

Like fallen leaves so men have died,
And time did quick their name erase;
Like winter scenes they're passed aside
By those who must give others place.

There are but few whose name lives on
For wealth or pow'r or noble cause;
But none does match the tribute strong
To one for whom the world does pause.

Each passing year poor maid and king
Bestows respect on Jesus' name;
Cathedral bells will world-wide ring,
The streets will hush the day He came.

The world that met Him once with hate
And scarce begrudged Him half His years
Today His birth will celebrate
With solemn vigil, gifts, and cheers.

Such transformation, clear, sublime,
Such retribution fitting, just,
Can only be explained sublime!
Unless—forbear—such made distrust!

Unless it is that He's not here
To strip our mock devotion bare;
To challenge our traditions dear,
Our pageants nor our icons spare.

Not here to ask, 'Why call me Lord,
And yet My words explain away?'
Make no mistake, religion's sword
Would surely pierce His side today.

No, nothing's changed—the world nor Christ,
His love is strong and friends are few;
The same whose will was sacrificed
Today requires as much from you.

Sincerely seek to know His will
And then in love His words obey;
Obedience plain is better still
Than all religion's vain display.

—J. from Ky.