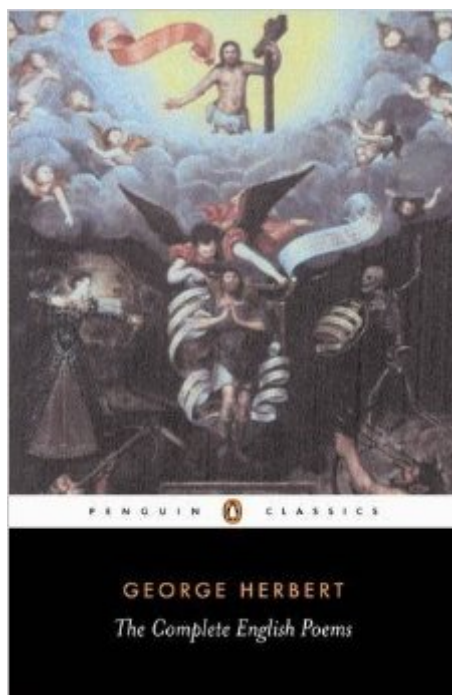


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The Complete English Poems (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

George Herbert combined the intellectual and the spiritual, the humble and the divine, to create some of the most moving devotional poetry in the English language. His deceptively simple verse uses the ingenious arguments typical of seventeenth-century 'metaphysical' poets, and unusual imagery drawn from musical structures, the natural world and domestic activity to explore a mosaic of Biblical themes. From the wit and wordplay of 'The Pulley' and the formal experimentation of 'Easter Wings' and 'Paradise', to the intense, highly personal relationship between man and God portrayed in 'The Collar' and 'Redemption', the works collected here show the transcendental power of divine love.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

George Herbert's poetry is, to my ears, some of the best religious poetry ever written. I studied a lot of poetry in grad school, but Herbert remains at the very top of my own personal literary canon. In Herbert, the best of godly devotion and exquisite craftsmanship are married, and that is a rare thing. This Penguin Classic version of "The Complete English Poems" has a misleading title - but in a good way! It not only contains all of Herbert's poetry but also his wise and wonderful book on the ministry, "A Priest to the Temple." Reading this manual on ministry gives you greater insight into where the profundity and godliness of Herbert's poetry comes from: in Herbert, the poet and priest are perfectly united. The poetry itself is divine. Although English metaphysical poetry may not be to everyone's taste, and it will be difficult for many modern readers, it's perfectly suited to mine. I love

the whimsical word play and the delight in the English language that Herbert manifests. The form matches the matter, and it always seems as if the poems end when they should on a note of satisfaction and having said just what one wanted to say. Most important of all, Herbert's poetry assists me in my praise of and devotion to my Lord. One of the most excellent aspects of Herbert's poetry is that it is not merely the individual meditations of a solitary Christian but is intimately connected to the life of Christ by being connected to His Bride, the Church. The structure of Herbert's collection, "The Temple," is aptly named. In summary, Herbert's poetry is a delight to my ears, my tongue, my mind, and my soul! Herbert's poetry also has a very personal connection with me: I used to read it to my wife when we were courting and early in our marriage.

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