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GEORGE HERBERT (1593 – 1633)

THE WINDOWS

Lord, how can man preach thy eternal word?
He is a brittle, crazy glass
Yet in thy temple thou dost him afford
This glorious and transcendent place,
To be a window, through thy grace.

But when thou dost anneal in glass thy story,
Making thy life to shine within
The holy Preacher's, then the light and glory
More rev'rend grows, and more doth win;
Which else shows waterish, bleak, and thin.

Doctrine and life, colours and light, in one
When they combine and mingle, bring
A strong regard and awe; but speech alone
Doth vanish like a flaring thing,
And in the ear, not conscience, ring.

Davie Donald, *The New Oxford Book of Christian Verse*
(Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 76-77.





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THE WINDOWS

GEORGE HERBERT

POET



George Herbert (1593 – 1633) was known for his humility and self-scrutiny. His poems and lyrics point to the amazing juxtaposition of contrition and gospel-boldness. Born in Wales, raised in England, and educated at Cambridge, he then served as a priest in the Church of England. Although never a healthy man, he tirelessly served the people in his small congregation, being remembered as one who traveled to parishioners' homes to pray for them and also to bring food and clothing to anyone who needed them. Tragically, he died at only age 39.