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## Arts Ministries

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### Poems in Perpetuity

#### 1. When the plane came down

It's 55 years now just gone since they buried 'em side by side  
 This pitiful yarn of a butcher and his Dad  
 I saw the plane and waved to them just before it crashed  
 And that Tiger Moth just dived and it was sad.

To the scene I ran as the plane blew up, and I saw the pilot move  
 But the flames consumed him in a hungry lick  
 The father sitting in the front copped the engine on his lap  
 And that fearful sight left a young lad feeling sick.

A fiancé there was screaming, it crashed right in her yard  
 And people were appearing everywhere  
 There was a stench of burning fuel and the whiff of burning flesh  
 And a plume of thick black smoke rose in the air.

When the medics finally came, just a simple waste of time  
 Both bodies were like sheep, all burnt and roasted black  
 The pilot's head had burst apart, his brain was hanging out  
 As they pulled him out, they left behind his back.

Some aircraft flew across right then, a flypast I suppose  
 Word had scattered far and wide, as well  
 Everyone was standing 'round, they came from far and wide  
 The plane was now a burnt out smouldering shell.

I rode the pushbike home that night a sombre thinking lad  
 The first time I'd seen death and bodies burnt  
 I've since seen many men die young, and often wondered why  
 But I paid to heed the lessons that I've learnt.

That afternoon in Wyee when, on my way to Sunday school  
 They were teaching me the values of the Word  
 Were teaching me the certainties, of a brief and transient life

Now in your younger days now gone.... I wonder if *you* heard?

Its 55 years now just gone, they buried 'em side by side  
He was just a brash young butcher and his Dad  
When the time arrives you least expect, when your plane crashes down  
If you haven't learnt eternal truths, I'll bet you wished you had

## 2. The greatest wonder

Is it not strange that a simple yes or no can, for many people, change the world? You might recall the story I told at the beginning of this book of the two young men who rode their bikes up to our house one day in Old Guildford, Sydney, and asked our father a simple question. It was "Do you mind if we pick your two boys up each Sunday and take them to Sunday School each week?"

I often wonder where I would be today if my father would have answered in the negative. An answer 'no' may well have consigned me to hell. You see, everything that has ever happened to me and will ever happen to me evolved around the answer my father gave. It changed my life, my brother's life, my sister and mother's life, and only God knows over the years how many more lives it changed.

Was it God who made my father say yes? Was it simply a matter of paternal discernment and wisdom? Or perhaps an innate breeding or upbringing from his own past from an era of days that bordered on the strictness of Victorian "Don't do as I do—do as I say" rigid disciplinarian obsessive religiosity that reached back to his own parents and beyond to their parents?

Who really knows? All I know is that the simple principle that my father lived by, worked. It would still work today if people had the brains, spiritual insight, or just plain simple care, love, and concern for their children. No children of any age, past or present, has faced the perils of this present generation.

So we are going to get a little religious here as I present a few little truisms that chartered the course of my life. Truisms, hope, and eternal destiny, that resulted from my father one day simply saying "yes" to a reasonable request.

### The Airman, The Cop and the Hotshot.

Well this is for the sceptic, the mockers and the doubters  
You can toss in all the atheists, evolutionists and the lot  
It's about three ordinary fellows, it all happened once to me  
One the Airman, one a Copper, and one, a young Hotshot.

It started late one evening when the copper and young Ron  
Were sent across for playing up, and for smuggling in the dope  
This crushing imposition came upon me like a rock  
Had to tell young Ron the Airman, Christ was his only hope.

The copper listened also, but then quietly walked away  
But Ron grew more intensive, seemed now desperate to live  
Could anyone expect right then, or possibly know the fact  
That one of us there talking, had two hours left to live?

I came to work next morning [obviously me who had not died!]  
I was stunned at the report, and the words that had been said  
The Airman that I'd witnessed to, the previous night before.  
Had suffered a drug-forced seizure, and then they found him dead.

This brings me to the Hotshot, he fits in here somewhere  
Just 19, fast car and a girl, and all that lay ahead  
He laughed at me, at the claims of Christ, [God made me speak to him]  
Within the week he wrecked his car, and his father found him dead

I was crooked at the Lord that week for badly letting me down  
To make me talk to men for nought, and then to let them die

**Six months later—that's 24 weeks, a woman looked me up**

Who told me what her name was, and then I found out why.

She was in fact the Aunty, of the Airman that was dead  
 She asked me what my name was and of course I then replied  
 She said she was a Christian and her nephew rang that night  
 "I've found my peace with God" he said, one hour before he died.

Think about that all you "Toms," your turn is on the way  
 You mockers and you "put it off," you ought to act your age  
 Did you notice that God showed Himself, **half a year after Ron was gone?**  
 Do you realize now that you could die, before you read this page?

I saw another man drop dead, it happened that same week  
 He'd only just accepted Christ, with his new life brightly showing  
 Would you like to know what his last words were, before he left this earth?  
 "If I die tonight just take my word, I know where I am going."

So drink your cup you lost poor souls, inebriate your guilt  
 You may have time to laugh it off, but then you never know  
 Your judgement day is on the way, one day you'll give account  
 God is knocking on your door right now, is it yes or is it no?

**4. Just borrowed**

My father's decision to send us to Sunday School had many ripple effects, not the least of which is the poem below and the event that caused its writing. The event occurred fifty six years after the boys picked us up for our first ride to Sunday School and is a litmus test to the masses who bawl and blubber at funeral services, who have no joy in their hearts, have no spiritual insight, and no hope for a future after death.

It could be said by the rationalists that the poem in question was a melancholy fool's attempt to console himself with grief or to expostulate his polemical views and concocted teachings and beliefs of a hereafter. Let me tell you, nothing could be further from the truth. Any persuasion to such presumption by any individual would only reflect my pity for them, and contempt for the place to which they are heading when the death dew begins to form on their brow.

If you should be amongst the number of the previous just mentioned, I would state the following:

Unless you have ever walked into a house and found your 38 year old daughter dead on the floor, and then had to go back outside to tell a wife who was just about to be diagnosed with cancer, to put all the goodies back into the boot of the car because her beautiful daughter was lying inside dead on the floor, I am afraid it is my business to inform you that you don't know what you are talking about. And I have no doubt you will be amongst the pathetic, dribbling, hopeless cases that attend the next funeral you go to, lest that is, it be your own.

My wife soon got over the terrible news that I delivered her, and as we both returned into the house to spend a few moments with our daughter before masses of police, ambulance and ministers arrived, we both had an overwhelming sense of peace that God had taken our daughter home and that we would see her again in the not too distant future. We were in fact quietly contented and completely at peace that death for our daughter was not only the end of her hell on earth, it was the beginning of her eternal victory and joy in heaven.

In her study was the evidence that attested to the last minutes of her life. There was an opened Bible which she had been reading, upon which lay her spectacles. Close by was half a glass of water that she had been drinking before she got up, walked to the kitchen and dropped dead.

There's the ripple affect if you care to see it of my father who considered it the right and proper thing to do to send his kids to Sunday School 56 years before. The woman who died as recorded in this story was of course, his own grand daughter who had become a Christian as a direct result of the simple decision that he had made, the results of which passed down the family line, and will forever continue to do so. Put a price on that if you dare!

**Just borrowed**

An angel could have brought her, our very youngest daughter  
 An effigy of God's amazing grace  
 She was only on the borrow, I'll not delve into our sorrow  
 I remember most the shine upon her face.

Earthly prophets shared no glory, neither does our daughter's story  
 Just the spewing, the addiction and the pain  
 And the torment was unfair of the cross she had to bear  
 Couldn't keep her down, she'd just get up again.

Christ died for sinners lost, that is why He paid the cost  
 An important fact I'd like you all to know  
 Though our daughter's life unsteady, in the end she was quite ready  
 She was absolutely ready then to go.

What I cannot put in writing, when we think, it's quite exciting  
 When we walked into her flat and found her dead  
 Tears and sorrows couldn't save us, 'twas assurance that God gave us  
 There was no death...she'd just gone on ahead.

You may be prone to mocking, but eternity is shocking  
 Our precious girl went home for you to know  
 Must I feed you with a spoon? *Your* turn is coming soon  
 Will you be in heaven above, or down in hell below?

Hope it was an angel brought her, our precious smiling daughter  
 I'll have to stop, I'm running out of space  
 You see how time just flies, our only hope is when one dies  
 We know we'll meet our Suzie face to face.

. When Paul just got converted, his world became perverted  
 He was flogged and bashed and stoned and beaten sore  
 Jailed, hurt by any means, attacked by Satan's fiends  
 Seemed to be the cross, God's people mainly bore.

Suzie never was a wife, kicked and suffered all her life  
 Her brilliant mind just could not understand  
 Her drugs, bulimia, drink, often took her to the brink  
 But when she went, it was by God's own hand.

Is not pure sapphire hone from scratching cutting stone?  
 Pure gold extracted from the darkest pit?  
 It's the same with you and me if we want the victory  
 Only cut and polished people can be fit.

It may be drugs or sorrow, you may never see tomorrow  
 Your heart could stop at any time its true  
 You may hold to high positions, that meet not God's conditions  
 Only He can change your life and make it new.

On that awful day we dread, when we found our angel dead  
 It really was to us a day of grace  
 It became the very essence of God's amazing presence  
 We learned just how to laugh death in the face.

##### 5. The Only Thing That Really Matters

I doubt if you will tether my poetical endeavour  
 My arrant tries are balanced on the fickleness of breath  
 I pen about a matter, not the former but the latter  
 Our greatest single journey is the odyssey of death.

They speak of evolution, prominent fool's solution  
 Is it theory of a cabbage, of a monkey or a fish?  
 Illogical delusion such spiritual pollution  
 It's the Devil's sleight of hand, it's a dire and deadly wish.

If enquiry aptly fitting is it safe where you are sitting?

Permit me here to lever a persuasion to be read  
 Conundrum here presented accepted or resented  
 Where will you then be headed seconds after you are dead?

All these Easter seasons, are not the simple reasons  
 Why desperate souls should seek a relationship with God  
 Is the Yuletidal season just an act of pagan treason?  
 Too late by far to matter when they plant you in the sod.

Let's desist from futile rot, are you saved or are you not?  
 Is the life of God within you, is He there and can you tell?  
 If your heart's a tight-closed book, you're much sillier than you look  
 You are blinded and you're lost, and you're on your way to hell.

Does the horror of a furnace [the place that God will burn us]  
 Give provocation passing, then there's something you should know  
 Your proud bold self-reliance is an act of God defiance  
 It's not where God will send you, it's where you will choose to go.

You can opt for glorious age and before you turn this page  
 Every cell and every sinew can know that God's within  
 Cry 'please Jesus set me free, and give to me victory  
 I repent, please turn me 'round, and please rid my life of sin.'

Is this verse a sinister plot, is this stuff all Tommy Rot?  
 Are my sentiments all mad, can you know where I begin?  
 If your faith in God is sound, the answer will be found  
 The peace of God will save you, and you'll know it deep within.

## 6. The Atheist's Prayer.

Dear Lord please help our nation, and all those 'fundamentals'  
 Is right-wing Christian madness here to stay?  
 Against my learn-ed station, and wowser's 'incidentals'  
 Oh please permit this godless fool his say.

We atheistic thinkers, got a few profound degrees  
 We're mastered in the clever things of man,  
 We gained our pagan blinkers, in the universities  
 We learnt it wrong, this Godly master plan.

They taught us in the pre-school, we came from hairy apes  
 And even jelly fish, I'm also told,  
 The Bible calls such men a fool, a better noun escapes,  
 Those wowsers are the weirdest of the fold.

If a loving God exists, who casts lost souls in hell  
 As Christian hypocrites all rant and bawl,  
 As God-like myth consists – and as time is bound to tell  
 It's me, the biggest hypocrite of all.

To me it's just a mystery, how planet Earth just spins  
 And if it veered just one degree off course  
 I know we'd all be history, [common logic never wins]  
 Atheism is the rhetoric of a horse.

What about that Jewish war, that leads to Armageddon  
 That emanates from Abrahamic sons?  
 It's just a festering sore, for fools without a head on,  
 Who fail to see the truth of bombs and guns.

And of the past dark ages, six thousand years in all  
 Aid hapless atheists to rationalise  
 To shun historic pages, to ignore man's rise and fall,  
 It blinds and closes godless shuttered eyes.

Thank you for my parents Lord, who came from monkeys hairy  
 My Dad forbade the gospel to me tell  
 He said "Religion's nonsense," he said it's 'airy fairy,'  
 We'll have a great reunion down in hell.

They say a Trump is sounding, that the Son is on his way  
 They say there'll be a great celestial song  
 Lost hearts will be left pounding, there'll be a mournful cry  
 When we atheists know we got it wrong.

I thank you for my peers Lord, though I speak with tongue in cheek,  
 There's Stalin, Hitler, Mao Tse Tung, and Pot  
 I could not understand Lord, when Darwin changed his speak,  
 He changed it e're his habitat got hot.

My theses and my papers, and my elevated brow  
 All bloat my chest with secularistic pride  
 I shun religious capers, with my I.Q. of a cow,  
 When Christ returns, I could try to run and hide

Amen.

7. **If you had but one hour to live**

**[which you will one day soon.]**

To think of today, there's something I'd say, there's not much good news I can give  
 The truth I would find, please make up your mind, if you just had one hour to live.  
 I'll try to be brief, of your on-coming grief, your last hour on earth is to come,  
 My news might be sour, might come in the hour, 'twill be such a sadness for some.

It just seems to me, there categories three, you're one of the other no doubt,  
 It might bring some pain, as you try to explain, what life and your lot is about.  
 If you stop and you think, all your feelings might sink, there's a point I've got here to tell,  
 On your last lie down, you'll go up or down, you'll end up in heaven or hell.

Now this is all true, and I'm telling you, never let it be left unsaid,  
 May I be discreet, he dropped dead at my feet, and when I say dead, I mean dead.  
 Just ten days before, God knocked at his door, his death was a stunning blow,  
 But when his hour came, God called out his name, for Alec the end of the show.

Those cata'gries three, that's one two and three, will tell what position you're in,  
 You're saved or you're lost, start counting the cost, you could all be rotting in sin.  
 Like Israel the day, King Pharoah did say, "You're mine and I'm keeping you bound."  
 The Devil's the same, still playing his game, solution in Christ can be found.

Now all the Jews free, it's like you and me, in fact this is cata'gry two'  
 But are you still bound, in wilderness found, and simply don't know what to do?  
 It simply is best, to sit at His rest, where spiritual wheels skid no more  
 For truth if you grope, 'twill offer you hope, Christ stands and knocks at your door.

9. **Watch those words.**

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Old Mr. Cunningham was a pointed-faced hard-doer. A skinny old "Mr.Efficiency" who exuded an air of Agintelligence and knowledge. He reminded me of the old retired bank manager type. When I was at kid at Sunday School, I got him to put something into my autograph book and this is what he wrote.

**"That that is is that that is not is not is not that it"** then signed it.

It took me about seven years to work out what his words meant. I'm not real quick on the uptake. We have got to be careful with words and what goes into our minds. I thought on this occasion old Cunningham had lost the plot and needed to be put away into a funny farm.

Old Mr Cunningham's words make perfect sense if you put in the proper punctuation. If you did, it would then read, "**That that is, is. That that is not, is not. Is not that it?**" It reads very simply, and if you try this autograph on some of your friends, you will find that very few of them will be able to work it out, yet, it is so simple. It is only a matter of watching the words carefully.

Let's take for example the first "**That that is, is,**" in the Bible. It is in the very first verse that even the old cocky could grasp. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The very last "**That that is not, is not,**" is found in the last thing the Bible says in the book of Revelation. It is a clear warning to any person who adds to or takes away from the meaning of the Bible, and warns that Jesus Christ is returning to the earth to claim His own very soon.

Here's the Bible in a nutshell: It is the infallible Truth. It is God's plan for man's destiny. Its message is crystal clear. It's a Book that depicts in the clearest of black and white terms that, **That that is-is, and that that is not-is not!** Then my dear reader—**is that not it?**

### The Cross

I travel down a vile road, God's whip of green hide goad,  
It often seems in terms of gains and loss  
Well-meaning men and fools, taught us lies in Sunday Schools,  
They camouflaged the meaning of the cross.

And that green hide whip is there, and the yokes we 'bullocks' wear  
Make toughened men know exactly who is boss,  
And that road winds in the sticks, as we kick against the pricks,  
On that cruel lonely road toward the cross.

But many will lose the race, and more will lose their place,  
Their rusty wheels are soon to gather moss,  
It's as though they never planned it—more, never understand it,  
That lesson of the journey to the cross.

Would you trade your earthly fritter, for festal robes of glitter?  
Would you walk away with head indignant toss?  
For the dauntless ones who care, there's a death awaiting there,  
Awful death awaits the reaching of the cross.

It's a roadway lined with doubts, and pain and spiritual droughts,  
God's abandonment will be the greater loss,  
You'll walk that road transfixed, as if your God does not exist,  
Then stagger t'ward your death beneath the cross.

Well Jesus made it through, there He died for me and you.  
He died then rose to conquer Satan's dross,  
Resurrection power is free, and it's there for you and me,  
But it's hidden at the bottom of the cross.

This myth of prosperity—fool's delusion fails to see,  
It's paved with those who want to be the boss,  
If you shun the pain and tears, and the struggling through the years,  
Forget about that road down to the cross.

Can you claim you're crucified? Well, a cocky can beside,  
Do you now emit a radiant glow of gloss?  
You're great pretence will fool you, and we'll all know the truth too,  
**That you escaped the horror of the cross.**

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