

ALL MY LEAVES SCATTERED ON THE GROUND

By John F. Hall

There was a time when I would hand-rake the leaves on my front yard. Last year, I used an electric hand-held blower to blow the leaves out of my front yard and down Dyers Hill Road. Many, many, years ago, I would rake the leaves into a big pile. My granddaughters, Andrea and Heather would dive into those autumn leaves. To see the



world from their eyes, to witness their joy and to hear their laughter from inside that pile of leaves, is something that money cannot buy. It is Christ's free amusement. My wife, Paula took our picture as the kids were using two rakes to make a big pile of leaves. Barbara Vance wrote a poem called, "Raking Leaves." These are her words: "I raked the leaves on our front yard; it took all afternoon. I started at 'round half past one and said, 'I'll be done soon.' But once I saw how more leaves fell each time I made a pile, I quickly saw this outdoor chore was going to take awhile. And so I did what my dad said a winner does to win: I studied that great pile of leaves, and then I jumped right in."

Paul Simon wrote the song, "Leaves That Are Green." These are his lyrics: "I was



twenty-one years when I wrote this song. I'm twenty-two now, but I won't be for long. Time hurries on. And the leaves that are green turn to brown, and they wither in the wind, and they crumble in your hand. Once my heart was filled with the love of a girl. I held her close, but she faded in the night. Like a poem I meant to write, and the leaves that are green turn to brown, and they wither in the wind, and they

crumble in your hand. I threw a pebble in a brook and watched the ripples run away..." "And they never made a sound, and the leaves that are green turn to brown, and they crumble in your hand. Hello, hello, hello, hello. Good-bye, good-bye, good-bye, good-bye. That's all there is, and the leaves that are green turn to brown."

While I am getting ready to do my yearly chore, and blow all those leaves scattered on my front yard, I'm reminded of a song written by the country singer, Grandpa Jones, called "Falling Leaves." These are his lyrics: "Fallen leaves that lie scattered on the ground, the birds and flowers that were here cannot be found. All the friends that he once knew are not around. They're all scattered like leaves on the ground. Some folks drift through life and never thrill, to the feeling that a good deed brings until, it's too late and they are ready to lie down, there beneath the leaves that's scattered on the ground. Lord, let my eyes see every need of every man, make me stop and always lend a helping hand. Then when I'm laid beneath that little grassy mound, there will be more friends around

than leaves upon the ground. To your grave there's no taking any gold, you cannot use it when it's time for hands to fold, when you leave this earth for a better home someday, the only thing you'll take is what you give away."

I halfway agree with Grandpa Jones. I'll take with me the memory that I gave most of my stories away to family, extended family, friends, Christian Fraternity Brothers, and so many others. The talent was given to me to write by Jesus Christ. However, I have a Bible that was given to me back when I was nine years old. It is a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Voygang, and their son, Johnny. He wanted a brother, he wanted me. You see, they wanted to adopt me when I was in the orphanage. My mom was gone. My dad's job was eliminated. He had no car and no money. Our rented house burned to the ground and we lost everything but the clothes that we were wearing. My dad did not want me to become a ward of the state and be put in a foster home. He felt that I would be better off in a Christian orphanage, until he could find a job in Texas. He declined the offer from the Voygang's to adopt me. They asked me if I wanted anything. I asked for a Bible, not knowing if my wish would be granted. That Bible is falling apart. The black front and back cover has pulled away from the binding. A few pages have become loose. I told the local undertaker, John Mark Vinson, to put that tattered old Bible in my hands, when they lie me down beneath the leaves scattered on the ground.

Billie Joe Armstrong wrote the acoustic ballad, "Wake Me Up When September Ends." he wrote the ballad about the death of his dad when he was 10 years old. He was assisted by Mike Dirnt and Tre Cool. These are some of their lyrics: "Summer has come and past, the innocent can never last. Wake me up when September ends. Like my father's come to pass, seven years has gone so fast. Wake me up when September ends. Here comes the rain again falling from the stars. Drenched in my pain again becoming who we are. As my memory rests but never forgets what I lost. Wake me up when September ends. Ring out the bells again like we did when spring began. Wake me up when September ends. Like my father's come to pass, twenty years has gone so fast. Wake me up when September ends..."

I like the hymn written by Mollie Lee called, "Before God Put the Leaves on the Trees." These are her lyrics: "Before God puts leaves on the trees, before He made the herbs bearing seeds, He thought about you, and He thought about me, and He loved us. Before God made the sun giving light, before He placed the stars shining bright, He thought about you, and He thought about me, and He loved us, and He loved us. Before God put the clouds in the sky, before He taught the birds to fly, He thought about you, and he thought about me, and He loved us, and He loved us. Before God put the whales in the sea, before He made the fish swimming free, He thought about you, and He thought about me, and He loved us. Before God made the cattle and sheep, before He made the insects that creep, He thought about you, and He thought about me, and He loved us, He loved us."

I'll wait until the majority of leaves have fallen off the trees in my front yard. Then I'll get out my electric leaf blower and blow all of my leaves, that are scattered on the ground, in front of my house, down Dyers Hill Road. The leaves in my back yard are another matter.

I'll vacuum them up with a hand-held electric vacuum. The vacuum also pulverizes them and they fill a bag that is attached to the vacuum.

I am thankful for Christ's grace and inspiration to write my stories. Elsie Brady wrote a poem called, "Leaves." These are her words: "How silently they tumble down and to rest upon the ground. To lay a carpet, rich and rare, beneath the trees without a care, content to sleep, their work well done, colors gleaming in the sun. At other, times, they wildly fly until they nearly reach the sky. Twisting, turning through the air, till all the trees stand stark and bare. Exhausted, drop to earth below, like children, for the snow." I've been to California six times and the great red wood trees amaze me. John and Michelle Phillips wrote the song, "California Dreamin." These are their first two lyrics: "All the leaves are brown and the sky is gray. I've been for a walk on a winter's day...". One of the maple trees in my front yard is over 70 years old. It is leaning to one side. It has verticillum wilt, a fungal infection of the soil that penetrates the tree roots and attacks the tree's vascular system. The leaves are stunted. The dead leaves will fall to the ground and the soil will reabsorb the fungal disease from the leaves. There is no cure. That is why I need to rake the leaves scattered on the ground under the trees.

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*Read other stories by John F. Hall at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>