

# HAPPINESS

Swollen tight with expectation  
At her second interview,  
She was bursting with excitement  
When the hiring call came through!  
But her work became vexation,  
Which at first was a delight,  
Now, to close her day's complaining,  
She writes résumés at night.

He could barely break from bragging  
When the car was new and clean . . .  
It was more than transportation,  
His enjoyment was serene!  
But the fresh became familiar,  
His fulfillment came and went,  
And the driver, once so happy,  
Shops again to be content.

What a joy to greet her baby,  
Hold the child, her very own!  
And the warm elation lasted  
Till her toddling boy was grown . . .  
But the teenage years were tragic,  
Dashing mother-hopes to dust.  
Now she's glad her son is leaving  
From the home of broken trust.

Passion's ecstasies in marriage  
Made first years a honeymoon,  
But the daily grind of duty  
Put the singers out of tune.  
Now he fantasizes daily  
Of the pleasure it would bring  
Living with another woman,  
If he tossed his wedding ring.

Happiness can be elusive:  
What seemed pleasing at the start  
Slowly loses its attraction,  
As the magic feelings part.  
Bright beginnings dim and darken  
Till emotion's thrill is lost . . .  
Misspent searches for perfection,  
Never compensate their cost.

When we look to things and people  
For the joy we think they lend,  
Happiness and satisfaction  
Are as shifting as the wind.  
Joy springs not from new  
possessions,  
Perfect children, job, or wife:  
True contentment comes when Jesus  
Is the Center of our life.

— *David L. Hatton, 7/9/1995*