.
When that tea kettle blows
There'll be blood on your doors.
But there's peace in the valley for me.

The Music of James W. Knox

Practiced I love you
And I'm thinking' of you
From hearts that do shift like the sand.
Some so audacious
So purely outrageous
As to tell you that they understand
The depth of your sorrow and the height of your joy
And the people that you've had to be.
But your heart ain't my throne
So I'll go it alone
Till there's peace in the valley for me.

Public opinion
Holds quite a dominion
O'er foolish and fainthearted men.
Shaping' a nation
With vain conversation
And lies they set forth with their pen.
But I'd always thought you were much stronger than that
And I'd hoped that you'd stand with me.
Though your turning around
Will for sure bring me down
There'll be peace in the valley for me.

Nations are troubled
And price tags are doubled
So men steal what their money won't buy.
Heartless defenders
Those master pretenders
Will sell you some sure alibi.
Cause judgment is winked at the hearts of young men
Are full set to work wickedly.
But Jesus well said
There's a price on your head.
But there's peace in the valley for me.

Rumor and riot Men try to deny it
'neath robes, behind pulpits of gold.
But the wages of sin
Are fast coming' in
As sworn by the prophets of old.
I claim opposition to your plans and your aims.
It's a heavenly vision I see.
Your new world I abhor
With its famines and war.
And there's peace in the valley for me.

The Music of James W. Knox

There will be peace in the valley for me.
Peace in the valley for me.
When this wandering' man
Lies down with the Lamb
There'll be peace in the valley for me.

THE END OF THE WORLD

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

That afternoon I had time to take a walk in the woods and found this song along that pathway. The bridge was added a month later.

This is the most popular of the songs we have recorded.

I have included the alternate lyrics here. They are used in live renditions of the song.

Guitars: Ed Billock, Charlie McEntyre

Bass: Bryan Reese

Piano: Stephanie Novakovic

Cello: Beth Anne Keibler

Violin: Bryan Reese

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Stephanie, Wendy

She married a preacher and followed him out to the field
Then to the lust of his flesh he began to yield
He gave up his honor, his family, and all that he had
Now she's left alone With a guilt not her own
And a heart so incredibly sad.
She's been to the end of the world
She's been to the end of the world
She's been to the end of the world
And Jesus was there.

He knew, when he looked out the door and the sheriff was there
He was about to be handed a burden that he could not bear
He said, "Sir, I'm so sorry, but there's been a crash on the bend"
And he heard nothing more as he fell to the floor
And knew he'd never see his boy again.

He's been to the end of the world
He's been to the end of the world
He's been to the end of the world
And Jesus was there.

He knows all about sorrow.
He knows all about loss.
He knows all about sadness.
Look at Him there on the cross.
He knows all about heartache.
He knows all about grief.
He knows about betrayal
He will provide blessed relief.

The Music of James W. Knox

He was my best friend. He taught me so many ways
To preach and to witness, to pray and to give God the praise.
Without warning or reason the bright light inside him went black.
And I had the whole armor For the foe in my front
But none for the friend at my back.

I've been to the end of the world.
I've been to the end of the world.
I've been to the end of the world.
And Jesus was there.

Alternate verses

He knew, when he looked out the door at the officers there
He was about to be handed a burden that he could not bear
He said, "Sir, I'm so sorry, but there's been a death in the war"
And he heard nothing more as he fell to the floor
And wondered what all the fighting was for.

He was my teacher as I flew along in the daze
Preaching and singing and too young to know of his ways.
I see now the warnings that I did not heed in my youth,
But my best friend's knife, rescued my life
From the pride that could kill off the truth.

THY WORD

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

Guitars: Ed Billock, Charlie McEntyre

Mandolin: Lilian Knox

Bass: Bryan Reese

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Stephanie, Wendy

Harmonica: Charlie McEntyre

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

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

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

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

HOLY, HOLY JESUS

One night in early 1984 I was reading through Isaiah and came across the first line of this song. I am sure I had read it before but had never noticed what an awesome title that was for God. I began to think of other things He was called in the word and got quite a blessing. Over the next few days as I meditated upon the names and titles of our great God this melody formed to support those ideas.

We had a real hard time getting the timing right on the recording but the ending vocal Ed and Lilian worked out saved the piece.

Guitars: Ed Billock, Charlie McEntyre

Harpsichord: Stephanie Novakovic

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Stephanie, Wendy, Ed

I've heard Him called the high and lofty one who inhabiteth eternity
I've heard Him called the great deliverer who sets the captive free
I've heard Him called the fair Immanuel
God born out of Mary's womb
I've heard Him called the resurrection as He triumphed o'er the tomb
But I call Him holy,
Holy, holy Jesus Lord of Lords.

I've heard Him called the scepter rising out of Judah for to reign
I've heard Him called the glorious hope by those
Who look for Him again
I've heard Him called the prophet like Moses
speaking truth to every man
I've heard Him called the everlasting Father, Savior and great I Am
But I call Him holy,
Holy, holy Jesus Lord of Lords

I've heard Him called the bread of life to feed the children in the way
I've heard Him called the living water refreshing the weary day
I've heard Him called the promised Lamb of God
Who takes away all sin
I've heard Him called the blessed Comforter moving like the wind
But I call Him holy
Holy, holy Jesus Lord of Lords.

I've heard Him called the Daystar dawning, the morning on the rise
I've heard Him called the awesome man of war
that nations do despise
I've heard Him called the lowly servant the prophet, priest and king
I've heard Him called the Alpha and Omega
Children let us sing
For He is holy
Holy, holy Jesus Lord of Lords.

PRISONERS OF HOPE

In 2003 we set to work on this CD. A number of things were happening at this time that were crushing my spirit. Our church experienced over twenty deaths (members or immediate family of members) in two years. I had contracted a viral infection in my lungs and breathing was difficult and preaching was next to impossible.

Out of this came a collection of songs about the longing for heaven. Eleven of the thirteen songs have reference to the believer's desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

I recorded this collection over several months in DeLand, Florida and then Ed Billock added his excellent touches and mixed the final product. We tried to expand the vocal and musical sounds on this record and saving a couple of glitches (one minor, one major) came up with an excellent album.

The intent behind this collection was to fill the hearts and minds of God's people with many differing views of their blessed hope.

FAR AWAY

In May of 2003, in an attempt to help me regain my health, the good people at THE BIBLE Baptist Church sent me, with my wife, for a four day sail in the Caribbean. Sitting on the deck in Nassau, watching the sun set, my heart longed to be free of the responsibilities and troubles that came with my calling.

Off in the distance a calypso band was playing and something in the rhythm of their song merged with the mood of my soul and soon I was scribbling these words on an envelope.

Guitars: Ed Billock, Lilian Knox

Bells: Stephanie Novakovic

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Stephanie, Wendy

Far away from all oppression
Far away from brazen skies
Far away from knowing the best of men
tell the best of lies
Far away from every shepherd
Who leads the flock astray
He's gonna come and take me far away

Far away from senseless gossip
Far away from evil men
Far away from sins I thought were dead, rising up again
Far away from trying to explain
What I should never have had to say
He's gonna come and take me far away

Far away from angry women
Far away from spineless men
Far away from knowing it'll fall apart
But never knowing when
Far away from every tender snare
Placed gently in my way
He's gonna come and take me far away

Far away from rape and plunder
Far away from children's tears
Far away from going under
The weight of nameless fears
Far away from every penalty
I've ever had to pay
He's gonna come and take me far away

Far away from cast off elders
Far away from wasted youth
Far away from always wondering

The Music of James W. Knox

Who's telling me the truth
Far away from all the shallow games
That hollow people play
He's gonna come and take me far away

Far away from cowardly silence
Far away from egotistical noise
Far away from all the drunken hands
On helpless girls and boys
Far away from every matter
About which I've had to pray
He's gonna come and take me far away

PRAISE THE LAMB

Each December there are parades in our area. Since thousands gather to watch these follies, we attend to work those crowds with gospel tracts. In 2002 we were working one such parade in Orange City, Florida. Having made our way along one side of the parade route doing our job for Jesus I stood at the end of the line of spectators, waiting for the crew working the other side to complete their task. The next day our church would remember the Lord as He had requested and as I stood on that sidewalk thinking of the upcoming communion service these words dawned in my heart.

The music is from a song I wrote way back in 1974 while a junior in high school, for a lesser purpose.

The lyric was originally called *Give Him The Glory* but Lilian said there was a well known song by that name and people would confuse the two. Like we have such an audience.

Guitars: Ed Billock, Lilian Knox

Keyboards: Stephanie Novakovic

French horn: Chris Jackson

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Stephanie, Wendy

I take this bread to remind me of the death
That Jesus accomplished at Calvary.
It is broken to remind me
Of the body that hung on the tree.
He gave me His Spirit to take control.
O He ransomed me, heart and soul.
And I'm still a mortal, but eternal life is inside of me.
Praise the Lamb. Praise the Lamb who has rescued me.
Praise the Lamb. Praise the Lamb who has rescued me.
I'll do what I can to give Him the glory.

I take this cup to remind me of the precious
Sin-cleansing blood that Jesus shed.
And I lift it to remind me
He triumphantly rose from the dead.
He gave me His Spirit to be my guide;
To ransom me, from selfish pride.
And I'm still amazed that eternal life is inside of me.

Praise the Lamb. Praise the Lamb who has rescued me.
Praise the Lamb. Praise the Lamb who has rescued me.
I'll do what I can to give Him the glory.

HE'S ALMOST GOT IT READY

This is a quartet song I wrote in August, 1982 while happily singing with Jim and Linda Wilson. The three of us, along with Charlie, made three pretty good albums in the early '80s but never did anything with them.

Guitars: Ed Billock, Charlie McEntyre Bass: Bryan Reese
Harmonica: Charlie McEntyre Backing Vocals: Lilian, Wendy, Cathy Shultz

Jesus said that when He left us He would go to build a place
Where we shall dwell for ages and we'll see him face to face
He said when He was finished He would call us up above
And I think that I can almost hear that trumpet of love.
 Oh I think that He's almost got it ready
 Oh I think that the work is almost done
 Very soon the construction will be over
 And I'll sail to my home beyond the sun.

Jesus said that many mansions lie upon the other side
And everyone who loves Him has a place there to abide
He said He's coming back to take us up to be with Him
And I think that I can almost hear that blast upon the wind.
 Oh I think that He's almost got it ready
 Oh I think that the work is almost through
 Very soon the construction will be over
 And I'll sail to my home beyond the blue.

Jesus said that we should fear not, said I'm coming back for you
And He cannot break His promise every word He said is true
All the angels will be singing as we leave this world of care
And I think that I can almost hear that shout ring through the air.

 Oh I think that He's almost got it ready
 Oh I think that the work is almost done
 Very soon the construction will be over
 And I'll sail to my home beyond the sun.

 Oh I think that He's almost got it ready
 Oh I think that the work is almost through
 Very soon the construction will be over
 And I'll sail to my home beyond the blue.

WHAT WILL IT BE

The first verse sprang from my reading of the Song of Solomon. That Shulamite looking through the window hoping for the coming of the one she loved set this song in motion. The chorus is drawn from the 4th chapter of Malachi, while the second verse is based upon Ecclesiastes. I wrote this in the summer of 1987.

Guitars: Ed Billock

Piano, organ: Stephanie Novakovic

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Stephanie, Wendy

Sometimes in the midnight I think that I hear
His voice in the distance calling me near
I race to the lattice but only darkness I see
But I stay through the night
Waiting for the light
What will it be beyond the sunrise for me?
What will it be when the Sun of righteousness
Rises with healing in His wings for all to see?
When the light of the world does reign in His glory
What will it be beyond the sunrise for me?

When I take my last journey through the valley of death
In the shadow of blackness I draw my last breath
In the distant tomorrow a glimmer I see
At the end of my travels
When the silver chord unravels
What will it be beyond the sunrise for me?

What will it be when the Sun of righteousness
Rises with healing in His wings for all to see?
When the light of the world does reign in His glory
What will it be beyond the sunrise for me?

THE CRY FOR PEACE

This song got me some nasty write-ups by angry little men whose so-called ministries consist of tearing down their brethren on obscure web sites. That's what you have to do if God is not using you. I am not sure why it is wrong for a Christian to sing an anti-war song. I am for peace. Jesus is not coming back to set up a thousand years of war. Praise the Lord! I long for a day when the killing and bloodshed are over and when young men no longer have to die in the place of the old men who sent them into combat. If that makes me a bad man, so be it.

The tune here is my adaptation of an old folk melody which had a revival in the 1970s. The lyric is my adaptation of a poem I found in a book over one hundred years old. The verse was penned in 1891 by Clara Davidson. I amended it in 2004 to make its theme scriptural.

Guitars: Ed Billock, Charlie McEntyre Harmonica: Charlie McEntyre
Backing Vocals: Stephanie

They tell us of wars and rumors of wars
and the orders of kings to lowly men
and little they heed of the sorrow decreed
by the stroke of the ruler's pen.

And little they care for child and wife
when both the wife and child do moan
while nations fight for their rulers' greed
and the fighter dies all alone.

The woman with hair like sunset gold
the woman with hair like midnight coal
each of them does lose the love of her life
the man that is half of her soul.

Aye! you that flatter a rulers' greed
and you that fawn at his great power
and you that fight when there is no need –
you too shall come to your dark hour.

When in the doom of that dreadful hour
when for your deeds you're called to pay
then shall cry your cry for peace
as we do cry for peace this day.

And we shall know peace on that day.

SAILING WITH YOU

In December, 2004 my father had surgery from which he could not recover. As his strength failed we both regretted the four decades during which we had no real relationship and rejoiced in the ten years we had spent serving the Lord together.

The third week of the following January I was moderating our church's annual Bible conference, then driving the thirty miles to the hospital to spend afternoons with him. It was his last week in this old world.

On those trips back and forth between his death bed and the exciting church services I struggled through a thousand emotions. This is the song that came to me as I rode along.

He went to heaven that week. Lilian and Stephanie learned the song in a day and we sang it at his memorial service. We held up the record long enough to include this number, for it surely fit the theme.

Guitars: Lilian Knox

Piano, organ: Stephanie Novakovic

They tell us the old boat is broken
And none has the skill to repair
The damage from many a journey
Out on the oceans of care

It's no longer fit for its service
Though it is not what any desires
They're taking it out of commission
And the captain is forced to retire

So we push your boat out into the current
And watch as you drift from the shore
With tear filled eyes we realize
It will sail this way no more
We commend your soul into the deep
And thank you for being so true
As your frail vessel slips out of my sight
How I wish I was sailing with you.

We passed through many a terrible storm
When it seemed that all would be lost
Then we would enter a haven of rest
That made it all seem worth the cost

So often we feared the stern captain
But he made us into a loyal crew
Though sometimes we questioned his judgment
He steadfastly carried us through.

So we push your boat out into the current
And watch as you drift from the shore

The Music of James W. Knox

With tear filled eyes we realize
It will sail this way no more
We commend your soul into the deep
And thank you for being so true
As your frail vessel slips out of my sight
How I wish I was sailing with you.

We commend your soul into the deep
And thank you for being so true
As your frail vessel nears heaven's bright shore
How I wish I was sailing with you.

Dad I wish I was sailing with you.

BE SURE

A good Bible lesson would be to find all the scriptures cited in this lyric. This was written as a very hard, driving, preachy song in December, 1980. It evolved into a children's song. By the time we recorded it for the *Prisoners* sessions it had drifted to a point somewhere between the two.

I wrestled with including it on this project as it does not fit the theme, but it came out so well that we decided not to hold it over.

It is a real thrill to visit churches and watch children sing this song.

Guitars: Ed Billock

Piano, organ: Stephanie Novakovic

Trumpet: Wade Rowdon

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Stephanie

Guess you thought that nobody was looking at you
When you did what you did guess you thought nobody knew
You looked every direction to make sure you were alone
But Jesus once said, there's a voice in the stone.
And there's one thing I want you to be certain about
I'll make it quite simple, so's to leave no doubt
Be sure Be sure Be sure Be sure
Be sure your sin will find you out.

When you curs-ed the king in your chamber that night
You must have felt certain it would not come to light
But Solomon warned you, and warned you right well
That a sweet little song bird was liable to tell.
And there's one thing I want you to be certain about
I'll make it quite simple, so's to leave no doubt
Be sure Be sure Be sure Be sure
Be sure your sin will find you out.

Did you cover up all of the possible ends?
Did you silence with bribery all of your friends?
Did you stop once to realize, in your reveling mirth,
That the eyes of the Lord walk throughout the whole earth?
Oh there's one thing I want you to be certain about
I'll make it quite simple, so's to leave no doubt
Be sure Be sure Be sure Be sure
Be sure your sin will find you out.

What you did in the closet, they'll shout from the roof
And the book of remembrance will reveal the proof
And the shame and the torment that bring you so low
Only serve to remind you, you reap what you sow.
And there's one thing I want you to be certain about
I'll make it quite simple, so's to leave no doubt
Be sure Be sure Be sure Be sure
Be sure your sin will find you out.

BEYOND THE RIVER

I have to be honest with you, I have been singing this song for so long, and its melody sounds so familiar, that I cannot recall writing it. It seems I've always known it. It may be a tune I heard as a boy or something I caught once on late-night radio and never forgot.

We recorded this for the *A T R* record but did not like the sound and left it off. We reworked it a bit and gave it what Ed called "a bunch of hillbillies on the front porch" sound.

Guitars: Lilian Knox

Mandolin: Lilian Knox

Violin: Bryan Reese

Backing Vocals: Lilian, Wendy, Cathy

Sometimes I'm so burdened
Sometimes I get weary
I long for contentment
The way I will follow
Beyond the river
Beyond the river
God will not forsake me
Beyond the river

Sometimes things go wrong
With life's busy throng
And a satisfied mind
Green pastures I'll find
That has no bridge
That has no bridge
By grace He will take me
That has no bridge

The path that I follow
It leads down to Jordan
The old ship of Zion
And I shall be sailing

Is narrow and steep
Dark river so deep
Will soon cross the tide
To Canaan's bright side

PRINCE OF PEACE

Here is another song born on the mail route. Came up with this one in October of 1986. This has always been Lilian's favorite melody. You would not believe all the work she and Stephanie do getting this music worked out for me. I give them the rough idea of what instruments I hear and how they are to be used and they do the rest. Thank the Lord for their talents. Ed does some great vocal work here as well.

Keyboards: Stephanie Novakovic

Backing Vocals: Ed Billock

Jesus would you calm me
When the things of earth alarm me
Would you let me feel your presence in my soul?
Jesus would you soothe me
When tribulation starts to move me
Would you let me know that you are in control?

Lord you know that I'm a weak
I'm a weak and fearful man
And sometimes I need a tender touch
From your strong right hand.
So with a promise from your blessed word
Would you bid my trouble cease?
Ah prove to me one more time
That you're the Prince of Peace.

Jesus would you love me
When the sky turns bleak above me
Would you let me know that everything's alright?
Jesus would you cheer me
When the tears of sorrow near me
Would you give to me a song in the night?

Jesus would you show me
What it takes to make me holy
Would you help me not to falter in my way?
Jesus keep me praising
All your sweet grace so amazing
Would you help me show I'm thankful all the day?

Jesus would you aid me
When some evil has waylaid me
Would you lift me up and let me stand again?
Jesus don't desert me
When some cutting word has hurt me
Oh remind me that you'll always be my friend?

JUST ME AND MY BEST FRIEND

This rambling folk song tells the tale of life on the road, hour after hour, city to city, moving on to take the gospel to another congregation or sidewalk gathering. I first wrote this while riding in and out of Franklin, North Carolina during the winter of 1981.

During the *Prisoners* sessions Ed reworked the tempo and turned a mediocre song into a very good one.

Guitars: Ed Billock

Backing vocals: Ed Billock

Rode out again this morning, staking my soul to the wind.
On the highway, all alone, just me and my best friend.
Been so long since anyone saw Him, but I sure know He's there.
And when I speak out the word of truth
His power fills the air.

Highlands how I've missed you. Good to pass your way again.
Singing through the mountains, just me and my best friend.
And He teaches me with the sunshine and the swaying of the field
and He shows me things men through all the age
have prayed to have revealed.

Filled with joy and gladness rounding still another bend
Feeding on freedom's beauty, just me and my best friend.
And each village reaches to us with its hands so warm and strong.
And He tells me with a whispering voice
We'll stay but not too long.

Got no time to look back on things that have met their end
We know this road started but it never stops,
just me and my best friend.
Oh He keeps me looking onward, and He keeps my sights on high.
And the place He's gonna lead me to I'll get there by and by.

Rolling, rolling, rolling on. Chasing stars till the sun comes again.
Guided through the nighttime; just me and my best friend.
Wondering how many's dying just beyond my sight.
Still finding only one to save, makes everything alright.

Wish I could cling to every soul who a smile did lend
To cheer us on our journey, just me and my best friend.
When this pavement turns gold and the last mile has been run
We'll gather round and talk about our travels with the Son.

WHEN I HEAR THE PRAISES START

Of the many songs which ministered grace to my heart as a young Christian, this Keith Green composition was one of my favorites.

My child, my child why are you striving?
You can't add one thing to what's been done for you.
I did it all while I was dying.
Rest in my love and peace will come to you.

When I hear the praises start I want to rain upon you
Blessings that will fill your heart Oh I see no stain upon you
Because you are my child, and you know me
To me you're only holy
Nothing that you've done remains Only what you do for me.

My child, my child why are you weeping?
You will not have to wait forever.
That day and that hour is in my keeping.
The day I'll bring you into heaven.

When I hear the praises start I want to rain upon you
Blessings that will fill your heart Oh I see no stain upon you
Because you are my child, and you know me
To me you're only holy
Nothing that you've done remains Only what you do in me.
Just what you do in me.

My precious bride the day is nearing
When I will take you in my arms and hold you
I know there's so many things that you've been hearing
But you just hold on to what I've told you

Cause when I hear the praises start
I want to rain upon you
Blessings that will fill your heart
Oh I see no stain upon you
Because you are my child, and you know me
To me you're only holy
Nothing that you've done remains
Only what you do for me.
Only what you do for me.
Only what you do for me.
Only what you do for me.

RUNNING OUT OF TIME

A week before the trip that yielded *Far Away* I was sitting on my front step, too weak to attend to the hundreds of tasks at hand and very depressed over my inability to muster enough strength to be about my Father's business. I thought of the labor that had brought me to this place of weakness, of the work yet to be finished, and realized for the first time that I might never accomplish all I had hoped to accomplish for the Saviour and His church.

That morning I composed this personal testimony of doubt and certainty, of triumph and defeat, of success mingled with regret.

We did an early version for the *ATR* album with which I was not pleased and this effort justified the wait.

Guitars: Ed Billock. Charlie McEntyre, Lilian Knox Mandolin: Lilian Knox
Bass: Bryan Reese Backing vocals: Stephanie Novakovic

There's a siren in the distance It's someone's sorest test
I want to follow and to be of help But I need a little rest
Every burden in this city I still want to make it mine
Oh yes I am still running I'm just running out of time.

Oh I tried to be the leader
Sought to rally all the brave
To stand and wage the war of wars
Against all that would enslave
I'm still hungry for the action
But I can't march in the front line
I never will stop running But I'm running out of time

Circumstance and obligation
Another call, another page
Ate away the days of fervor
Stole my passion and my rage
That ghost that broke my sleep last night
His face looked just like mine
Oh yes I am still running I'm just running out of time.

I was gonna change the world you know
Then my babies came along
I worked my job and earned my pay
While the world kept rolling on
I've reached the days of might have been
And my failure haunts my mind
Oh babies I'm still running
I'm just running out of time.

The Music of James W. Knox

There are millions out there crying
Once I heard every call
In my heart I know they are still there
But now I can't hear them all
There's a dragon in the vineyard
Get my sword, that devil's mine
Oh yes I am still running I'm just running out of time.

I still press toward the same mark
How did I get so far behind?
Oh yes I am still running I'm just running out of time.

RUNNING OUT OF TIME

This is the alternate lyric which appears on *In the Beginning Was The Word..*

There's a siren in the distance Someone's world has come apart
I want to follow and to be of help But today my heart won't start
Every burden in this city I can't help but feel it's mine
Oh yes I am still running I'm just running out of time.

I tried to be the leader Sought to rally to the Light
All who saw the cause was just all who loved the right
I'm still hungry for the action
But I can't march in the front line
I never will stop running But I'm running out of time

All the pressing obligations Irons all glowing in the fire
Ate away my days of fervor Took my strength not my desire
That ghost that broke my sleep last night
His face looked just like mine
Oh yes I am still running I'm just running out of time.

Once I thought that I might change the world
I stood up tall and strong
Seems the world is none the better But I don't think I was wrong
I've reached the days of might have been
And my failure haunts my mind
Oh yes I'm still running I'm just running out of time.

I know I've hurt some people and there's now way they can know
That realizing I have failed them Brings me oh so low
While we both dwell on my weakness I press on they stay behind
I've got to keep on running For I'm running out of time.

The Music of James W. Knox

There's a shadow on my heart and mind
Since childhood I have known
I am chosen to serve others Though I long to be alone
I'm as frail as any mortal I'm indwelt by the Divine
Don't know if I'm running to or from
But I'm running out of time.

There is pain in every victory, There is joy in each decline
Oh yes I am still running I'm just running out of time.

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD

The John To Music Project Volumes 1 & 2

This is a collection of songs setting forth a word-for-word musical rendering of the first six chapters of the book of John. These are fragments of songs I never finished, tunes that came to my heart to which I never put lyrics, and traditional melodies. I put this together during the fall of 2005.

The following spring we recorded these songs in a very sparse style so that the words would have the predominant place. The recordings were then mastered by Chris Jackson in July and August of 2006.

The purpose behind this project is to enable the child of God to use melody and the meter to commit this grand portion of God's word to memory while singing in their hearts with grace to the Lord.

John 1:1-14 In the Beginning

This is an old tune from the Scottish Highlands known as Loch Lamond. This is a shorter arrangement than that commonly heard.

Keyboards: David Brown Backing vocals: Mark Thren, Stephanie Novakovic

1:15-23 John Bare Witness

This tune is called Canyon Wind. I wrote this in the mid nineties but never had any lyrical direction. Lilian came up with the bridge melody, which greatly helped the song.

Guitars: Lilian Knox

Mandolin: Christianna Novakovic, Lilian Knox

Backing vocals: Lilian Knox

1:24-36 Beyond Jordan

In the early '90s I wrote a song called Running My Race. The lyrics were simple and repetitive, the tune was catchy. It was just right for radio. Just the sort of song I never cared for. So I gave it up for use in this project.

Guitar: Lilian Knox

The Music of James W. Knox

1:37-42 Come and See

This is a tune called Whistle and was originally a scripture song of verses from Titus for use in a Sunday school class. I think I wrote this in 1997. The bridge was added for this project.

Guitars: Lilian Knox

Backing vocals: Lilian Knox

1:43-51 Finding Others

I wrote a song in 1975 called Empty Table. I was an unsaved teenager writing about the joy I saw in the lives of Christians who lived in poverty. The song was published and brought me quite a bit of acclaim. This is adapted from that melody. The original was much slower and more dramatic. I like how this rendering suits the subject matter.

Guitars: Lilian Knox

Backing vocals: Stephanie Novakovic

2:1-11 Water To Wine

This is a tune called Bouncy. At one time I was going to do an album of songs for children but I've never been able to write anything on purpose. This is one of the remnants from that project.

Guitars: Lilian Knox

Trombone: Sam Jackson

Backing vocals: Lilian Knox

2:12-22 Down to Capernaum

The dark mood of this tune is owing to its beginning. After conducting a funeral I began a song denouncing death but never got beyond a first verse. I do not labor over songs or lyrics. If they flow I keep them, if they don't I leave them alone. That tune, Scourge, seems well suited for this passage.

Guitars: Lilian Knox

Organ. Backing vocals: Stephanie Novakovic

Backing vocals: Stephanie Novakovic

2:23-3:10 Nicodemus

This is the well-known and oft-used Ode to Joy from one of Beethoven's hit albums.

Keyboards: David Brown

Trumpet: Wade Rowdon

Trombone: Sam Jackson

French Horn: Chris Jackson

Backing vocals: Mark Thren

The Music of James W. Knox

3:11-16 So Loved

Alfred Smith is credited with this tune which I learned in Sunday school as a boy.

Keyboards: David Brown

Backing Vocals: Mark Thren, Stephanie Novakovic

3:17-21 Not Condemned

This tune is called Beachside. I came up with it specifically for these verses during the recording of this project.

Guitar: Lilian Knox

Backing Vocals: Lilian Knox

3:22-31a After these Things

This started out as a tune found in many first-lesson books for keyboard players under a variety of titles. I learned it as Brown Eyes. Through the course of this project we lost the meter and something of the melody, so I guess it's mine now.

Harp: Sarah Wickham

3:31b-3:36 The Father Loveth the Sun

I call this tune Trumpet's Tone. It is one of many that Lilian has written to teach her Sunday school class verses of scripture. She allowed me its use for this recording. Nice girl.

Guitar: Lilian Knox

Backing vocals: Lilian Knox

4:1-15 Through Samaria

I was always frustrated by this one because I really liked it. I wrote the tune Hillside in 2002 but never came up with any suitable lyrics.

Twelve-string-guitar: Linda Strand

Guitars: Lilian Knox, Les Peatt

Backing vocals: Stephanie Novakovic

4:16-29 Woman at the Well

Another melody from the 90's. While recording this version it dawned on me that this tune has its roots in a ditty we used to sing in elementary school. I laughed and laughed. If I told you the song you would know it, but then you too would laugh each time you heard this one. So I'll just leave you to puzzle over the mystery.

The Music of James W. Knox

Guitar: Lilian Knox Piano: Stephanie Novakovic
Backing vocals: Stephanie Novakovic, Lilian Knox

4:30-38 White Fields

I wrote a song about 1988 or 89 called *I Wonder What Happened to Him* about a school chum named Jon Novinski. Having no plans to record the song it was given over for use in this project.

Guitar: Lilian Knox Keyboards: Stephanie Novakovic Trumpet: Wade Rowdon

4:39-46 Many Samaritans

Some of the worst traffic in America is on US 74 between Charlotte and Monroe. It was while stuck there one afternoon I came up with *You've Got the Look* which is the song used here. This is a most difficult sequence of changes and the girls did a fine job working it out.

Guitars: Lilian Knox Piano: Stephanie Novakovic

4:47-54 Nobleman's Son

Here is another traditional melody of the highlands. The tune, Slane, is centuries old and is best known for its use in the hymn *Be Thou My Vision*.

Keyboards: David Brown Violin: Emily Wickham
Backing vocals: Mark Thren

5:1-9 At Bethesda

This snippet is called Parapets. I cannot recall how long ago I first recorded it but it never had any lyrics until now.

Guitar: Lilian Knox Piano: Stephanie Novakovic Flute: Lauren Riley

5:10-21 God Was His Father

This tune is based on a traditional folk song about a condemned criminal waiting out his days. I had formerly adapted the tune and its mood in *Truck Driving Man*, which told about another form of boredom. The melody seemed a good fit for this section of John.

Guitar: Lilian Knox Mandolin: Christianna Novakovic, Lilian Knox
Backing vocals: Mark Thren

The Music of James W. Knox

5:22-31 Death to Life

In the days of my youth gospel songs and folk songs were captured by various protest groups and used for political purposes. I have taken a measure of criticism for restoring these melodies to their rightful place. It seems those who stole them should be censured and I should be applauded, but some of the brethren lack sufficient depth of understanding. This is the lovely tune, Overcome.

Twelve string guitar: Linda Strand

Guitars: Les Peatt, Lilian Knox

Backing Vocals: Stephanie Novakovic

5:32-40 Witnesses

Another unfinished song from the early '90s. This tune is titled Simmering Scale.

Guitar: Lilian Knox

Piano, Backing Vocals: Stephanie Novakovic

5:41-47 Honor From Men

In 2001 I started a song called *Look At The Prints in My Hands* but never did finish it. The meter and feel perfectly matched "I receive not..." This is Lilian's favorite tune from the project.

Guitar: Lilian Knox

Bells: Stephanie Novakovic

6:1-9 Over the Sea

This melody has popped up in a lot of places over the years. It was used in a Hollywood musical. I learned it in music class in the third grade as *Early One Morning*. Many of you learned it in Sunday School as Ha-Ha-Hallelujah.

Keyboards: David Brown

6:10-15 Make the Men Sit

During work on the *Prisoners of Hope* album I wrote *When I Went Out One Morning* but was not satisfied with the lyrics and dropped the song from that session. Here is that tune with a much better set of words.

Guitar: Lilian Knox

Organ: Stephanie Novakovic

Autoharp: Laura Holt

The Music of James W. Knox

6:16-35a Even Was Come

This is the tune from a song I wrote in 2004 called *Rising Sea*. With no foreseeable plans to record that song I opted to use its music here, with some regrets, for I really hated to give up a melody of which I am quite fond.

Guitar: Lilian Knox

Mandolin: Lilian Knox

Piano: Stephanie Novakovic

Backing vocals: Lilian Knox

6:35b-46 The Father

Once more we cross the water for a traditional tune from the highlands. This is the haunting *Londondary Aire*.

Keyboards: Stephanie Novakovic

Harp: Michaela Novakovic

Backing vocals: Lilian Knox, Stephanie Novakovic

6:47-59 Eat This Bread

This is Glistening Pines, a song I wrote around 1997 but did not finish.

Guitars: Lilian Knox

Backing Vocals: Stephanie Novakovic

6:60-71 Going Back

One last folk melody from the old country. This beautiful tune is my adaptation of *Mary of the Wild Moor*.

Guitar: Lilian Knox

Guitar: Les Peatt

Violin: Tiffany Bach

20:30-31; 21:25 Life

I just could not bring myself to end this session with the material on Judas, so I wrote this tune for the verses taken from the end of John.