



## Compressing thought into Haikus

*Many of these verses, particularly those written in 2016-2017, are included in the book  
[Still Digging – scratching the surface and plumbing the depths of prayer.](#)*

### How Haikus Work

*(The simple Haiku format of 3 lines consisting of 5, 7 then 5 syllables forces the writer to compress ideas, which presses the thoughts deeper...)*

Five – seven – five – STOP  
That is where a haiku ends...  
But the thought lingers

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### Still Digging

*(The first haiku I ever wrote tells a story about my journey that continues to echo in experience...)*

I tried to dig down  
To the bottom of God's love...  
I am still digging.

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### Life's hope

In the dawn childhood  
Shines bright and green and hopeful.  
When dusk closes in  
Embers can glow forever

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### Message written in blood

*(The Christian story is not an easy read...)*

Love is the message  
Written in blood on the cross.  
It hurts to read it.

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### Walking on Water

*(What did Peter feel like as he walked towards Jesus? And what does faith feel like in today's sceptical world?)*

Walking on water  
The sea looks far more choppy.  
Help me or I'll sink

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### Holding Faith Lightly

*Faith must face scepticism. It's not healthy to ignore it. (This three verse haiku breaks the rules. But being conventional does not promote growth)*

Orthodox doctrine  
But nothing above question;  
Faith strengthened by doubt.

Better to believe  
In gold that's been through the fire  
Than to trust in straw.

Holding faith lightly,  
Knowing it must be tested ...  
It always survives.

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### Samuel listens

*(1 Samuel 3:1-10)*

Samuel awoke,  
Hearing the same voice again.  
This time he listened

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### Prayer starts here

Prayer takes all forms.  
But it doesn't even start  
Until we turn up.

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### Holy Habits

Holy habits help  
To keep us on the pure path  
Of discipleship.

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### Kneeling

Kneeling, I submit  
It's not a place for boasting;  
A place for prayer

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### Not about duty

Not about duty  
Not about ticking boxes  
It's all about God.

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*The next poem isn't in strict haiku format, but, because it's short, it's included here:*

## **Suffering**

I don't blame God  
for my suffering, but –  
I let him use it.

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## **Adoration**

Adoration is  
A right sense of proportion –  
I bow to the truth.

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*Another 2-verse haiku:*

## **Thanksgiving**

If I am thankful  
my spirit is uplifted,  
so I benefit.  
Thankfulness is good,  
not just for the one we thank,  
but to make us smile.

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## **Take off your shoes**

Take off your shoes  
And feel the rough, dirty earth -  
That is holy ground

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## **Be still**

To be really still  
means letting go of tension,  
muscle by muscle

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## **My song is a prayer**

When I worship God  
I ride on clouds of wonder.  
My song is a prayer.

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## **A promise to pray**

A promise to pray  
is a commitment to love.  
I must not forget.

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*This one's also not strictly a Haiku, but it's short:*

## **Guilt be gone**

Guilt be gone  
I am who I am  
I'll meet with my God  
Any way that I *can*.

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*Two more verses that are not strictly in haiku format, but they are short, and consistent in theme with others in this document:*

## **Thoughts that won't go away**

I just had this thought  
as I started to pray;  
it popped into my mind  
and it won't go away

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## **In distraction or temptation**

In distraction or temptation  
we're not obliged to fall –  
though the phone may keep on ringing  
we don't have to take the call.

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*The following 2 haikus present ways of dealing with distraction in prayer and are based on advice given in "The Cloud of Unknowing":*

## **When distractions come**

When distractions come  
I look straight over their heads  
as if they're not there

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## **When it's all too much**

When it's all too much  
I fall down like a coward  
and leave it to God.

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*Again, not a true haiku, but short:*

## **People who can teach me**

The people who can teach me  
whoever they may be  
have views that may be faulty –  
they could be as wrong as me!

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## **Stages of prayer**

I want to progress  
through the stages of prayer  
whatever it costs.

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## **One word is enough**

One word is enough  
to fix my prayer on God  
and focus on him.

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## **Prayer ministry**

I am no better  
than the people I pray for.  
But still I can pray

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