

Farmer's Goodbye

August 7-Sept 7, 2009

They buried Jesse yesterday, flowers round the hall	G C G
A silk tie around his neck he never wore at all	C G Em D
The old boy hadn't looked that good since 1964	C G C
Looked a damn sight better than the banker boys who kicked him out the door	C G D G

Addie Mae thanked us all and passed the coffee round
And wiped a tear and said he'd finally laid his burden down
But I wondered what he'd be thinking if he saw himself that way
I knew Jess pretty good, I could just hear him say

Chorus

Don't bury me in no white shirt, don't slick down my hair	C G D G
Don't put no tie around my neck, just an old bandana there	C G G D
Just lay me out the way I was, an honest working man	C G G C
And I'll pull my weight in the fields of the lord	C G
When I reach that promised land	D G

Jesse was a hard dirt farmer, born behind the plow
You didn't ask him to set a spell, you knew he didn't know how
He was worthy of his hire, like the preachers say
If you knew Jess like I did you'll remember him that way

So don't dress me up, don't trim my nails when we say our goodbyes
I won't be knocking on the pearly gates in no pretty boy disguise
Just lay me out the way I was for the honest world to see
And send me off in a John Deere cap so the good Lord will know me

Chorus

A song praising the rural virtues written at a time when the American family farm was struggling to survive. In the New Testament, Matthew and Luke both mention the laborer who is worthy of his hire, that is, whose work deserves to be rewarded. Addie Mae appears again in my song "Lines in the Sand."