

thoughts and prayers
smiles and tears

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Father, you are still in control
Jesus, you are still on your throne
Lord, we embrace what you allow
Be still, my soul, and know he is God

You are faithful, you are loving
In your kindness you allow

What is best

Lord, change my heart
Purify and renew
Please make me something useful to you
That thirsting men may come to this spring
And drink life everlasting

Strip away selfishness
Purge us of all pride
Cause our comfort to come from you
Give us faith to forget all our fears

Lord, give us a hunger for you
Bread of life that makes us brand new
For practical righteousness
Jesus, be formed in us
We long both to will and to do

I'm thirsting for water that flows
A river where holy fruit grows
A wellspring within
Jesus, conquer all sin
I thirst that I might overflow

More of you, Lord, less of me
Full replacement
Total conformity
Absolute death, abundant life
Purely Christ is what I seek

The calling to suffer I sense drawing near
The spirit is willing, the flesh grips with fear
Clenching the comforts this fading life brings
Will I lose my life, or will I lose everything?

Was Father's desire his beloved to inflict
While all other children from anguish protect?
Not this loving Lord, the trials he shares
Pain, yet power to become Christ's co-heirs

One day in his presence without weeping we'll sing
For now our sweet tears are his drink offering
Just like Jesus, while weeping, found grace to endure
Not my will but thine, glory and honor are yours

Suffering first, then glory
Perfection is only after pain
Life for death, or death for life?
My loss will be his gain

Selfless savior
Murmurless master
Simply a servant
Lovingly last
Father's faithful
Generous giver
Only for others
Always alive

Always alive
Always asking
Hoping and seeking
Vessels to break
Vessels to fill
Fruit to abide

Self righteousness, self deception
Every thought evil since conception
Self confidence, self assurance
House on sand, stable turned nervous

Think for me, speak to me
Save me from insanity
Holy breath, perfect rest
In your grasp I'm safe at last

Your righteousness, true perfection
Overcome evil by faith's protection
Trust, confidence, rest, repentance
My heart your home, the lifter of burdens

I choose to trust Jesus
I choose to be free
I'm not gonna let these little things worry me

Feelings are feelings
That's all that they are
They come without welcome
They cover like a cloud
But Father, you're faithful
Your love always shines
It penetrates the darkness
With peace deeper than my mind

Is this desire of mine divine?
Or inspired by my own mind?

It is priceless to not receive
The deepest longing of your dreams
Something better, something unseen
Remains waiting quietly

I am your shield, your great reward
What else are you hoping for?
Lift your head and joy will come
Am I not better to you than ten sons?

This cherished gift to you I'd lift
But can I confess
That what I now possess is truly yours?

All it took was forty days
For them to make a god that they could praise
A deity who understands
Their wants, their needs, and their demands

Quickly pray and then they play
By design their god has nothing to say
While they indulge their creator arrives
All those who cannot wait must die

Who is on this side?
What is the reason for your pride?
Why won't you wait on me?
When have I forgotten your needs?

Draw near you for the Lord
To your side strap your sword
Without favor raise your hand
Purge the evil from your land

When the modern day Moses comes
To gather all his Father's sons
A faithful family will he find?
Or twice dead daughters and sons blind?

Who is on this side?
What is the reason for your pride?
Why won't you wait for me?
When have I forgotten your needs?

Start in my heart
Break it all apart
Crush all my pride
Fill me inside

Let the river flow
Humility grow
Give me what I need
Plant in me your seed

Here I come again
I am knocking at your door
Here I come again
I am begging you for more

Father I see your son; compassion, mercy and love
Your desire is real, it fills me
To change me into his image completely

In desperation I cry
Only one thing will satisfy
In desperation I plead
Fill me with your spirit
Until Jesus is everything in me

I'm longing, I'm yearning
My heart won't stop burning
This passion, this groaning
My burden is growing
Jesus, I need you
I must be just like you
Father I praise you
Your spirit is speaking

Make me a glass
That others look through
Never seeing me
Only beholding you
Magnified greater than they ever knew
Before through this window they set their view

For the praise of your glorious grace
And the honor due your name
In the works that you have prepared for me
Father let me reveal your fame

As we sit before your throne
We rejoice to be alive
Of all the places we could be
We're with you

And we long for what you will do today
Your thoughts toward us are great
So we wait and expect to see
Revelations of your glory

Jesus, you're not just a name
Or a writing on a page
Not a memory trapped in history
You're alive and I need to speak to you today

Not some words, the living word
Who we hear, not what we have heard
Not a teaching reserved for preaching
Jesus, whisper in my ear
I know that you are near

You are known by your life
Through your touch
In your presence
To know you is my delight

I want to be with you
I need to be with you
I want to be with you

Why do you bother with me?
Holy Father I'm so unworthy
I know that you don't need me
Yet you stoop down just to whisper to me

I love you, you're my child
For you I would die
And I did, and now I live
Let me live through you

Which one of us is greater?
Argue two grains of sand
Well, said the sun, let me help you understand
Looks to me like you are twice that one's size
But in my eyes
If you were any smaller you'd disappear forever

Which one of us is greater?
Argue two little sons
Well, said the Father, I can help you answer that one
Looks to me like you are twice your brother's age
But that's not my way
If you want to be great you have to learn to be a servant

In foolish pride we compare
Somehow forgetting how we got here
Living in the shadow of his feet
We're all just one grain more than nothing

How long will you chase nothing?
I know it seems like something
But when you get to the end of that rainbow
There's nothing there
No pot of gold, nothing to show
Further away and another month older
As you hang your head in shame
You hear a quiet voice say

Come to me, I know you're weary
Come to me, my yoke is easy
And I will give you rest
I always have in mind your best

Something inside you says its right
You decide to give it a try
But as you start that way
You see a glimmer in the corner of your eye
You turn around, a flashing sign
Promises great, and the road is smooth and wide
Forget deception of last time
The newest way his voice fades

Come to me, I know you're weary
Come to me, my yoke is easy
And I will give you rest
I always have in mind your best

Why so sad?

What exactly do you lack?

What is making your feet drag?

Longing to be free relentlessly you seek

Comfort, security, wealth, popularity

Expected human liberties as fuel to fly

No wonder your tank is always dry

Why so stressed?

Cannot find a place to rest?

Continual jet lag?

Yet can't really recall if you've ever flown on

Comfort, security, wealth, popularity

Expected human liberties as fuel to fly

No wonder your tank is always dry

They're slowly choking you inside

Want to soar?

View this life from above?

Unravel from the thorns?

Let go of the weight

Get rid of your chains

Pursue love instead

Jesus, my brother
Jesus, my friend
I need to talk to you
Weak and weary
I'm so glad you're always here with me

Loving Father
Friend of men
I'm seeking favor with you
Lacking vision, looking upward
I'm longing to hear your voice

Jesus, my brother, you are the same
Though all around me starts to change
Gently flowing, your love is sweet
And I'm resting in your name

So I come, I fall, I worship
I lay my burdens at your feet
I come, I fall, I worship
I rest, your yoke is easy

I refuse to be moved by emotion or abuse
When the waves rise
And lightning splits the darkened skies
I refuse to be moved

I refuse to be used by the false comforts of this life
When all feels well, a gentle breeze on a calm sea
I refuse to be used

I will live by what he gives
And I will be moved to thanksgiving
When he chooses his best for me
Regardless of how it seems

Such a sweet surrender
In the depths of my heart I know
Feelings and circumstance try me to doubt
But I'm learning your ways
They are higher and they are better than mine
And your spirit is inside me

Such a sweet surrender
Gladly I give all I am, all my plans
No aspirations, I only want you
Your life to be my own, my heart your throne
A Father, a son secured by love
And your spirit inside me

Such a sweet surrender
The details don't matter to me
Just let me talk to you walk by your side
Don't care if we go or if we stay
Anywhere, anyway
As long as I am with you
And your spirit is inside me

Do I think I could do better?
What would I choose, and who would I fool?
My life would be ruined in no time
'Cause nothing I can do apart from you
In all my own wisdom is anything
Could I, would I really choose better?

A miracle we say
When we finally got our way
Begging and pleading, never conceding
His desire was to give us full contentment in him

Never rest and he will give you second best
Go ahead, give him the credit
But he would rather be that treasure
We need him, not one more thing

He's the gift not just the giver
Why one drink when you can have the river?
All your needs and pleads he meets
When you receive him

You gave away your prize
But the prize wasn't mine
The first across the line
Isn't always first in his eyes

Can you win with human legs
When this race is run with heart instead?
Will you receive men's reward
Without favor from the Lord?

Take the lowest seat, ignore what they think
Crowned by men, or are you servant of the King?

Show me the ugly side
The things I didn't know were hiding
Parts of me I'd rather not know
Anchors deep keep me from growing
Keep me from going next to you
Show me truth
Don't show me my pretty side
I promise I won't hide
I need rivers of life
So cut the cords and clean me out
'Till there's no doubt I'm with you
And your love is coming through

Here she comes, my gentle dove
I want to give her everything
Lord, why, though I try
I'm not the one to provide
Her deepest needs, her faith filled dreams
'Cause I don't know your timing
And though I wish I held that gift
You're her only Father and I am just her brother
Send your blessings from above
And for my wife my life I will lay down

Once again, my closest friend
Somehow faithful without fail
Through waiting and through wavering
This I wish I could repay
With her deepest needs, her faith filled dreams
But I don't know your timing
And though I wish I held that gift
You're her only Father and I am just her brother
Send your blessings from above
And for my wife my life I will lay down

Give me your heart, I made it for me
You know you can't fill it with other things
Give me your heart, I made it for me
My loving kindness fulfills all you needs

Give me your heart, child, give me your heart
Abandon all other wants
Worthless they are
Run into my arms, don't even look back
In my embrace there's nothing you'll lack

The kingdom of God is among us
Not waiting in heaven above
Humble children are entering in
Jesus invites you to come

The king himself is here
Reigning in our midst
As he's opened our hearts for his throne
Opened eyes his glory will behold

The shepherd lays down his life
And lovingly walks by our side
As he leads he radiates peace
In intimate love we can abide

Jesus, you are alive
Not only in the skies
Our hearts are where you abide
You are near, so near to us

Make us a blessing even if we never see
All that you are doing to bless those in need
Let your love flow even if we never know
All the ways it warmed those hurt and lonely souls

We are vessels for pouring not for storing
Light can't be caught
Hidden manna will rot
Reflect, wash feet, radiate, feed sheep
Comfort, heal, clothe, and receive
Set those captives free

Embrace or escape, what will you do?
When Father's gift from heaven comes down to you

He's telling you he loves you
With each trial that he brings
Only children he delights in
Receive these needed blessings

Just because it hurts doesn't mean it's bad
The pain that you are feeling is the pain that Jesus had

Turn your eyes toward Jesus
The source of your faith
Who for the joy set before him
Chose to embrace

I'm not trying to be callous
But just how much are words worth?
Are they seeds that will bring up weeds?
Only time will tell
In peace, I'll wait to see
And rest assured
He'll prove his word
Even if it's not what I heard

Father, I love you
Jesus, live in me
Cause me to shine
Radiate love divine
Flowing with streams that heal
Plant your peace
Reap righteousness

Mosquito on an elephant's back

Another minor inconvenience

If Paul's severe sufferings were light and momentary

How much more these gentle breezes?

Arrived in the flesh, earth was my reality
Inherited the quest for possessions and popularity
The bitterest gall, discontentment, sorrow
I must have it all, I'll grab more tomorrow
Hope unfulfilled, growing wants, swelling appetite
This nauseating pill, I cannot wait another night
Hope now deceased, only impossibility
For my heart no release, no peace, no joy, futility
Darkness of the deepest kind, no more light exists
Dreams of hope visit my mind, why do I resist?
Messengers with keys frequenting my prison
This lock I won't concede, it's all that I've been given
He promised everything, very little did I get
Built up, reduced to nothing
My fate this bottomless pit
Is this offer valid, to be lifted from this grave?
Has he really said it, my lost soul he can save?
Nothing left to lose, whether truth or fantasy
Broken crumbs for you to use
Here I am, how could you want me?
Gentle warmth melting stone
Almost surreal, once numb now I feel
Peace unknown, no longer alone
Now I believe the deepest wounds can heal
HOPE – Heaven's Open--Persevere Enter

Scraping my way through every day
Rarely looking back as I gather scraps
Surviving off crumbs enough only for one
No overflow and no glory to show

If your food depends on me, great is my need
No strength remains, selfishly ashamed
When I choose to starve your provision's enlarged
Honey from the rock, finest wheat not merely for me

The cure for corruption
From deceitful desires
Is ignoring our impulses
And serving the spirit
By waiting for his will

I don't understand this
I am way beyond pretense
Yet I know somehow you authored it
How long until you finish this?

Your Issac's on the altar
Now you're waiting for the ram
Presuming this provision
The knife's not in your hand

You didn't even bring it
You didn't plan to kill this
What kind of sacrifice
Can you expect to stay alive?

Pretend surrender
You appear sincere, but under this veneer
Your gift is wrapped in a tight gripped fist

I will strike the fork you keep in me
Only one pitch, a tune of worship
The note of praise
Abba, Father, receive glory

I will fan the flame you lit in me
Only one source, this light of love
The start of faith
Consuming fire, my heart overtake

In your mercy I am speechless
From death row released despite being guilty
While I float away, you're putting on my chains

In you mercy, beyond limit
Trading beauty and riches for this worthless sinner
After washing off my mud you wore it on yourself

As I crafted your crown
As I forced the thorns down
You were thinking of how you could touch me
Considering when you would love me
Longing for the day you might crown me

In your mercy you dwell in me
My heart was so filthy, now it's your throne
No longer under sin's control
Your peace and power rule my soul

Leaning on his staff, favoring one side
Cringing at the pain, yet rejoicing in his gain
Deceiver was his name when the angel came his way
For sin he might have died, instead a prince became

I used to be strong, now I'm broken
Not the man I used to be
Soon the man you're making me

He carried my cross, crushed by its weight
Not a striped deserved, another's debt he paid
Prideful was my name, when Father came to save
Expecting to be cast away, instead a son became

I used to be strong, now I'm broken
Not the man I used to be
Soon the man you're making me

Thank you, friend, for caring about the things he does
Thank you, friend, for sharing in the things he loves

I see in you by what you do
You trust his grace will pave the way
To offer readily joy filled hospitality
Meeting others needs, ignoring your own weakness

You probably don't know just how much you glow
Father is pleased, thanks for washing feet

Quiet, my soul
Be still and know
Stammering tongue be done

Listen, hear him
Don't speak
There's no need

He's near, he cares
Don't you fret
He's never failed you yet

You're afraid, you run away
Terror inside, you hide
You dread becoming dead
Every thought spent avoiding torment

Next time you fear, draw near
Longing within, hide in him
When you dread becoming dead
Strive to enjoy his life instead

His love holds no terror
His favor has no wrath
He envies to hold you near
What, then, is your source of fear?

Command your soul be still
Reject its earthly will
Focus not through flesh's eye
The view is true, but feelings lie

Violently wear faith's spectacles
Though all soul's strength will rebel
And only one simple difference is seen
Father's hand, orchestrating

Floating along, offering songs with peace
Strumming my guitar, looking at the stars
Not an ounce of grief or worry
The moon gets tucked in by dark clouds and a cold wind
And Orion's gone, and my songs begin to fade
Darkness invades and fierce gusts turn the pages of my mind
A dozen in a second's time

Jesus, how are you asleep?
'Cause I'm about to freak out
Thumping waves pound and I'm tumbling around
Like a little rag doll scratching and grabbing for ground
But there's none to be found
The only sound, my heartbeat
A pulsating death scream, Jesus, wake up please!
Unless our destiny's to be the bottom of this sea

Jesus, the floods have lifted up, lifted their voice
Lifted their pounding waves, where's your grace
Is there any way I can be saved?
Jesus, if your head stays on that pillow
My wife will be a widow in a couple of minutes

Where's your faith? Can I save?
Be amazed, quiet waves!

Though to you I seem asleep
Still the earth submits to me
And no matter how you feel
I am still king of everything
My throne is from eternity

Snow globe home, protected by a glass dome
Seemingly safe from outside storms
The view is crystal clear in stillness sitting there
Without worry, forgetting our last fear
The snow is softly laid, hasn't moved or blown away
Everything is easy, delighting in our days
Suddenly a shake; a tornado or earthquake?
Slipping from security as we watch the swelling waves
The tide is turning, everything is churning
Calamity, chaos, anxious heart burning
For a breath I gasp, my head hits the glass
Somehow while spinning, my eyes catch a glance
What's that I see? Are those fingers around me?
Holding my home, causing this difficulty?
An arm everlasting, a countenance unchanging
Sitting there secure, control and reign unwavering
I was safe all along, though light and peace seemed gone
Christ my King, still in control, my solid rock, my song

Fragile dreams, destined to perish it seems
Brought to tears, accustomed to waiting for years
Sweet possibilities, one step short of apprehending

Yet accompanying closed doors
Before self pity grows
Always help and comforting
A calming peace to wait and see
What the change of plans will bring

The smile of a child, a gift in itself
Undefined joy, simple trust
Reaching deep a warm touch

The shine of their eyes, a glimpse into life
Unrestrained love, peace, innocence
Open invitation, instantly friends

Who would think trials could be a gift
Or security could come through instability
Looking back I see the plan
And now a treasure in my hand

The cable fixed to an anchor deep
The slightest tug reminding me
Though surface storms are threatening
In depths of love secure my peace

Recalling how this hope took hold
During darkness and outcomes unknown
Secretly slipping to the greatest depth
Obtaining foundations for eternal rest

What do I want?

Why do I want it?

What will I do to make it mine in little or no time?

Push wisdom from others aside

Against the spirit's surrender strive

Forfeiting his presence

Frantically seeking birthday presents

While searching for tomorrow's manna

We trample on today's

Father doesn't birth magicians
Or spiritual technicians
Can't mechanically fix that
Can't pull reality from a hat
No more shows or greasy elbows
The only way to meet our need
Unbroken Father/son intimacy

Continual connection, done with ups and downs
A flow that never stops
No more booster shots

The tongue is a sword, teeth are daggers
Lips a noose in need of a master

Who can rule these, mortify their deeds?
The Spirit is willing, am I yielding?

Like lava flows, like an avalanche rolls
Careless words fly like sharpened arrows

How long will you fight to secure a position?
How hard will you squirm to change your condition?
Have you forgot you're in this lot
By pre-thought choice?

You told him to take control
He doesn't plan on letting go
The chains you think you feel you flee
Are hands of care to set you free

The longer you fight them
You feel his grip tighten
He dreads the thought of release
Yet unable to force his peace
If you insist on ignoring his providence
Demanding more evidence of his love
By salvation from discomfort and pain
Freedom from facing inconvenience again
Eventually he will loosen the rein
Yet none of your circumstances will change
Just loneliness and shame, a terrible trade

Would you rather give thanks?
Focus on the inward grace
In the midst of the storm you face
Knowing nothing can take
Peace's place or love's space
No matter the case
Nothing can separate you from him
He's holding your hand
After the valley of shadows is spanned
You'll realize his plan
And learn to trust him over and over again

Exited eternity to enter hopeless humanity
Into our insanity, Jesus, the creator, a man to be
From the womb to the tomb
Born in dirt, not a hospital room
Lowest of the low

No claim to fame among blood the same
Only suspect of shame for the way he came
To the humble he appeared
Shepherds heard the angel's word
And foreigners learned from prophecies spurned

When he arrived
He brought light to blind eyes
Set free from the lies held to by those in disguise
He committed no crimes still he suffered and died
'Cause they hated his name
When their jealousy raged had him brutally slain
Then sealed him in the grave to eliminate escape
But ultimate death was never his fate

He arose, visited his bros
Explained himself on the road
Ate some fish and broke a loaf
Then it was time to go
Resume his place on that glorious throne
But not before he swore he would never leave us alone
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His spirit we can receive to remind us of his sayings
Forever he intercedes
Making certain we have what we need
All we have to do is believe
Showing sincerity by our deeds
Enduring through sufferings
Never murmuring, blessing our enemies

Finding our true identity
Through heavenly intimacy
Love so deep even others can see
Being driven to jealousy
By such solid security

As you overflow
They observe there's always more
An unlimited source
The reason for your hope
Your obvious salvation
A standing invitation
To all creation
To join the demonstration
Of mutual love
Origin from above
Father, daughters and sons
Finally One

What if your eyes had high def lines
Streaming live video straight to your wife's eyes
Would she be surprised? Feel despised?
Would you wish that you had been blind?

What if those sights were displayed real time
High up in the sky for all who walk by to view
Being narrated, too, by every thought
Running through your mind at the time
Would you try to hide? Are you living a lie?
Hoping no one will find
Your secret desires way down on your inside
You got them buried deep?
You might as well wear them on your sleeve
'Cause even if no human soul ever sees
That doesn't change the fact that you're still guilty

When the space to pretend comes to an end
Will you repent or defend?
Will you swallow your pride or will you deny?
Claiming you tried or playing it sly
Trying to divert God's eye
By pointing your finger at some other "worse" guy
You thought you bought some time
'Till he caught you in your crime
Red-handed
You've been reprimanded
Reasoning demanded
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But you don't understand that you're a slave
Paying with pain for every glance that you take
And every picture you paint in your brain
Going 'gainst the grain of why you were made
Feeling the strain of living life two faced
Slowly showing shame
Hoping its not too late to make a change

You want to change?
Turn around and call on his name
Stop playing that game
Start saying the same
His heart contains mercy for your gain
And infinite grace remains that explains
How to abstain and refrain
From living a contradiction
From looking with evil vision
From following wicked decisions
Then covering your condition

No more disguise when his grace arrives
His love provides
Revelation and insight
You're feeling alive for the first time in your life
Finally safe to decide

Wear your inside on the outside

Morning mercies ride the beams
Of his never ending love
Extended arms deliver soft hands
Longing to lift my bruised chin
If I fall I will get up again
Praises resound to my saving King
You never slumber or sleep
Under wings of peace your beloved you keep

I'm at a roadblock
I need a breakthrough
Something's gotta give
'Cause I don't want to live

Content with good enough
Compared to what I was
Maintaining mediocrity, battling hypocrisy
Knowing I was meant to be radiating glory

I don't want to waste my whole life
Living for myself, sitting on the shelf
Never being used, feeling cool, being fooled
Seeking grace for my purpose
Which is only the surface of what he intended
When he revealed his splendor to me

I want my life to be a love treasury
Filled and flowing over on friends and enemies

God, choose me; but am I ready?
God, use me; but am I ready?
Will I stand when it's heavy?
Or will I crumble when it's hard?

“May the words of my mouth and the thoughts
of my heart be pleasing in your sight”

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