Clarion Review

Poetry

I Saw My God Today While Walking the Path of Life
Wilma A. Hudgins
Wilma Hudgins
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Four Stars (out of Five)

In improvisational jazz, it's common for a soloist to take a riff or a phrase of a beloved song and musically change it so that listeners can hear something entirely new —a song that acknowledges the original idea while expanding or enhancing it into something uniquely wonderful. In a way, this is what Wilma Hudgins is doing in her book of poetry, *I Saw My God Today While Walking the Path of Life*.

This collection of religious, free verse poems, originally published in the Hickman County Times over a period of several years, draws inspiration from familiar Biblical scripture. The book is divided into several sections, with poems that cover family, nature, God's grace, the stations of life (births, graduations, weddings, sympathy, and death), and the life of the author herself.

Each poem is coupled with a piece of verse and, in some places, a whole passage from the Bible. Corinthians 13:4-7, in which the apostle Paul defines love ("Love is patient, love is kindÂ…") leads off the section about family, and its echo can be heard in the verses of "Sisters Together": "My sister has a character so divine / And a beauty of spirit so sublime / In goodness and strength few / Compare."

It's clear from the start that this collection of poems represents something deeply personal to Hudgins. Again in the section on family, she includes photos of her parents, siblings, and children, and her wedding picture. Readers can't help but flip back and forth between poems such as "My Parents' Faith" or "He Cared for Our Children" and the pictures, to see where Hudgins gathered her inspiration.

While the idea of religious poetry may turn some off, Hudgins' works are contemporary, non-denominational, and completely accessible. Written in clear, precise verse, these poems do not judge or rebuke. Most begin with the phrase "I Saw My God Today" and discuss the

wonder, abundance, and hope that Hudgins sees and attributes to God in the people and the world around her. Because of this, *I Saw My God Today* is an ideal book for readers who want to brighten their day or someone else's with uplifting religious poetry.