



Love Poems

FROM A CHRISTIAN WIFE

TO HER HUSBAND

DECADES OF LOVE, FRIENDSHIP, AND LIFE TOGETHER

During her lifetime, Ruth Bell Graham wrote dozens of poems. Here are a few of them that beautifully convey her enduring love for her husband, Billy. More than that: Her poems reflect the couple's committed relationship to their faithful God and to each other. Like other couples, Billy and Ruth experienced joy and sorrow, tension and tenderness over the years. As you read, we pray these touching poems will help deepen your love and devotion toward those closest to your heart.

FROM THE DESK OF RUTH BELL GRAHAM:

Pity the married couple who expect too much from one another.

It is a foolish woman who expects her husband to be to her that which only Jesus Christ Himself can be: always ready to forgive, totally understanding, unendingly patient, invariably tender and loving, unfailing in every area, anticipating every need, and making more than adequate provision. Such expectations put a man under an impossible strain. The same goes for the man who expects too much from his wife.

IF I MARRY

Ruth wrote this poem as a 17-year-old on a ship as she voyaged from China to the United States to attend Wheaton College.

If I marry:

He must be so tall when he is on his knees,
as one has said,
he reaches all the way to Heaven.

His shoulders must be broad enough to
bear the burden of a family.

His lips must be strong enough to smile,
firm enough to say no,
and tender enough to kiss.

His love must be so deep that it
takes its stand in
Christ and so wide that
it takes in the whole world.

He must be big enough to be gentle
and great enough to be thoughtful.

His arms must be strong enough
to carry a little child.

DEAR GOD, I PRAYED

Dear God, I prayed, all unafraid
(as we're inclined to do),
I do not need a handsome man
but let him be like You;

I do not need one big and strong
nor yet so very tall,
nor need he be some genius,
or wealthy, Lord, at all;

but let his head be high, dear God,
and let his eye be clear,
his shoulders straight, what'er his state,
whate'er his earthy sphere;

and let his face have character,
a ruggedness of soul,
and let his whole life show, dear God,
a singleness of goal;

then when he comes
(as he will come)
with quiet eyes aglow,
I'll understand that he's the man
I prayed for long ago.

I LOOKED INTO YOUR FACE AND KNEW

I looked into your face and knew
that you were true;
those clear deep eyes awoke in me
a trust in you.

I'd dreamt of shoulders broad and straight,
one built to lead;
I met you once and knew that you
were all I need.

You did not have to say a word
to make me feel
that will, completely in control,
was made of steel.

I'd dreamt of dashing love and bold,
life wild with zest;
but when with you my heart was stilled
to perfect rest.

And how? I could not understand,
it seemed so odd:
till on my heart it quietly dawned
—love is of God!

NEVER LET IT END, GOD!

Never let it end, God,
never—please—
all this growing loveliness,
all of these
brief moments of
fresh pleasure—

never let it end,
let us always
be a little breathless
at love's beauty;

never let us pause to reason
from a sense of duty;
never let us
stop to measure
just how much to give;

never let us
stoop to weigh love;
let us live—
and live!

THROUGH THE YEARS

Train our love
that it may grow
slowly ... deeply ... steadily;
till our hearts will overflow
unrestrained and readily.

Discipline it too,
dear God;
strength of steel
throughout the whole.

Teach us patience,
thoughtfulness,
tenderness, and
self-control.

Deepen it
throughout the years,
age and mellow it
until,
time that finds us
old without,
within,
will find us
lovers still.

LOVE WITHOUT CLINGING

Love
without clinging;
cry
if you must—
but privately cry;

the heart will adjust
to the newness of loving
in practical ways:
cleaning
and cooking
and sorting out clothes,
all say, "I love you,"
when lovingly done.

So—
love
without clinging;
cry—
if you must—
but privately cry;

the heart will adjust
to the length of his stride,
the song he is singing,
the trail he must ride,
the tensions that make him
the man that he is,
the world he must face,
the life that is his.

So
love
without clinging;
cry—
if you must—
but privately cry;

the heart will adjust
to being the heart,
not the forefront of life;
a part of himself,
not the object—
his wife.

So—
love!

HERO-WORSHIP

I met you years ago
when
of all the men
I knew,
you,
I hero-worshipped

Then:

you are my husband, now,
my husband!

And from my home
(your arms),
I turn to look
down the long rail of years
to where I met you first
and hero-worshipped,
and I would smile;
... I know you better now:

the faults,
the odd preferences,
the differences
that make you you.

That other me
—so young,
so far away—
saw you
and hero-worshipped
but never knew;
while I,
grown wiser
with the closeness of these years,
hero-worship too!

FINAL NOTE:

All relationships we have in this life—including marriage—will one day end. However, there is one that endures forever. To learn more about this greatest love story of all—God's great love for us—explore these free resources:

- *Why does God love me?* Go to PeaceWithGod.net.
- For daily spiritual devotions, go online to BillyGraham.org/devotions.
- To speak with one of our associates for prayer, call our 24/7 prayer line at **888-388-2683**.