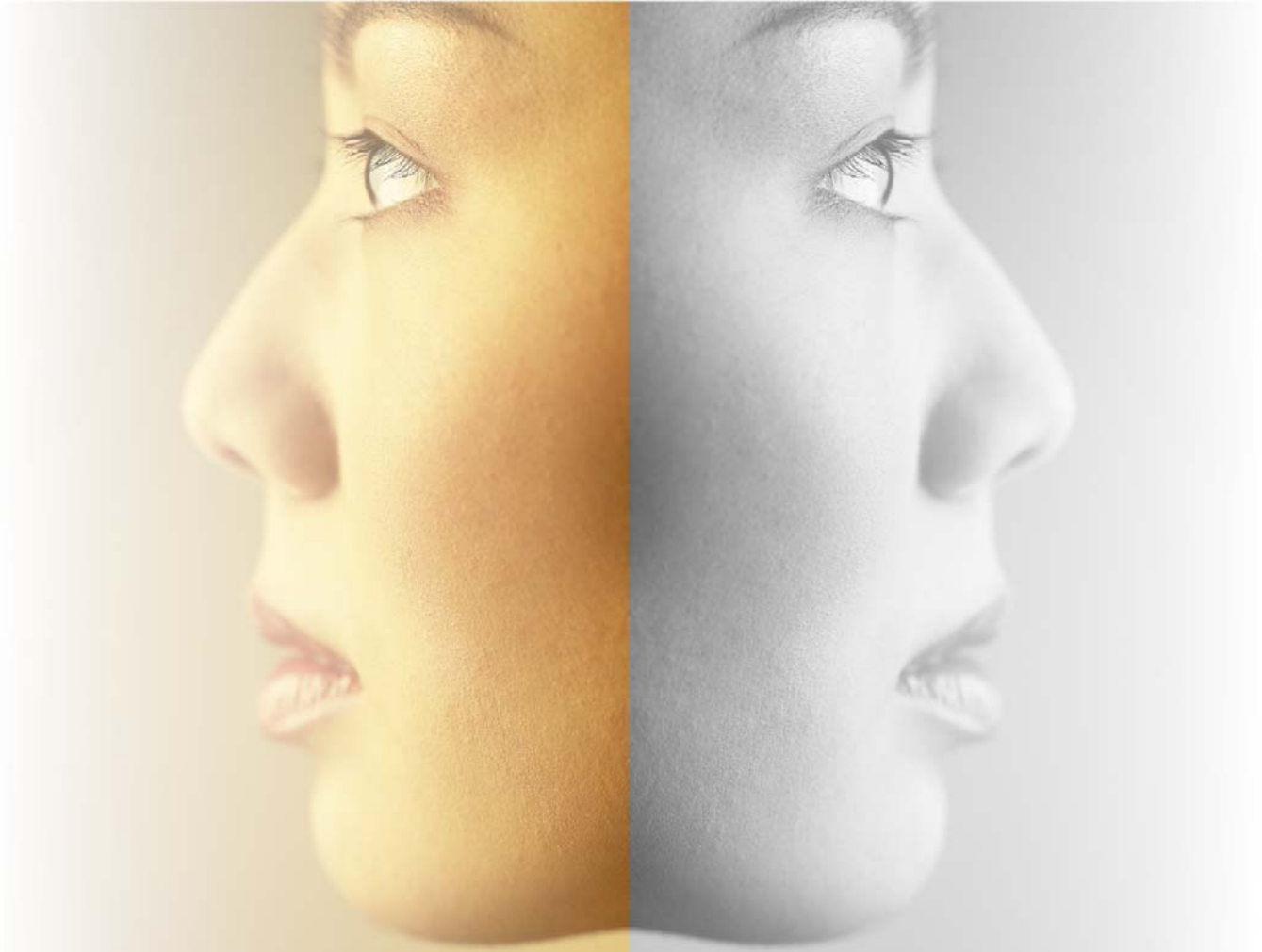


Public Image or Real Me



Poems by Pauline Pearson

List of Poems in order

Public Image or Real Me

Bruised Spirit

Opening Up

The Cupboard

When I Can't Feel God's Presence

Dry Valley

What is Love?

My Bundle

Do You Love me?

Frightened Child

Why God?

On the Rubbish Heap

A Woman for God

Conflict

Childhood Chasm

Choices

One Pebble in the Pool

I hold a Box

Why Didn't I say 'No'?

The Wall

The End of the Road

Good and Bad Secrets

Rabbit in the Corner

Public Image or Real me

When I began to let you see
What was inside - the real me,
My first reaction was relief
But also, mixed up, shame and grief.

Pressed down inside for months and years
Were my emotion, thoughts and fears.
I did not know that I could say
How I was feeling on that day.

I thought that, as a Christian, I
Should always smile and never cry,
Should never show that I might fail
Perfection - that was quite beyond the pale!

But I grew sick of smiles and lies
Where inside were such miseries.
I had to find a way to break
The pattern - for my heart's sake.

So I began hesitantly
To let you see the real me,
Dismantling the brick facade -
The public image - that was hard!

Would you react, reject and shun
This frightened trembling Christian?
I wondered, could you ever say,
'I understand, I've felt this way'.

But now I realise this is true -
I've got to know the real You,
Despised, rejected, crucified,
And I no longer have to hide
The real me.

Bruised Spirit

Crushed and bruised beyond belief,
Spirit broken down with grief,
Can I rise again and know
A place where living waters flow?

Can I ever find a way
To turn again to God and pray?
Would He listen to my plea?
I'm not sure He even sees me.

In my mind is disillusion,
Fear, mistrust and deep confusion.
Does God love me – if so, why –
When no one else will hear my cry?

Despite my fear, I will reach out.
I will believe, though there is doubt.
I'm trusting God will understand –
I feel the scars upon His hand.

Come, my daughter, come, my son,
My love extends to everyone.
There's healing and forgiveness, too.
It's there for you, it's there for you.

Opening Up

When I came, desperate,
With the dawning knowledge
That I had to do something
About the pain and past abuse,
All I wanted was for it to go away.
I began to look at me
And you said,
'How does it feel?
What's going on for you?
Can you tell me?'

Slowly, it began to dawn on me
Just what had been done.
The feelings which had laid
Dormant under the pressure cooker lid,
Began to rise, bubbling,
Escaping like the steam,
Hissing louder and louder
Till they erupted
In a most untidy way.

And the pain grew, wave upon wave,
And the anger, too, rage upon rage,
And I hurt, I really did!
I asked myself, 'Do I really
Want to go on with this?'
You told me, 'It will not always
Feel this way. There is hope!
You will get better.'
So I hung on in there,
And, at last, the pain receded.

Today I look back
Into the painful past
And know the freedom
That has come at last.

The Cupboard

I'm scared of doing this –
Opening the cupboard.
Who knows what will fall out
And roll untidily across the floor?
How embarrassing if all
Should see the mess
And hear the crash and bang!

In a way I can cope with
What's in front –
It's what's behind that registers
High on my worry scale.
In amongst the toys and games,
The spiders' webs, the dust,
Are the half-forgotten, half-remembered things.

How can I deal with them?
I'm like a child
On my first day at school –
Frightened of what might happen;
The strangeness, the separation,
The excitement of doing something
That I've never done before.

I had a teacher then to help me,
And I need one now.
Holy Spirit, show me what I should do,
But let me feel the comfort
Of Your presence protecting me
As I look through the contents of
The cupboard of my life.

When I can't feel God's presence

When I can't feel God's presence
Does it mean that he's not there?
When my hold on faith is crumbling
And I find no sense in prayer,
Does He think that I'm a failure?
Will he say that I don't count
Because I can't read the bible
And my mind is full of doubt?

When all I feel is darkness,
It's hard to know what's right.
It's so very hard to struggle –
Shall I just give up the fight?
But oh, I want to know You Lord,
To feel Your presence near.
Do You know how I am feeling?
Is it that You don't care?

'I care, dear child, I understand,
And when you hurt, I feel your pain.
I walk with you on that darkened path
To bring you into light again.
And the reason why I walk with you
Is because you are my friend.
No matter how you're feeling
My love will never end'.

Dry Valley

This is a long, dry valley
I'm walking through.
I can see no end.
Only burning, shimmering despair.
Sometimes I find water,
But when I reach out,
All I can taste is tears.

Oh, God, how long must I walk?
Can't I stop?
Can't I just lay down and die?
Here's a little bush -
A tiny bit of shade.
I'll stay here and drift away
Into forgetfulness.

I rub my eyes, so hot and tired,
Someone is standing beside me,
Holding out a bottle
Of cool, fresh water.
'Take it, drink,' the angel says,
'God has a purpose in this valley,
So walk on.'

What is Love?

How can I know that God really loves me
If I don't understand what love is?
And to try to believe that he came
And he died just for me – that's impossible!
It's hard to believe that I'm special
Though I know that he cares for me;
But *loves* me? I just can't accept that!
I'm too unimportant to see.

I can accept it for others,
That He loves them and holds them so near,
But 'Father' to me is quite different –
Unstable, unlistening, God of Fear.
I want a God who listens,
Who understands each tear,
Who brings me hope and comfort,
Whispering peace into my ear.

But dare I hope for such things as these?
And is this what love really means?
Could I find in you the Father
That I longed for in my dreams?

My little, hurting, lovely child,
Come here, come close to Me.
Let's have a quiet chat
While you sit upon my knee.

I will tell you what I bought you with –
My treasure and my pride,
I paid for you with My own life,
Put your hand there, in my side.
Can you feel the scars? Can you understand
As I hold you with my nail marked hands?
And as your darling face I kiss,
I'll ask you child, do you know what love is?

My Bundle

I stand here, all alone,
With my bundle.
I hug it close to my body,
Nervously checking
That the string holds firm.
It's fine, no problem.

I can hear your voice,
Asking me to give you
My bundle.
I shake my head,
I don't want you to see
What's inside.

You tell me,
As I stand here shamefaced,
That you know anyway,
So why not undo the string?
I take a deep breath
And fumble with the knots...

This ugly, little thing?
It's anger.
And this one?
'Fear', I whisper, licking dry lips.
And now, the big one?
Rejection!
I scream.

I stand here, empty,
My hands hang heavy by my side.
I hear your voice again.
I look up, half-trembling,
To a dazzling array of gifts.

'Are they for me?', I whisper.
Why would you give presents
To somebody like me?
'But you're My child',
I hear you say.
'And I love you - any way.
Unwrap your gifts'.

There's peace (instead of anger),
Joy and assurance of God's love,
That take the place of fear.
And best of all - acceptance,
Into the Father's heart.

I stand here, still,
Alone no more.
Holding the hand of Father God.
I look up into His face,
Seeing the smile of approval,
And shyly, I smile back.

Do you love me?

I'm the little part of you,

The one you used to be.

The one who faced rejection,

Abuse and insecurity.

I know that you are trying

To see things the way I see,

But all I really want from you

Is for you to say you love me.

Frightened Child

Here I sit inside my shell,
Withdrawn again from your love.
Wanting so much
To feel your touch
But I'm frightened by the thought of it.
I know that I'm keeping you
From the comfort you can bring,
But my head is full of such confusion and pain –
The range of emotions I'm experiencing.

Here I am, a frightened child,
Putting a brave face on it all,
But calling to you
And only you
To wrap me in your arms again.
I know that I'll have to start trusting you, Lord,
To let you hold me securely and tight,
Whilst I kick and scream at the unfairness of life,
A little child who is wanting to fight.

So here I am, without my shell,
Opening myself to receive your love.
Pour in your balm
At the end of the storm,
Father God accepting me.

Why, God?

There are some things, God
That I find difficult to understand.
I just can't make sense of
All the things that happen -
Injustice, cruelty, abuse, neglect.
Why do you seem to stand
On the sidelines of our lives?
It's just not fair – that's how I feel
And I'm angry because
You didn't intervene.
Or did you?

Did you stop something from happening
That might even have been worse?
The trouble is, God, I just don't know any more.
Will the fact that I feel this way
Prevent you from loving me?
No, it can't – you're bigger than that,
I know.
In fact you're so big, so powerful,
That it's way beyond my tiny mind.

The thing is, God, that
I still love you, still want you
In control of my life.
I think that I can only
Wrap up these questions in my tears
And give them, give them up
To you.

On the Rubbish Heap

Dust-ridden you lie there,
Exposed to view,
Shame-faced and guilty,
Unforgivable you.
Fearful and helpless,
Full of despair,
No hope for the future,
And no-one to care.

Tenderly God saw
His daughter in need,
Gently he called you
His daughter indeed.
His loving hands draped you
With a robe dazzling white,
His righteousness only
Now is in sight.

So why are you waiting,
O daughter, beloved?
Stand up and acknowledge
Your Father above.
His Word is a rock that
Is solid, secure.
His love cannot alter,
Will forever endure.

And you are forgiven,
And you are now free
To be all that the Father
Planned for you to be.

A Woman for God

Loved and cherished
Long before the world was shaped.
Abused, rejected by those who should have cared,
You grew, not knowing who you were,
Not knowing your uniqueness
And specialness to God,
Who made you.

Loved and cherished,
Now you are a woman grown
And yet still a child inside,
Rejected and alone, talented and brave,
Not knowing yet
Your specialness to God
Who made you.

Your worthiness is found
Not in what you do
But in who you are in Him.
You have been chosen
Picked out by God
To be the woman
He planned for you to be.

Conflict

There's a battle going on
Within my soul,
For I want, Oh I want
To be really whole,
To be close to God
And to know him well,
But I'm angry with God –
And that's **hard** to tell!

I wanted so much
As a child to know
That he listened to me,
That he loved me so,
And I called to him,
“Will you help me, Lord?
Will you stop this pain?”
But he never heard.

I suppose I think,
Deep within my heart,
That he hated the sin
That he drew apart.
For I thought that the wrong
And the sins that were done
Were down to me –
So I cried alone.

But I want you, God,
In spite of it all,
So will you listen
If I dare to call?

'I'm listening, child,
As I listened then.
Let's talk it through
And begin again'.

Childhood Chasm

You have looked into empty spaces,
Seeing only rocks of pain,
Sharp places, icy rain.
You called for the child,
And heard only a mocking echo,
Borne on the winds of time.
You looked for fun and laughter,
Tenderness and care,
But though you hunted high and low,
They were not anywhere.

At last you wept, despairingly,
Seeing the loss and devastation -
The empty places of your life,
Mourning the waste of childhood.

And now I come,
Holding out broken hands,
But they are filled with gifts
That have your name on the label.
Beauty for ashes,
Oil of joy,
Peace everlasting
That nothing can destroy.
Healing balm to soothe the pain,
And hope - it will not be this way again.

Reach out!
Take the gifts from a Father
Who only seeks your good.
Reach out!
Take and know the filling
Of those empty, hurting places,
With the love of God.

Choices

I did not choose to be abused
I did not choose the pain.
I did not ask for it to happen
Once more – and then again.
I did not want a childhood
Full of terror, full of blame,
The words that cut and wounded –
But it happened just the same!

I cannot change my childhood.
It's just part of what I am,
But I have chosen healing
In Jesus' precious name.
For He chose me – yes, He chose me,
Before I ever came to be,
And He loved me and He grieved,
Upon the cross of Calvary.

So now I choose to give Him
All the things that hurt me so,
The secrets that I hid, I now
Feel safe to let them go.
And though I don't forget the sadness,
God is helping me to see
That he wove it in the pattern
Of the things He's planned for me.

One Pebble in the Pool

Only one pebble was thrown –
At least, as far as is known,
But the ripples spread wider
And wider each day.
The price became greater
That each had to pay
For the knock-on effects of sin.

Only one person abused
But others were hurt and confused
In the family and church.
As the impact was felt
The pain became greater
As more blows were dealt,
And it was “only” one person’s sin.

I Hold a Box

I hold a box
Clutched tightly to my chest
And, Oh, it's full again
Of all the latest revelations
From my wee child.

Innocently he talks
Of what was done to him
And then, relieved of his load,
Falls asleep –
Whilst I lie here grieving,
Seething, fretting.

How could she do it?
What help is she getting?
How much more is there to know?
Oh God, what can I do
With all this anger,
All this pain?
There's only one place I know
And so I open up the box
And place it in Your nail-scarred hands again.

Why didn't I say No?

When everything started
All those years ago,
Why, oh why was it
That I didn't say 'no'?
I should have said 'stop!'
Should have pushed him away,
But I didn't and have carried
That guilt to this day.

It must have been my fault,
I should've told him to go,
But he begged and he pleaded
And I didn't say 'no'
When he gave me those sweeties
And those pennies for pay,
And I've carried that burden of guilt
To this day.

'That guilt which you're carrying
Belongs not to you,
But to your abuser – he did it to you.
He was bigger and stronger
And you couldn't say 'no'
When you were a child all those years ago.

So put down that burden
For I want you to see
You are loved and accepted
And precious to Me.
When I died on the cross
All your past I did know.
Now I call you to freedom
My child, don't say 'no!'

The Wall

You stand there in the darkness,
Fingers pressed against the wall,
Desperately searching for a way through
Unyielding stone.
Determined not to go back
But seeing no way forward.

Spiritual impasse, darkness indeed,
Longing to progress in God
But adamant you can't forgive
What has been done.

A voice reminds you that you have known
Forgiveness in your life.
The cost for Him was giving up His own.
What cost for you?
Giving up control, you whisper,
Losing pride and losing power,
Giving up rage, revenge,
Allowing bitterness to leave.

Suddenly you sense a lightening
Of the darkness.
You see a place where the
Mortar is loose.
'Help me God', you whisper.
'I want to be able to forgive'.

And as you push against the wall,
You sense it giving way.
Slowly, slowly,
You step across the rubble
Into the freedom of forgiveness.

The End of the Road....

Reaching this place feels like the end,
I've reached a point where
There can be no turning back.
I wish I could, 'cos what I face
Seems so impossible.
Forgiveness? No way! Why should I,
After all that has been done to me?
If I forgive, then it will be as though
The sins against me were unimportant
And of no account.
If I forgive, then there'll be nothing left.
But if I don't – what then?

And God says,
Forgiveness does not mean that
What you suffered doesn't matter any more.
It just means that My grace and My love
Can cover all that has been done to you.
As you have known forgiveness for yourself,
So you can extend the same to others.
You can, my child.
I made it possible on the bitter road
From Gethsemane to Calvary,
Where forgiveness became complete.

O God, my heart is torn – my whole body
Is an ocean full of tears.
Can I forgive? God help me –
Not my will but Yours alone.
I will step out, I will!
So, help me, God.

Good and Bad Secrets

I have a secret!
I wish I could say
What someone asked
Me to keep today.
Mum's birthday is coming
And dad's bought her a –
No! I won't tell anyone
Until the great day.

I have a secret –
I wish I could say
What someone asked
Me to keep today.
It feels a bit scary.
What can I do?
Would it be alright
If I tell it to you?

Rabbit in the Corner

In the corner sat a rabbit,
Very frightened, very small,
Very muddled in her thinking,
Should she talk about it at all?

I think I was a naughty rabbit,
I think I was but I'm not sure,
Perhaps I should have run away
When he touched me with his paw.

A kind and gentle person stepped in
Where the rabbit sat in shame.
He said, 'I know what you are thinking,
Little one, you're not to blame'.

'I'm very, very sad it happened,
And what he did - it wasn't right.
But when I see you, little rabbit,
YOU are not naughty in my sight'.

The rabbit hopped out of the corner,
And leant against the kind man's knee.
Then Jesus' voice came clearly to her,
'You're safe now, rabbit, and you're free'.



PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ
All poems (c) CCPAS 2005

Price £1.50