

# The Book of Heavenly Love

Compiled by

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Stories and Articles to Warm your Innermost Heart

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## From the Desk of Geoffrey Keyte

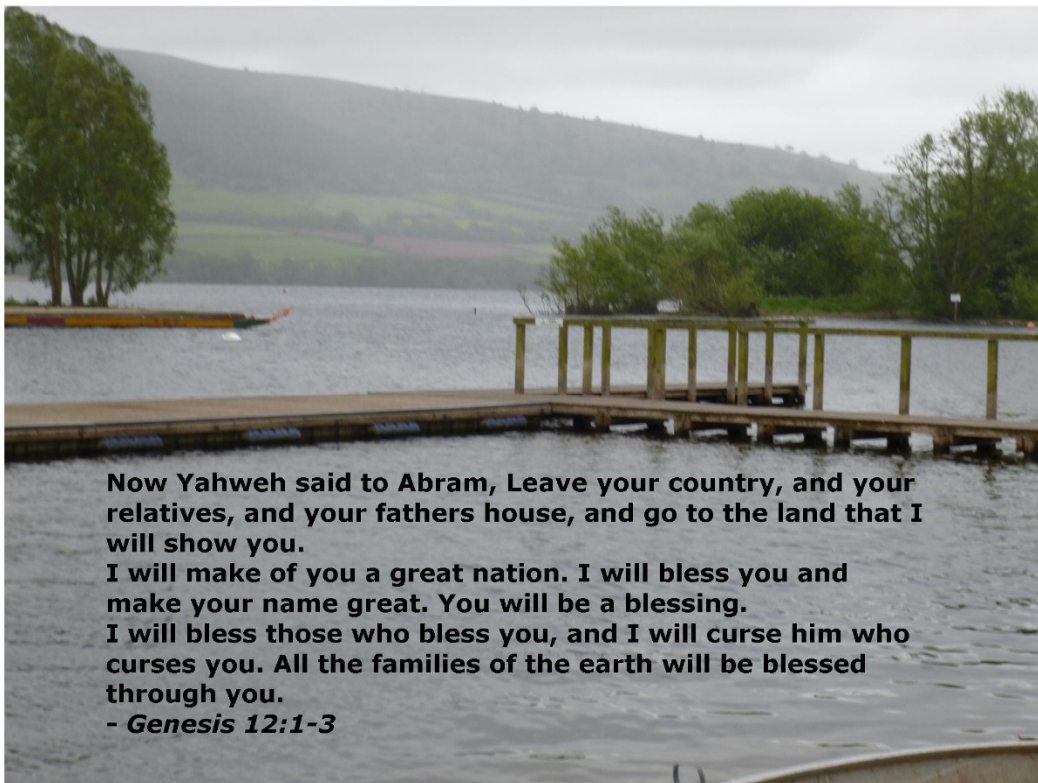
“And in the beginning was The Word!”

And one word led to another; thus this ‘Book of Heavenly Love’ was born.

Some of these heartwarming stories that I have included are real ‘tear-jerkers’ – so boxes of tissues at the ready!

Where possible I have credited the writings to their original source but many items have had to remain ‘anonymous’ as I have no idea from whence they came.

But God has guided me to compile this book – so whom am I to argue with Him?



May your life be greatly enriched through reading this Book of Heavenly Love.....

With many peaceful blessings – Geoffrey Keyte

## You Are My Sunshine, My Only Sunshine

Like any good mother, when Karen found out that another baby was on the way, she did what she could to help her 3-year-old son, Michael, prepare for a new sibling.

They found out that the new baby was going to be a girl, and day after day, night after night, Michael sang to his sister in mommy's tummy.

He was building a bond of love with his little sister before he even met her.

The pregnancy progressed normally for Karen, an active member of the Panther Creek United Methodist Church in Morristown, Tennessee.

In time, the labour pains came. Soon it was every five minutes, every three, every minute. But serious complications arose during delivery and Karen found herself in hours of labour. Would a C-section be required?

Finally, after a long struggle, Michael's little sister was born. But she was in very serious condition. With a siren howling in the night, the ambulance rushed the infant to the neonatal intensive care unit at St. Mary's Hospital, Knoxville, Tennessee.

The days inched by. The little girl got worse. The pediatrician had to tell the parents there is very little hope. Be prepared for the worst. Karen and her husband contacted a local cemetery about a burial plot.

They had fixed up a special room in their house for their new baby but now they found themselves having to plan for a funeral.

Michael, however, kept begging his parents to let him see his sister. I want to sing to her, he kept saying.

Week two in intensive care looked as if a funeral would come before the week was over. Michael kept nagging about singing to his sister, but kids are never allowed in Intensive Care. Karen decided to take Michael whether they liked it or not. If he didn't see his sister right then, he may never see her alive.

She dressed him in an oversized scrub suit and marched him into ICU.

He looked like a walking laundry basket. The head nurse recognized him as a child and bellowed, "Get that kid out of here now. No children are allowed."

The mother rose up strong in Karen, and the usually mild-mannered lady glared steel-eyed right into the head nurse's face, her lips a firm line. "He is not leaving until he sings to his sister" she stated. Then Karen towed Michael to his sister's bedside. He gazed at the tiny infant losing the battle to live. After a moment, he began to sing.

In the pure-hearted voice of a 3-year-old, Michael sang:-

"You are my sunshine, my only sunshine, you make me happy when skies are gray."

Instantly the baby girl seemed to respond. The pulse rate began to calm down and become steady.

"Keep on singing, Michael," encouraged Karen with tears in her eyes.

"You never know, dear, how much I love you, please don't take my sunshine away." As Michael sang to his sister, the baby's ragged, strained breathing became as smooth as a kitten's purr.

"Keep on singing, sweetheart."

"The other night, dear, as I lay sleeping, I dreamed I held you in my arms".

Michael's little sister began to relax as rest, healing rest, seemed to sweep over her.

"Keep on singing, Michael."

Tears had now conquered the face of the bossy head nurse. Karen glowed.

"You are my sunshine, my only sunshine. Please don't take my sunshine away..."

The next, day...the very next day...the little girl was well enough to go home.

Woman's Day Magazine called it The Miracle of Brother's Song. The medical staff just called it a miracle.

Karen called it a miracle of God's love.

NEVER GIVE UP ON THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE. LOVE IS SO INCREDIBLY POWERFUL



They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them, but then an entire life to forget them.

Distance and time may separate us but friendship and memories won't.



His name was Fleming, and he was a poor Scottish farmer. One day, while trying to make a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog. He dropped his tools and ran to the bog. There, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved.

"I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life."

"No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied waving off the offer. At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family hovel.

"Is that your son?" the nobleman asked.

"Yes," the farmer replied proudly.

"I'll make you a deal. Let me provide him with the level of education my own son will enjoy. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll no doubt grow to be a man we both will be proud of." And that he did.

Farmer Fleming's son attended the very best schools and in time, graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin.

Years afterward, the same nobleman's son who was saved from the bog was stricken with pneumonia. What saved his life this time? Penicillin.

The name of the nobleman? Lord Randolph Churchill. His son's name? Sir Winston Churchill.



Alexander Fleming

Someone once said: What goes around  
comes around.

Work like you don't need the money.

Love like you've never been hurt.

Dance like nobody's watching.

Sing like nobody's listening.

Live like it's Heaven on Earth.



If there be righteousness in every heart,  
There will be beauty in every  
character,  
If there be beauty in every character,  
There will be harmony in every home.

If there be harmony in every home,  
There will be order in every nation,  
Where there is order in every nation,  
There will be peace throughout the  
world





HELEN KELLER ONCE SAID:-

"WHEN ONE DOOR OF HAPPINESS  
CLOSES, ANOTHER OPENS; BUT OFTEN  
WE LOOK SO LONG AT THE CLOSED  
DOOR THAT WE DO NOT SEE THE ONE  
WHICH HAS BEEN OPENED FOR US"



*Helen Keller*

## Twin Consciousness

Once upon a time, twin boys were conceived.

Weeks passed and the twins developed. As their awareness grew, they laughed for joy: "Isn't it great that we were conceived? Isn't it great to be alive?"

Together the twins explored their worlds. When they found their mother's cord that gave them life, they sang for joy! "How great our mother's love is, that she shares her own life with us!"

As weeks stretched into months, the twins noticed how much each was changing.

"What does it mean?" one asked.

"It means our stay in this world is drawing to an end," said the other.

"But I don't want to go," said one. "I want to stay here always."

"We have no choice," said the other. "But maybe there is life after birth."

"But how can there be" responded one. "We will shed our life cord and how can life be possible without it? Besides, we have seen evidence that others were here before us, and none of them has returned to tell us that there is life after birth. No, this is the end. Maybe there is no mother after all."

"But there has to be," protested the other. "How else did we get here? How do we remain alive?"

"Have you ever seen our mother?" said one.

"Maybe she lives only in our minds. Maybe we made her up because the idea made us feel good."

So the last days in the womb were filled with deep questioning and fear.

Finally, the moment of birth arrived. When the twins had passed from their world, they opened their eyes and cried for joy--FOR WHAT THEY SAW EXCEEDED THEIR FONDEST DREAMS.

That is birth...and that is death...



## THE MOST BEAUTIFUL HEART

One day a young man was standing in the middle of the town proclaiming that he had the most beautiful heart in the whole valley. A large crowd gathered and they all admired his heart for it was perfect. There was not a mark or a flaw in it. Yes, they all agreed it truly was the most beautiful heart they had ever seen. The young man was very proud and boasted more loudly about his beautiful heart.

Suddenly, an old man appeared at the front of the crowd and said "Why, your heart is not nearly as beautiful as mine." The crowd and the young man looked at the old man's heart. It was beating strongly, but full of scars, it had places where pieces had been removed and other pieces put in, but they didn't fit quite right and there were several jagged edges. In fact, in some places there were deep gouges where whole pieces were missing.

The people stared - how can he say his heart is more beautiful, they thought? The young man looked at the old man's heart and saw its state and laughed. "You must be joking," he said. "Compare your heart with mine, mine is perfect and yours is a mess of scars and tears."

"Yes," said the old man, "Yours is perfect looking but I would never trade with you. You see, every scar represents a person to whom I have given my love - I tear out a piece of my heart and give it to them, and often they give me a piece of their heart which fits into the empty place in my heart, but because the pieces aren't exact, I have some rough edges, which I cherish, because they remind me of the love we shared. For my heart is pure. Sometimes I have given pieces of my heart away, and the other person hasn't returned a piece of his heart to me. These are the empty gouges -- giving love is taking a chance.

Although these gouges are painful, they stay open, reminding me of the love I have for these people too, and I hope someday they may return and fill the space I have waiting. So now do you see what true beauty is?"

The young man stood silently. He walked up to the old man, reached into his perfect young and beautiful heart, and ripped a piece out. He offered it to the old man with trembling hands.

The old man took his offering, placed it in his heart and then took a piece from his old scarred heart and placed it in the wound in the young man's heart. It fit, but not perfectly, as there were some jagged edges. The young man looked at his heart, not perfect anymore... But more beautiful than ever, since love from the old man's heart flowed into his. They embraced and walked away side by side.

How sad it must be to go through life with a whole untouched heart. Look, listen and learn: a scarred heart is more precious than a flawless one, as the owner of a scarred heart has given a piece of him to someone in need. We should do the same. Remember this whenever someone is in need of your support, love, approval, company or presence.

# Did God Create Everything That Exists?

Did God create everything that exists? Does evil exist? Did God create evil?

A University professor at a well-known institution of higher learning challenged his students with this question. "Did God create everything that exists?"

A student bravely replied, "Yes he did!"

"God created everything?" The professor asked.

"Yes sir, he certainly did," the student replied.

The professor answered, "If God created everything; then God created evil. And, since evil exists, and according to the principle that our works Define who we are, then we can assume God is evil."

The student became quiet and did not respond to the professor's Hypothetical definition. The professor, quite pleased with himself, boasted to the students that he had proven once more that the Christian faith was a myth. Another student raised his hand and said, "May I ask you a question, professor?"

"Of course", replied the professor.

The student stood up and asked, "Professor, does cold exist?"

"What kind of question is this? Of course it exists. Have you never been cold?"

The other students snickered at the young man's question. The young man replied, "In fact sir, cold does not exist. According to the laws of physics, what we consider cold is in reality the absence of heat.

Everybody or object is susceptible to study when it has or transmits energy, and heat is what makes a body or matter have or transmit energy.

Absolute zero (-460 F) is the total absence of heat; and all matter becomes inert and incapable of reaction at that temperature. Cold does not exist. We have created this word to describe how we feel if we have no heat."

The student continued, "Professor, does darkness exist?"

The professor responded, "Of course it does."

The student replied, "Once again you are wrong sir, darkness does not exist either. Darkness is in reality the absence of light. Light we can study, but not darkness. In fact, we can use Newton's prism to break white light into many colours and study the various wavelengths of each colour.

You cannot measure darkness.

A simple ray of light can break into a world of darkness and illuminate it. How can you know how dark a certain space is?

You measure the amount of light present. Isn't this correct? Darkness is a term used by man to describe what happens when there is no light present."

Finally the young man asked the professor, "Sir, does evil exist?"

Now uncertain, the professor responded, "Of course, as I have already said. We see it every day. It is in the daily examples of man's inhumanity to man. It is in the multitude of crime and violence everywhere in the world. These manifestations are nothing else but evil."

To this the student replied, "Evil does not exist, sir, or at least it does not exist unto itself.

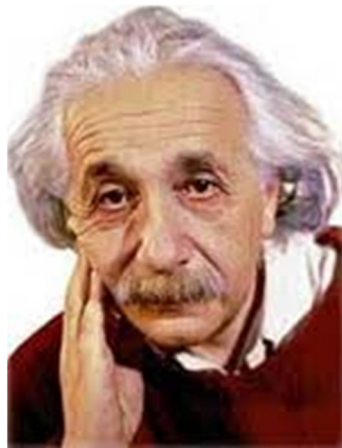
Evil is simply the absence of God. It is just like darkness and cold, a word that man has created to describe the absence of God.

God did not create evil. Evil is the result of what happens when Man does not have God's love present in his heart. It's like the cold that comes when there is no heat, or the darkness that comes when there is no light."

The professor sat down.

The young man's name -- Albert Einstein

A true story.



Albert Einstein

## Forgive Me When I Whine

Today, upon a bus, I saw a girl with golden hair  
I looked at her and sighed and wished I was as fair.  
When suddenly she rose to leave,  
I saw her hobble down the aisle.  
She had one leg and used a crutch  
But as she passed, she passed a smile.  
Oh, God, forgive me when I whine  
I have 2 legs, the world is mine.

I stopped to buy some candy  
The lad who sold it had such charm  
I talked with him a while, he seemed so very glad  
If I were late, it'd do no harm.  
And as I left, he said to me,  
"I thank you, you've been so kind.  
It's nice to talk with folks like you.  
You see," he said, "I'm blind."  
Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.  
I have 2 eyes, the world is mine.

Later while walking down the street,  
I saw a child with eyes of blue  
He stood and watched the others play  
He did not know what to do.  
I stopped a moment and then I said,  
"Why don't you join the others, dear?"  
He looked ahead without a word.  
And then I knew, he couldn't hear.  
Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.  
I have 2 ears, the world is mine.

With feet to take me where I'd go.  
With eyes to see the sunset's glow.  
With ears to hear what I would know.  
Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.  
I've been blessed indeed, The world is mine.

If this poem makes you feel like I felt,  
just forward it to all your friends,  
after all, it's just a simple reminder....  
We have soooooo much to be thankful for!!!

Sorrow looks back,  
Worry looks around,  
Faith looks up.  
Thank God for making us whole.

Sometimes life thrusts unwelcome changes on us and it is natural to feel dispirited or sad. At such times it is worth remembering an old saying:-

"When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the other one"





Two loving minds with only a single thought

Happiness keeps You Sweet,  
Trials keep You Strong,  
Sorrows keep You Human,  
Failures keep You Humble,  
And success keeps You Glowing



## Love Never Dies

As she stood in front of her 5th grade class on the very first day of school, she told the children an untruth. Like most teachers, she looked at her students and said that she loved them all the same. However, that was impossible, because there in the front row, slumped in his seat, was a little boy named Teddy Stoddard.

Mrs. Thompson had watched Teddy the year before and noticed that he did not play well with the other children, that his clothes were messy and that he constantly needed a bath. In addition, Teddy could be unpleasant. It got to the point where Mrs. Thompson would actually take delight in marking his papers with a broad red pen, making bold X's and then putting a big "F" at the top of his papers.

At the school where Mrs. Thompson taught, she was required to review each child's past records and she put Teddy's off until last. However, when she reviewed his file, she was in for a surprise.

Teddy's first grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is a bright child with a ready laugh. He does his work neatly and has good manners... he is a joy to be around."

His second grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is an excellent student, well-liked by his classmates, but he is troubled because his mother has a terminal illness and life at home must be a struggle."

His third grade teacher wrote, "His mother's death has been hard on him. He tries to do his best, but his father doesn't show much interest, and his home life will soon affect him if some steps aren't taken."

Teddy's fourth grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is withdrawn and doesn't show much interest in school. He doesn't have many friends and he sometimes sleeps in class."

By now, Mrs. Thompson realized the problem and she was ashamed of herself. She felt even worse when her students brought her Christmas presents, wrapped in beautiful ribbons and bright paper, except for Teddy's. His present was clumsily wrapped in the heavy, brown paper that he got from a grocery bag.

Mrs. Thompson took pains to open it in the middle of the other presents. Some of the children started to laugh when she found a rhinestone bracelet with some of the stones missing, and a bottle that was one-quarter full of perfume.

But she stifled the children's laughter when she exclaimed how pretty the bracelet was, putting it on, and dabbing some of the perfume on her wrist. Teddy Stoddard stayed after school that day just long enough to say, "Mrs. Thompson, today you smelled just like my Mom used to."

After the children left, she cried for at least an hour. On that very day, she quit teaching reading, writing and arithmetic. Instead, she began to teach children. Mrs. Thompson paid particular attention to Teddy. As she worked with him, his mind seemed to come alive.

The more she encouraged him, the faster he responded. By the end of the year, Teddy had become one of the smartest children in the class and, despite her lie that she would love all the children the same, Teddy became one of her "teacher's pets."

A year later, she found a note under her door, from Teddy, telling her that she was the best teacher he ever had in his whole life.

Six years went by before she got another note from Teddy. He then wrote that he had finished high school, third in his class, and she was still the best teacher he ever had in life.

Four years after that, she got another letter, saying that while things had been tough at times, he'd stayed in school, had stuck with it, and would soon graduate from college with the highest of honors. He assured Mrs. Thompson that she was still the best and favorite teacher he had ever had in his whole life.

Then four more years passed and yet another letter came. This time he explained that after he got his bachelor's degree, he decided to go a little further.

The letter explained that she was still the best and favorite teacher he ever had. But now his name was a little longer.... The letter was signed, Theodore F. Stoddard, MD.

The story does not end there. You see, there was yet another letter that spring. Teddy said he had met this girl and was going to be married.

He explained that his father had died a couple of years ago and he was wondering if Mrs. Thompson might agree to sit at the wedding in the place that was usually reserved for the mother of the groom.

Of course, Mrs. Thompson did. And guess what? She wore that bracelet, the one with several rhinestones missing. Moreover, she made sure she was wearing the perfume that Teddy remembered his mother wearing on their last Christmas together.

They hugged each other, and Dr. Stoddard whispered in Mrs. Thompson's ear, "Thank you Mrs. Thompson for believing in me. Thank you so much for making me feel important and showing me that I could make a difference."

Mrs. Thompson, with tears in her eyes, whispered back. She said, "Teddy, you have it all wrong. You were the one who taught me that I could make a difference. I didn't know how to teach until I met you."

(For those that don't know, Teddy Stoddard is the Dr. at Iowa Methodist in Des Moines that has the Stoddard Cancer Wing).

Peace  
starts  
with a  
smile



Angel Music

A group of Kentucky friends went deer hunting and paired off in twos for the day.

That night, one of the hunters returned alone, staggering under the weight of an eight-point buck.

"Where's Henry?" the others asked.



"Henry had a stroke of some kind. He's a couple of miles back up the trail," the successful hunter replied.

You left Henry laying out there and carried the deer back?" they inquired.

"A tough call," nodded the hunter. "But I figured no one is going to steal Henry!"

## Talking Dog for Sale

A guy sees a sign in front of a house: "Talking Dog for Sale." He rings the bell and the owner tells him the dog is in the backyard..... The guy goes into the backyard and sees a black mutt just sitting there.

"You talk?" he asks.

"Sure do." the dog replies.

"Oh My Gosh!! So, what's your story?" replies the man.

The dog looks up and says, "Well, I discovered my gift of talking pretty young and I wanted to help the government, so I told the CIA about my gift, and in no time they had me jetting from country to country, sitting in rooms with spies and world leaders, because no one figured a dog would be eavesdropping.

I was one of their most valuable spies eight years running.

"The jetting around really tired me out, and I knew I wasn't getting any younger and I wanted to settle down. So I signed up for a job at the airport to do some undercover security work, mostly wandering near suspicious characters and listening in.

I uncovered some incredible dealings there and was awarded a batch of medals. Had a wife, a mess of puppies, and now I'm just retired."

The guy is amazed. He goes back in and asks the owner what he wants for the dog. The owner says, "Ten dollars."

The guy says, "This dog is amazing. Why on earth are you selling him so cheap?"

"Cause he's a liar. He didn't do any of that stuff."

Written with a pen.  
Sealed with a kiss.  
If you are my friend,  
Please answer this:

Are we friends  
Or are we not?  
You told me once  
But I forgot.

So tell me now  
And tell me true  
So I can say....  
I'm here for you.

Of all the friends  
I've ever met,  
You're the one  
I won't forget.

And if I die  
Before you do,  
I'll go to heaven  
And wait for you.

I'll give the angels  
Back their wings  
And risk the loss  
Of everything,

Just to prove my friendship is  
true to have a friend like  
you!

A Sunday school teacher asked her class,  
"What was Jesus' mother's name?"

One child answered, "Mary."

The teacher then asked, "Who knows what  
Jesus' father's name was?"

A little kid said, "Verge."

Confused, the teacher asked, "Where did you  
get that?"

The kid said, "Well, you know they are always  
talking about Verge n'Mary."

## The Tale of Two Pots

A water bearer had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole which he carried across his neck.

One of the pots had a crack in it, while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water.

At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his house.

Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream.

"I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you. I have been able to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you've watered them.

"For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

Moral: Each of us has our own unique flaws. We're all cracked pots. But it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding. You've just got to take each person for what they are, and look for the good in them.

Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape. Remember to appreciate all the different people in your life!



A nursery school teacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's work. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was.

The girl replied, "I'm drawing God."

The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like."

Without missing a beat or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "They will in a minute."

## Dear Dad

A father passing by his son's bedroom was astonished to see the bed was nicely made and everything was picked up. Then he saw an envelope propped up prominently on the centre of the bed.

It was addressed, "Dad".

With the worst premonition, he opened the envelope and read the letter with trembling hands:-

Dear Dad,

It is with great regret and sorrow that I'm writing you. I had to elope with my new girlfriend because I wanted to avoid a scene with mom and you. I've been finding real passion with Joan and she is so nice, even with all her piercing, tattoos, and her tight Motorcycle clothes. But it's not only the passion, dad, she's pregnant and Joan said that we will be very happy.

Even though you won't care for her as she is so much older than I, she already owns a trailer in the woods and has a stack of firewood for the whole winter. She wants to have many more children with me and that's now one of my dreams too.

Joan taught me that marijuana doesn't really hurt anyone and we'll be growing it for us and trading it with her friends for all the cocaine and ecstasy we want. In the meantime, we'll pray that science will find a cure for AIDS so Joan can get better; she sure deserves it!!

Don't worry Dad, I'm 15 years old now and I know how to take care of myself. Someday I'm sure we'll be back to visit so you can get to know your grandchildren.

Your son,

John

PS: Dad, none of the above is true. I'm over at the neighbour's house. I just wanted to remind you that there are worse things in life than my report card that's in my desk centre drawer.

I love you!

Call when it is safe for me to come home.





This is a true story.

The scene took place on a BA flight between Johannesburg and London. A white woman, about 50 years old, was seated next to a black man. Obviously disturbed by this, she called the air Hostess. "Madam, what is the matter?" the hostess asked.

"You obviously do not see it then" she responded. "You placed me next to a black man. I do not agree to sit next to someone from such a repugnant group. Give me an alternative seat."

"Be calm please," the hostess replied. "Almost all the places on this flight are taken. I will go to see if another place is available."

The Hostess went away and then came back a few minutes later.

"Madam, just as I thought, there are no other available seats in the economy class. I spoke to the captain and he informed me that there is also no seat in the business class. All the same, we still have one place in the first class."

Before the woman could say anything, the hostess continued: "It is not usual for our company to permit someone from the economy class to sit in the first class. However, given the circumstances, the captain feels that it would be scandalous to make someone sit next to someone so disgusting."

She turned to the black guy, and said, "Therefore, Sir, if you would like to, please collect your hand luggage, a seat awaits you in first class."

At that moment, the other passengers who were shocked by what they had just witnessed stood up and applauded.



A LITTLE GIRL WAS TALKING TO HER TEACHER ABOUT WHALES. THE TEACHER SAID IT WAS PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR A WHALE TO SWALLOW A HUMAN BECAUSE EVEN THOUGH IT WAS A VERY LARGE MAMMAL ITS THROAT WAS VERY SMALL.

THE LITTLE GIRL STATED THAT JONAH WAS SWALLOWED BY A WHALE.

IRRITATED, THE TEACHER REITERATED THAT A WHALE COULD NOT SWALLOW A HUMAN; IT WAS PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE.

THE LITTLE GIRL SAID, "WHEN I GET TO HEAVEN I WILL ASK JONAH." THE TEACHER ASKED, "WHAT IF JONAH WENT TO HELL?"

THE LITTLE GIRL REPLIED, . THEN YOU ASK HIM.



There came a frantic knock at the doctor's office door,  
A knock, more urgent than he had ever heard before,  
"Come in, Come in," the impatient doctor said,  
"Come in, Come in, before you wake the dead."

In walked a frightened little girl, a child no more than nine,  
It was plain for all to see, she had troubles on her mind,  
"Oh doctor, I beg you, please come with me,  
My mother is surely dying, she's as sick as she can be."

"I don't make house calls, bring your mother here,"  
"But she's too sick, so you must come or she will die I fear,"  
The doctor, touched by her devotion, decided he would go,  
She said he would be blessed, more than he could know.

She led him to her house where her mother lay in bed,  
Her mother was so very sick she couldn't raise her head,  
But her eyes cried out for help and help her the doctor did,  
She would have died that very night had it not been for her kid.

The doctor got her fever down and she lived through the night,  
And morning brought the doctor signs, that she would be all right,  
The doctor said he had to leave but would return again by two,  
And later he came back to check, just like he said he'd do.

The mother praised the doctor for all the things he'd done,  
He told her she would have died, were it not for her little one,  
"How proud you must be of your wonderful little girl,  
It was her pleading that made me come; she is really quite a pear!

"But doctor, my daughter died over three years ago,  
Is the picture on the wall of the little girl you know?"  
The doctor's legs went limp for the picture on the wall,  
Was the same little girl for whom he'd made this call.

The doctor stood motionless, for quite a little while,  
And then his solemn face, was broken by his smile,  
He was thinking of that frantic knock heard at his office door,  
And of the beautiful little angel that had walked across his floor.

## If You Think You Are Beaten

"If you think you are beaten, you are;  
If you think you dare not, you don't.  
If you'd like to win, but think you can't  
It's almost a cinch you won't.

If you think you'll lose, you've lost,  
For out in the world we find  
Success being with a fellow's will;  
It's all in the state of mind.

If you think you're outclassed, you are:  
You've got to think high to rise.  
You've got to be sure of yourself before  
You can ever win a prize.

Life's battles don't always go  
To the stronger or faster man,  
But soon or late the man who wins  
Is the one who thinks he can."

— Walter D. Wintle

*(This is one of my all-time favourite poems! GK)*

## PAID IN FULL

A young man was getting ready to graduate college. For many months he had admired a beautiful sports car in a dealer's showroom, and knowing his father could well afford it, he told him that was all he wanted.

As Graduation Day approached, the young man awaited signs that his father had purchased the car. Finally, on the morning of his graduation, his father called him into his private study.

His father told him how proud he was to have such a fine son, and told him how much he loved him. He handed his son a beautiful wrapped gift box.

Curious, but somewhat disappointed the young man opened the box and found a lovely, leather-bound Bible.

Angrily, he raised his voice at his father and said, "With all your money you give me a Bible?" and stormed out of the house, leaving the holy book.

Many years passed and the young man was very successful in business. He had a beautiful home and wonderful family, but realized his father was very old, and thought perhaps he should go to him. He had not seen him since that graduation day.

Before he could make arrangements, he received a telegram telling him his father had passed away, and willed all of his possessions to his son. He needed to come home immediately and take care of things.

When he arrived at his father's house, sudden sadness and regret filled his heart.

He began to search his father's important papers and saw the still new Bible, just as he had left it years ago. With tears, he opened the Bible and began to turn the pages.

As he read those words, a car key dropped from an envelope taped behind the Bible. It had a tag with the dealer's name, the same dealer who had the sports car he had desired.

On the tag was the date of his graduation, and the words...PAID IN FULL.

## THE 99 CLUB

LONG ago, there lived a king who should have been contented with his life, given all the riches and luxuries he had. However, this was not the case. The king was always wondering why he just never seemed happy with what he had.

Sure, he had the attention of everyone wherever he went, and he attended fancy dinners and parties.

Yet, he still felt something was lacking but couldn't put his finger on it.

One day, the king woke up earlier than usual to stroll around his palace. He entered his huge living room and came to a stop when he heard someone happily singing away. He followed the sound of the song and found one of the servants singing. The man had a very contented look on his face.

This fascinated the king and he summoned him to his chambers. The servant entered as ordered and the king asked why he was so happy?

To that, he replied: "Your Majesty, I am nothing but a servant, but I make enough to keep my wife and children happy. They are my inspiration; they are contented with whatever little I bring home. We don't need much â•• a roof over our heads and warm food to fill our stomachs. I am happy because my family is happy."

Hearing this, the King dismissed the servant and called for his personal assistant. The king poured out his personal anguish and then related the story of the servant. He hoped that somehow, his assistant would be able to tell him why a ruler who could have anything he wished for at a snap of his fingers was not contented, whereas his servant, who had so little, was extremely happy.

The assistant listened attentively and came to a conclusion. "Your Majesty, I believe that the servant is not a member of The 99 Club."

"The 99 Club? And what is that?"

"To truly know what The 99 Club is, Your Majesty will have to do place 99 gold coins in a bag and leave it at this servant's doorstep."

That very evening, the king arranged for 99 gold coins to be placed in a bag at the servant's doorstep. He was slightly hesitant and thought he should have put 100 coins into the bag, but decided to do as his assistant had advised.

The servant was just stepping out of his house when he saw the bag at his doorstep. Wondering what it could contain, he took it into his house and opened it. When he saw the gold coins, he let out a joyous shout. There were so many of them!



He could hardly believe his eyes. He called out to his wife and showed her the shiny pieces. He then took the bag to a table, emptied it out and began to count the coins. Soon, he came to 99 and it struck him that that was an odd number. So he counted the coins again and again, only to arrive at the same number.

The servant began to wonder what could have happened to the last coin. There must have been 100, for who would put just 99 coins in the bag?

He began to search his entire house, and poked looked around his backyard. For hours, he searched because he didn't want to lose out on that one coin. Finally, exhausted, he decided that he would have to work harder than ever to earn enough to complete his entire collection of 100 gold coins.

He got up late the next morning, in an extremely bad mood, and started shouting at his wife and children.

What he didn't realise was that he'd spent most of the night thinking of ways to work hard so that he would have enough money to buy himself one gold coin.

Then he went to work, only not in his usual happy mood, with a song on his lips, but feeling grumpy and tired.

When the king saw the servant, he was puzzled to see the change in his attitude. He promptly summoned his assistant to his chambers. The king related his thoughts about the man and once again, his assistant listened.

The king had thought that the servant who, until yesterday, had been contented with his life, should be even happier after receiving the gold coins.

To this, the assistant replied: "Ah! But Your Majesty, the servant has now officially joined The 99 Club."

He explained: "The 99 Club is just a name given to those people who have everything yet are never contented.

They are always striving for that extra one gold coin to round off what they have to 100!

"We have so much to be thankful for and we can live with very little. But the minute we are given something bigger and better, we want even more. We are not the same happy, contented person we used to be.

"We don't realise the price we have to pay for wanting more and more - we lose sleep, we hurt the people around us ... That is what joining The 99 Club is all about."

One day a little girl was sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast on her brunette head.

She looked at her mother and inquisitively asked, "Why are some of your hairs white, Mom?"

Her mother replied, "Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white."



The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then said, "Momma, how come ALL of grandma's hairs are white?"

## THE HUG

No moving parts, no batteries,

No monthly payments and no fees,

Inflation Proof, non-taxable,

In fact, it's quite relaxable;

It can't be stolen, won't pollute

One size fits all, don't dilute.



It uses little energy,

But yields results enormously.

Relieves your tension and your stress,

Invigorates your happiness,

Combats depression, makes you beam,

And elevates your self-esteem!



Your circulation it corrects – without Unpleasant side-effects.

It is, I think, the perfect drug:

May I prescribe my friend.....the hug.



(And, of course, fully returnable)

## LIFE'S LIKE THAT

A Sunday school teacher: was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds.

After explaining the commandment to "honour" thy Father and thy Mother, she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?"

Without missing a beat one little boy answered, "Thou shall not kill."



I knocked at heaven's door this morning, God asked me...My child what can I do for you? And I said,

Father, please protect and bless the person reading this message... God smiled and answered... Request granted.

If you believe, send it to those you wish to bless. By doing this you have succeeded in praying for others today.

---

"Two things a man should never be angry at: what he can help, and what he cannot help."

-Thomas Fuller

---

A little boy was overheard praying:-

"Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."



Sometimes life thrusts unwelcome changes on us and it is natural to feel dispirited or sad. At such times it is worth remembering an old saying:-

"When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the other one"



I had been teaching my three-year old daughter, Caitlin, the Lord's Prayer for several evenings at bedtime, she would repeat after me the lines from the prayer.

Finally, she decided to go solo. I listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word right up to the end of the prayer:-

"Lead us not into temptation," she prayed, "but deliver us some E-mail.





One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people.

He said, "My son, the battle is between two "wolves" inside us all.

One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather:

"Which wolf wins?"

The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

It doesn't hurt to take a hard look at yourself from time to time, and this should help get you started.

During a visit to the mental asylum, a visitor asked the Director what the criterion was which defined whether or not a patient should be institutionalised.

"Well," said the Director, "we fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the patient and ask him or her to empty the bathtub."

"Oh, I understand," said the visitor. "A normal person would use the bucket because it's bigger than the spoon or the teacup!"

"No." said the Director, "A normal person would pull the plug."

Do you want a bed near the window?"



A smile is a curve that can set a lot of  
things straight

It lights the face with beauty: entirely lifts  
the gloom,

As will a tiny lantern, in some corner of a  
room:-

And the passer-by is gladdened, when  
someone stops a while

To have a little cheery word, made richer  
by a smile.

So, when the world is blanketed, with  
mists and pouring rain:

**JUST SMILE**

Your smile could bring the sunshine to  
someone's life again.



The Master was searching for a vessel to use;  
On the shelf there were many - which one would He choose?  
Take me, cried the gold one, I'm shiny and bright,  
I'm of great value and I do things just right.  
My beauty and lustre will outshine the rest  
And for someone like You, Master, gold would be the best!

The Master passed on with no word at all;  
He looked at a silver urn, narrow and tall;  
I'll serve You, dear Master, I'll pour out Your wine  
And I'll be at Your table whenever You dine,  
My lines are so graceful, my carvings so true,  
And my silver will always compliment You.

Unheeding the Master passed on to the brass,  
It was wide mouthed and shallow, and polished like glass.  
Here! Here! Cried the vessel, I know I will do,  
Place me on your table for all men to view.

Look at me, called the goblet of crystal so clear,  
My transparency shows my contents so dear,  
Though fragile am I, I will serve You with pride,  
And I'm sure I'll be happy in Your house to abide.



The Master came next to a vessel of wood,  
Polished and carved, it solidly stood.

You may use me, dear Master, the wooden bowl said,  
But I'd rather You used me for fruit, not for bread!

Then the Master looked down and saw a vessel of clay.  
Empty and broken it helplessly lay.

No hope had the vessel that the Master might choose,  
To cleanse and make whole, to fill and to use.

Ah! This is the vessel I've been hoping to find,  
I will mend and use it and make it all mine.

I need not the vessel with pride of its self;

Nor the one who is narrow to sit on the shelf;  
Nor the one who is bigmouthed and shallow and loud;  
Nor one who displays his contents so proud;  
Not the one who thinks he can do all things just right;  
But this plain earthy vessel filled with My power and might.

Then gently He lifted the vessel of clay.  
Mended and cleansed it and filled it that day.  
Spoke to it kindly. There's work you must do,  
Just pour out to others as I pour into you.



Nazareth

TACT is the ability to describe others as they see themselves.

Smiles cost nothing, yet they are most valuable when exchanged





## Friendship

Sharing thoughts and feelings,  
Good times and memories, too,  
Helps build the kind of friendship  
That will last a lifetime through.



Your friendship has been special  
for a long, long time to me ~  
I cherish everything we've done,  
and each happy memory.

We've laughed together,  
dreamed and shared,

Helped each other,  
always cared.

Your friendship has been special,  
just as it will always be.

Beauty is but the sensible image of the Infinite.  
Like truth and justice it lives within us;  
Like virtue and the moral law it is a companion of the soul.



The appearance of things change according to the emotions,  
and thus we see magic and beauty in them, while the magic  
and beauty are really in ourselves.

It was beautiful hot day and wee Jimmy was down at the River Clyde. He was sitting under at tree just fishing. A man in a white suit and hat walked by and asked "How is the fishing going today - have you caught anything?"

"I've got seven already" replied Jimmy, "but I've just put them back into the river"

"That is a bit silly", said the man "you could have sold them."

"Why would I want to do that?" quizzed wee Jimmy

"Well you could have made a few quid profit and bought a bigger and better and stronger Fishing rod to catch lots more fish"

"Why would I want to do that?" quizzed wee Jimmy again

"Well more fish would mean more profit, and you could buy your own fish and chip van and make lots of money"

"But I like being under my tree, just fishing. It makes me happy"

"But" said the agitated stranger, "do you not see that if you had a big van you would make loads of money?."

"And then what would I do with all that money?"

"Well" snapped the stranger "if you worked hard you could have enough money to open your own Fish and Chip restaurant"

"And then what?" asked Jimmy

"Well, you could be so rich you could go fishing any time you wanted".

"But that is what I am doing today" said Jimmy.

# *I Love My Friends!*

Michael is the kind of guy you love to hate. He is always in a good mood and always has something positive to say.

When someone would ask him how he was doing, he would reply, "If I were any better, I would be twins!"

He was naturally motivated. If an employee was having a bad day, Michael was there telling the employee how to look on the positive side of the situation.

Seeing this style really made me curious, so one day I went up to Michael and asked him, "I don't get it! You can't be a positive person all of the time. How do you do it?"

Michael replied, "Each morning I wake up and say to myself, Mike, you have two choices today. You can choose to be in a good mood or you can choose to be in a bad mood. I choose to be in a good mood.

Each time something bad happens, I can choose to be a victim or I can choose to learn from it.

I choose to learn from it.

Every time someone comes to me complaining, I can choose to accept their complaining or I can point out the positive side of life. I choose the positive side of life.

"Yeah, right, it's not that easy," I protested.

"Yes, it is," Michael said. "Life is all about choices. When you cut away all the junk, every situation is a choice. You choose how you react to situations. You choose how people will affect your mood.

You choose to be in a good mood or a bad mood. The bottom line: It's your choice how you live life."

I reflected on what Michael said.

Soon thereafter, I left the Tower Industry to start my own business. We lost touch, but I often thought about him when I made a choice about life instead of reacting to it.

Several years later, I heard that Michael was involved in a serious accident, falling some 60 feet from a communications tower. After 18 hours of surgery and weeks of intensive care, Michael was released from the hospital with rods placed in his back.

I saw Michael about six months after the accident. When I asked him how he was, he replied. "If I were any better, I'd be twins.

Wanna see my scars?" I declined to see his wounds, but did ask him what had gone through his mind as the accident took place.

"The first thing that went through my mind was the well-being of my soon to be born daughter," Michael replied. "Then, as I lay on the ground, I remembered that I had two choices: I could choose to live or I could choose to die. I chose to live."

"Weren't you scared? Did you lose consciousness?" I asked.

Michael continued, "...the paramedics were great. They kept telling me I was going to be fine. But when they wheeled me into the ER and I saw the expressions on the faces of the doctors and nurses, I got really scared.

In their eyes, I read 'he's a dead man.'

I knew I needed to take action."

"What did you do?" I asked.

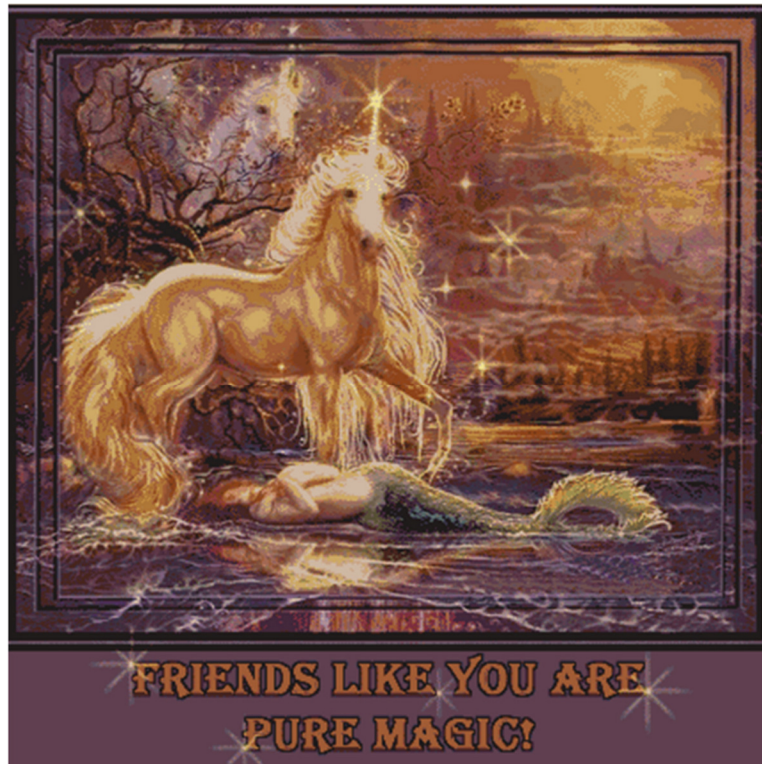
"Well, there was a big burly nurse shouting questions at me," said Michael. "She asked if I was allergic to anything. 'Yes,' I replied. The doctors and nurses stopped working as they waited for my reply. I took a deep breath and yelled, 'Gravity.'"

Over their laughter, I told them, 'I am choosing to live. Operate on me as if I am alive, not dead'."

Michael lived, thanks to the skill of his doctors, but also because of his amazing attitude.

I learned from him that every day we have the choice to live fully.

Attitude, after all, is everything.



Have you ever been just sitting there and all of a sudden you feel like doing something nice for someone you care for?

THAT'S GOD talking to you through the Holy Spirit.

Have you ever been down and out and nobody seems to be around for you to talk to?

THAT'S GOD wanting you to talk to Him.

Have you ever been thinking about somebody that you haven't seen in a long time and then next thing you know you see them or receive a phone call from them?

THAT'S GOD.

There is no such thing as coincidence.

Have you ever received something wonderful that you didn't even ask for, like money in the mail, a debt that had mysteriously been cleared, or a coupon to a department store where you had just seen something you needed, but couldn't afford?

THAT'S GOD

Knowing the desires of your heart.

Have you ever been in a situation and you had no clue how it was going to get better, how the hurting would stop, how the pain would ease, but now you look back on it.

THAT'S GOD

Passing us through tribulation to see a brighter day.

Do you think that you are reading this e-book by accident? NO!

**I was thinking of you!**

Keep this going. You have no idea which one of  
Your e-mail buddies could use hope today.

Dear God..

I know you're watching over me  
And I'm feeling truly blessed  
For no matter what I pray for  
You always know what's best!

I have this circle of E-mail friends,  
Who mean a lot to me;  
Some days I "send" and "send,"  
At other times, I let them be.

I am so blessed to have these friends,  
With whom I've grown so close;  
So this little poem I dictate to them,  
Because to me they are the "Most"!

When I see each name download,  
And view the message they've sent;  
I know they've thought of me that day,  
And "wellwishes" were their intent.

So to you, my friends, I would like to say,  
Thank you for being a part;  
Of all my daily contacts,  
This comes right from my heart





God's Eye

May you be blessed  
with all things good,  
May your joys, like the stars at night,  
be too numerous to count.

May your victories be more abundant  
than all the grains of sand  
on all the beaches  
on all the oceans  
in the entire world.

May lack and struggle be always  
absent from your life  
and may beauty order and abundance  
be your constant companions.

May every pathway you choose  
lead to that which is pure and good and lovely.  
May every doubt and fear  
be replaced by a deep abiding trust  
as you behold evidence of a Higher Power  
all around you.

And when there is only darkness  
and the storms of life are closing in  
May the light at the core of your being  
illuminate the world.

May you always be aware you are loved beyond measure  
and may you be willing to love unconditionally in return.

May you always feel protected and cradled  
in the arms of God,  
like the cherished child you are.

And when you are tempted to judge  
may you be reminded that we are all ONE  
and that every thought you think  
reverberates across the universe,  
touching everyone and everything.

And when you are tempted to hold back,  
may you remember that love flows best when  
it flows freely  
and it is in giving that we receive  
the greatest gift.

May you always have music and  
laughter and may a rainbow follow  
every storm

May gladness wash away every disappointment  
may joy dissolve every sorrow  
and my love ease every pain.

May every wound bring wisdom  
and every trial bring triumph  
and with each passing day  
may you live more abundantly than the day before.

May you be blessed!

And may others be blessed by you.  
This is my heartfelt wish for you.

May you be blessed!

A drunk man in an Oldsmobile  
They said had run the light  
That caused the six-car pileup  
On 109 that night.

When broken bodies lay about  
"And blood was everywhere,"  
"The sirens screamed out eulogies,"  
For death was in the air.

"A mother, trapped inside her car,"  
Was heard above the noise;  
Her plaintive plea near split the air:  
"Oh, God, please spare my boys!"

She fought to loose her pinned hands;  
"She struggled to get free,"  
But mangled metal held her fast  
In grim captivity.

Her frightened eyes then focused  
"On where the back seat once had been,"  
But all she saw was broken glass and  
Two children's seats crushed in.

Her twins were nowhere to be seen;  
"She did not hear them cry,"  
"And then she prayed they'd been thrown free,"  
"Oh, God, don't let them die!"

Then firemen came and cut her loose, "  
"But when they searched the back, "  
"They found therein no little boys, "  
But the seat belts were intact.

They thought the woman had gone mad  
"And was travelling alone,"  
"But when they turned to question her, "  
They discovered she was gone.

Policemen saw her running wild  
And screaming above the noise  
"In beseeching supplication,"  
Please help me find my boys!

They're four years old and wear blue shirts;  
"Their jeans are blue to match."  
"One cop spoke up, ""They're in my car,"  
And they don't have a scratch.

They said their daddy put them there  
"And gave them each a cone,"  
Then told them both to wait for Mom  
To come and take them home.

"I've searched the area high and low,"  
But I can't find their dad.  
"He must have fled the scene,"  
"I guess, and that is very bad."

"The mother hugged the twins and said, "  
"While wiping at a tear, "  
"He could not flee the scene, you see, "  
"For he's been dead a year."

"The cop just looked confused and asked, "  
"Now, how can that be true? "  
"The boys said, "Mommy, Daddy came "  
"And left a kiss for you.""" "

He told us not to worry  
"And that you would be all right, "  
And then he put us in this car with  
"The pretty, flashing light."

"We wanted him to stay with us, "  
"Because we miss him so, "  
"But Mommy, he just hugged us tight"  
And said he had to go.

He said someday we'd understand  
"And told us not to fuss,"  
"And he said to tell you, Mommy, "  
"He's watching over us."

The mother knew without a doubt  
"That what they spoke was true, "  
"For she recalled their dad's last words, "  
" I will watch over you."

The firemen's notes  
could not explain  
"The twisted, mangled car,"  
And how the three of them escaped  
Without a single scar.

"But on the cop's report was scribed,"  
"In print so very fine,"  
An angel walked the beat tonight on Highway 109.

## A SPECIAL FRIEND

A Special Friend is one who will put you first.  
Love you for yourself.  
Accept your faults  
Lend a helping hand in time of need.

Help your dreams to keep going  
Brings you joy to warm your heart  
Makes you feel wanted and welcome.

A special friend has time to care  
He has time to love  
He loves enough to understand  
The gift of special friendship is rare.

It is priceless. It is a treasure, and I  
am happy that you are my friend.

## My Teacher

Today I met my Teacher,  
He said "Be still my dear,  
Your thoughts are causing aching,  
Your suffering brings me here."

I stopped and faced my Teacher,  
So I could hear the words he said,  
How did he know my turmoil?  
Thoughts running through my head.

I saw the pain across his face,  
The sadness in his eyes,  
It hurt to think my turmoil,  
Was affecting one so wise.

I placed my hand upon my heart,  
For there lay all my pain,  
Was then he made me realise,  
Suffering was my choice again.

Why did I do this to myself?  
And choose to hurt inside,  
Hadn't I suffered long enough?  
Why did I choose to hide?

I knew inside I had the strength,  
To rise above all pain,  
I knew the choice to suffer now,  
Had been mine once again.

I knew the choice of happiness,  
Lay there within my soul,  
I'd only got to choose it,  
And once again feel whole.



The Teacher smiled so broadly,  
As he wiped away my tears,  
For he knew I'd found the answers,  
Hidden behind my fears.

He placed his hands upon my head,  
And with Love began to heal,  
All my scars from suffering,  
The pain I'd chose to feel.



Imagine that life is a game in which you are juggling five balls.

These balls are called work, family, health, friends and integrity.

And you are keeping them all in the air - at the same time!

But one day, you finally come to understand that work is like rubber ball.

If you drop it, it will bounce back.

The other four balls - family, health, friends and integrity - are made of glass.

If you drop one of these, it will be irrevocably scuffed, nicked, perhaps even shattered.

Once you truly understand the lesson of the five balls, you will have the beginning of balance in your life.....





### In God We Trust

"Watch out! You nearly broad-sided that car!"

My father yelled at me. "Can't you do anything right?"

Those words hurt worse than blows. I turned my head toward the elderly man in the seat beside me, daring me to challenge him. A lump rose in my throat as I averted my eyes. I wasn't prepared for another battle.

"I saw the car, Dad. Please don't yell at me when I'm driving."

My voice was measured and steady, sounding far calmer than I really felt. Dad glared at me, then turned away and settled back.

At home I left Dad in front of the television and went outside to collect my thoughts.

Dark, heavy clouds hung in the air with a promise of rain. The rumble of distant thunder seemed to echo my inner turmoil. What could I do about him?

Dad had been a lumberjack in Washington and Oregon. He had enjoyed being outdoors and had revelled in pitting his strength against the forces of nature. He had entered gruelling lumberjack competitions, and had placed often. The shelves in his house were filled with trophies that attested to his prowess.

The years marched on relentlessly. The first time he couldn't lift a heavy log, he joked about it; but later that same day I saw him outside alone, straining to lift it.

He became irritable whenever anyone teased him about his advancing age, or when he couldn't do something he had done as a younger man.

Four days after his sixty-seventh birthday, he had a heart attack. An ambulance sped him to the hospital while a paramedic administered CPR to keep blood and oxygen flowing.

At the hospital, Dad was rushed into an operating room. He was lucky; he survived.

But something inside Dad died. His zest for life was gone. He obstinately refused to follow doctors' orders. Suggestions and offers of help were turned aside with sarcasm and insults.

The number of visitors thinned, then finally stopped altogether.

Dad was left alone.

My husband, Rick, and I asked Dad to come live with us on our small farm. We hoped the fresh air and rustic atmosphere would help him adjust.

Within a week after he moved in, I regretted the invitation. It seemed nothing was satisfactory. He criticized everything I did. I became frustrated and moody. Soon I was taking my pent-up anger out on Rick.

We began to bicker and argue.

Alarmed, Rick sought out our pastor and explained the situation. The clergyman set up weekly counselling appointments for us. At the close of each session he prayed, asking God to soothe Dad's troubled mind.

But the months wore on and God was silent.

A raindrop struck my cheek. I looked up into the grey sky. Somewhere up there was "God." Although I believe a Supreme Being had created the universe, I had difficulty believing that God cared about the tiny human beings on this earth.

I was tired of waiting for a God who did not answer.

Something had to be done and it was up to me to do it. The next day I sat down with the phone book and methodically called each of the mental health clinics listed in the Yellow Pages.

I explained my problem in vain to each of the sympathetic voices that answered. Just when I was giving up hope, one of the voices suddenly exclaimed, "I just read something that might help you! Let me go get the article."

I listened as she read. The article described a remarkable study done at a nursing home. All of the patients were under treatment for chronic depression. Yet their attitudes had improved dramatically when they were given responsibility for a dog.

I drove to the animal shelter that afternoon. After I filled out a questionnaire, a uniformed officer led me to the kennels. The odour of disinfectant stung my nostrils as I moved down the row of pens.

Each contained five to seven dogs. Long-haired dogs, curly-haired dogs, black dogs, spotted dogs - all jumped up, trying to reach me.

I studied each one but rejected one after the other for various reasons, too big, too small, too much hair. As I neared the last pen a dog in the shadows of the far corner struggled to his feet, walked to the front of the run and sat down.

It was a pointer, one of the dog world's aristocrats. But this was a caricature of the breed.

Years had etched his face and muzzle with shades of grey. His hipbones jutted out in lopsided triangles. But it was his eyes that caught and held my attention. Calm and clear, they beheld me unwaveringly.

I pointed to the dog. "Can you tell me about him?"

The officer looked, then shook his head in puzzlement. "He's a funny one ~ Appeared out of nowhere and sat in front of the gate. We brought him in, figuring someone would be right down to claim him. That was two weeks ago and we've heard nothing. His time is up tomorrow." He gestured helplessly.

As the words sank in I turned to the man in horror. "You mean you're going to kill him?"

"Ma'am," he said gently, "that's our policy. We don't have room for every unclaimed dog."

I looked at the pointer again. The calm brown eyes awaited my decision.

"I'll take him," I said.

I drove home with the dog on the front seat beside me. When I reached the house I honked the horn twice. I was helping my prize out of the car when Dad shuffled onto the front porch.

"Ta-da! Look what I got for you, Dad!" I said excitedly.

Dad looked, then wrinkled his face in disgust. "If I had wanted a dog I would have gotten one. And I would have picked out a better specimen than that bag of bones. Keep it! I don't want it."

Dad waved his arm scornfully and turned back toward the house.

Anger rose inside me. It squeezed together my throat muscles and pounded into my temples. "You'd better get used to him, Dad. He's staying!"

Dad ignored me.

"Did you hear me, Dad?" I screamed.

At those words Dad whirled angrily, his hands clenched at his sides, his eyes narrowed and blazing with hate. We stood glaring at each other like duellists, when suddenly the pointer pulled free from my grasp.

He wobbled toward my dad and sat down in front of him.

Then slowly, carefully, he raised his paw. Dad's lower jaw trembled as he stared at the uplifted paw. Confusion replaced the anger in his eyes. The pointer waited patiently. Then Dad was on his knees hugging the animal.

It was the beginning of a warm and intimate friendship.

Dad named the pointer Cheyenne. Together he and Cheyenne explored the community. They spent long hours walking down dusty lanes. They spent reflective moments on the banks of streams, angling for tasty trout.

They even started to attend Sunday services together, Dad sitting in a pew and Cheyenne lying quietly at his feet. Dad and Cheyenne were inseparable throughout the next three years.

Dad's bitterness faded, and he and Cheyenne made many friends.

Then late one night I was startled to feel Cheyenne's cold nose burrowing through our bed covers. He had never before come into our bedroom at night. I woke Rick, put on my robe and ran into my father's room.

Dad lay in his bed, his face serene; but his spirit had left quietly sometime during the night. Two days later my shock and grief deepened when I discovered Cheyenne lying dead beside Dad's bed.

I wrapped his still form in the rag rug he had slept on. As Rick and I buried him near a favourite fishing hole, I silently thanked the dog for the help he had given me in restoring Dad's peace of mind.

The morning of Dad's funeral dawned overcast and dreary. This day looks like the way I feel, I thought, as I walked down the aisle to the pews reserved for family. I was surprised to see the many friends Dad and Cheyenne had made filling the church.

The pastor began his eulogy. It was a tribute to both Dad and the dog who had changed his life. And then the pastor turned to Hebrews 13:2. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers..."

"I've often thanked God for sending that angel," he said.

For me, the past dropped into place, completing a puzzle that I had not seen before: the sympathetic voice that had just read the right article ~ Cheyenne's unexpected appearance at the animal shelter ~ His calm acceptance and complete devotion to my father ~ and the proximity of their deaths. And suddenly I understood. I knew that God had answered my prayers after all.

~by Catherine Moore~

## Stress

A lecturer when explaining stress management to an audience, raised a glass of water and asked "How heavy is this glass of water?"

Answers called out ranged from 20g to 500g.

The lecturer replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long you try to hold it.

If I hold it for a minute, that's not a problem.

If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my right arm.

If I hold it for a day, you'll have to call an ambulance.

In each case, it's the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

He continued, "And that's the way it is with stress management.

If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavy, we won't be able to carry on."

"As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again.

When we're refreshed, we can carry on with the burden."

"So, before you return home tonight, put the burden of work down.

Don't carry it home. You can pick it up tomorrow.

Whatever burdens you're carrying now, let them down for a moment if you can."

So, my friend, Put down anything that may be a burden to you right now.

Don't pick it up again until after you've rested a while.



You catch it like the flu  
When someone smiled  
at me today  
I started smiling too.



I walked around the corner  
And someone saw me grin;  
When he smiled, I realised  
I had passed it on to him.



I thought about the smile  
And then realised its worth  
A single smile like mine  
Could travel round the earth.



So if you feel a smile begin  
Don't leave it undetected;  
Start an epidemic, quick  
And get the whole world  
Infected.



If you should find the Perfect Church  
Without one fault or smear,  
For goodness sake, don't join that church,  
You'd spoil the atmosphere.

But since no perfect church exists  
Where people never sin  
Let's cease in looking for that church,  
And love the one we're in!

If we tried to apply that philosophy within our family, our  
friendships or our place of work, what a difference it  
could make!!





There came a frantic knock At the doctor's office door,  
A knock, more urgent than he had ever heard before.  
"Come in, Come in," the impatient doctor said,  
"Come in, Come in, before you wake the dead."

In walked a frightened little girl, a child no more than nine,  
It was plain for all to see she had troubles on her mind.  
"Oh doctor, I beg you, please come with me,  
My mother is surely dying, she's as sick as she can be."

"I don't make house calls, bring your mother here,"  
"But she's too sick, so you must come or she will die I fear."  
The doctor, touched by her devotion decided he would go,  
She said he would be blessed, more than he could know.

She led him to her house where her mother lay in bed,  
Her mother was so very sick she couldn't raise her head.  
But her eyes cried out for help and help her the doctor did,  
She would have died that very night had it not been for her kid.

The doctor got her fever down and she lived through the night,  
And morning brought the doctor signs that she would be all right.  
The doctor said he had to leave but would return again by two,  
And later he came back to check, just like he said he'd do.

The mother praised the doctor for all the things he'd done,  
He told her she would have died, were it not for her little one.  
"How proud you must be of your wonderful little girl,  
It was her pleading that made me come, she is really quite a pearl!

"But doctor, my daughter died over three years ago,  
Is the picture on the wall of the little girl you know?"  
The doctors legs went limp for the picture on the wall,  
Was the same little girl for whom he'd made this call.

The doctor stood motionless for quite a little while,  
And then his solemn face was broken by his smile.  
He was thinking of that frantic knock heard at his office door,  
And of the beautiful little angel that had walked across his floor.



A holy man was having a conversation with the Lord one day and said, Lord, I would like to know what Heaven and Hell are like."

The Lord led the holy man to two doors. He opened one of the doors and the holy man looked in. In the middle of the room was a large round table.

In the middle of the table was a large pot of stew which smelled delicious and made the holy man's mouth water. The people sitting around the table were thin and sickly.

They appeared to be famished. They were holding spoons with very long handles that were strapped to their arms and each found it possible to reach into the pot of stew and take a spoonful, but because the handle was longer than their arms, they could not get the spoons back into their mouths.

The holy man shuddered at the sight of their misery and suffering. The Lord said, "You have seen Hell."

They went to the next room and opened the door. It was exactly the same as the first one. There was the large round table with the large pot of stew which made the holy man's mouth water.

The people were equipped with the same long-handled spoons, but here the people were well nourished and plump, laughing and talking.

The holy man said, "I don't understand."

"It is simple" said the Lord, "it requires but one skill. You see, they have learned to feed each other, while the greedy think only of themselves."



**When I was young, clear eyed and sure of mind,  
I saw the world a playground for my pleasure,  
Where I was certain I would always find  
Love, fun and endless treasure.**

**I saw no people's pain or sorrow,  
Counted not the rainy days,  
Cared not for warnings of tomorrow,  
But lived the moment's selfish haze.**

**But time that whisks away our dreams,  
Strips the world to naked sight,  
Nothing now is what it seems,  
The brightest day is darkest night.**

**I now look back with wiser  
eyes, Hoping I have learned at  
last To see the truth and not  
the lies That rule the universe  
so vast.**

**Yet within the darkness one thing's true  
As true as the shining sun above,  
In all the cosmos - old or new,  
There is no greater truth than love.**

*Simon Barnes  
Written May 6th, 2006.*



## A BASKET OF PROBLEMS

by

Lee Simonson

Some years ago a group of conventioners gathered at a ski resort to conduct their annual meeting. It was autumn, so there was no snow and no skiing, but the town was picturesque and the fall scenery was as pretty as a postcard. The leaves were scarlet and the mountains surrounding the town were spectacular.

Hundreds of conventioners came from every part of the country; young and old, rich and poor, and in all shapes and sizes. They shared common interests, though their backgrounds and careers were quite varied.

Twenty of the conventioners were put up at a large bed and breakfast near the outskirts of town. A little off the beaten path and nestled on the side of the mountain, the large Victorian house offered the perfect view and was an ideal setting for the weary travellers.

After a few days, the guests became better acquainted, friendship developed, and a camaraderie was felt within the group.

The new found friends seemed to particularly enjoy the light hearted conversations that took place every evening after dinner in front of the inn's huge stone fireplace.

As the logs blazed, the fire cast a beautiful dancing glow around the main room. Some sat in rocking chairs, others snuggled on the large sofas, and there were those who enjoyed sitting on the blankets and pillows on the floor. Everyone sipped their beverages and laughed at the stories told of their day's convention activities.

But one night the stories around the fireplace took a different twist.

The conversation turned serious when Mike, a young man in his 20's, confessed that he had just been diagnosed with cancer. While it was treatable and he stood an excellent chance of being cured, he was nonetheless distraught.

A middle aged couple, Tom and Cheryl, offered their support and understanding. They had just been informed that their child needed a kidney transplant. The news had been emotionally devastating to the family.

A woman tearfully explained how she had recently lost her husband to a car accident. Another person told that he had just lost his job and was at wit's end.

The evening turned gut wrenching as others began to describe horrible aspects of their "normal" lives or lives of their loved ones. From depression and drug addiction, to eating disorders and relationship problems -- no one seemed immune from some sort of hardship.

Finally, an elderly gentleman -- a man who was at the convention by himself and only known to the group as Mr. Hayes, interjected himself into the conversation.

Mr. Hayes had a distinguished look about him, and while no one knew exactly where he came from, he spoke with a gentle voice that engendered confidence and assuredness.

During the past days, he had smiled and laughed, evidently enjoying the company, but he had not said very much. People just looked at him and thought he was a "nice old man."

After listening to everyone's concerns and problems, Mr. Hayes looked over at the hostess and asked her if she could get a paper and pen for everyone in the room. She returned in a minute, complying with the unusual request.

"Do me a favour," Mr. Hayes asked. "We're going to try something and I need your cooperation. On the small piece of paper please write down the three biggest problems you are facing in your personal life right now. Don't sign your name. We'll keep everything confidential."

The group began to ponder and found the experiment fascinating; not knowing what was to follow. After everyone was done writing down their problems, Mr. Hayes asked everyone to fold their paper and place it in a small basket that was placed in front of the fireplace.

There were curious looks throughout the room, but again, everyone co-operated, wondering what would happen next.

Mr. Hayes shook the basket and held it above everyone's head as he walked around the room and asked each person to pick a paper from the basket. After he was done, he sat back down and looked around the room.

"Friends, open the paper and just read to yourself the problems that you chose," Mr. Hayes explained. "And please, be as honest as you can."

Then, Mr. Hayes glanced at the woman sitting on his left and asked, "Lisa, would you like to trade your problems that you wrote down with those that you chose from the basket?" "No," Lisa said.

Next, Mr. Hayes asked the man sitting next to Lisa the same question. "Would you like to trade the problems you wrote down for those that you chose from the basket?" Again the reply was "No."

Mr. Hayes went around the entire room. Everyone had a chance to respond. Remarkably, the answers were all the same -- no, no, no, no, no... Comments ranged from "I can deal with my own problems, but I can't deal with what I chose out of the basket," to "Wow - these make my problems look like nothing. Forget this." Mr. Hayes settled back in his cushioned rocking chair while the fire crackled in the background.

He asked, "Do your problems seem so difficult now when you see what others must endure? Most of you wish you were in someone else's shoes, and yet, when you get a chance to trade your problems for theirs, none of you are willing.

"Don't you see? Tonight you've learned, by your own admissions, that despite the hardships you face, and despite the worries that grind away at you and cause you to lose sleep at night -- despite all that -- you've come to appreciate and understand the simple fact that the problems you face are nothing compared to what others must deal with.

In light of everyone else's problems, your own problems seem manageable. If nothing else, that's something to be grateful for.

"Sure, we like to complain. It's our nature and it's also therapeutic to express ourselves and get our frustrations off our chests. There is nothing wrong with that, and in fact, it can be a healthy thing to do. It helps us sort things out. And heaven knows, we can always find something to complain about."

The group found themselves mesmerized with Mr. Hayes' comments, with several people shaking their heads in agreement, as if something amazing has just dawned on them.

"But friends," he said, "the burdens that have been placed upon us are there for a reason; because without our problems, we would not search for answers. And if we led our lives without searching for answers, we would never become better, or stronger, or more understanding.

Sometimes it takes a serious problem to wake us up to what's really important in life.

As an example, you'll find that many of the answers you're looking for can be found by helping others facing similar problems, and that act of service is what's really important.

"You see, the key to your enrichment, to your happiness and peace, is to take the problems you have and look at them as a chance to find an answer. Learn your lessons well, and then to take those lessons and answers and use them to become a better person -- for yourself and for others.

I'm not saying that you have to like the challenges you face. No one does. But you can look at those challenges as an opportunity to do some good.



"Now with that in mind, remember this... Some people let the world and the problems they face dictate what they think and how they live their lives. And yes, some people just love to wallow in misery. But if the truth be known, it should and can be the opposite.

You have the power within you to change your world and put your problems behind you as you move forward.

"Ironically, the power to do that comes from the very things you see as problems and setbacks. That's what most people don't understand. For every setback you experience there is an equal or greater blessing that accompanies it.

You may not realise this, but your struggles are allowing you become a better person each and every day. You just have to open your eyes and see it.

"The blessings that come from your struggles are sometimes hidden and many times you have to look long and hard. But by finding them in due course, and by counting those blessings, you will discover a secret of the ages, an undeniable truth, which seems to have escaped most of humanity.

"That secret is very simple: The more you count your blessings, the more blessings are bestowed upon you. If you don't believe me, just try it and see what happens."

The group was spellbound, just staring at Mr Hayes, reflecting upon his words, his sincerity and conviction. His comforting knowledge seemed to vanquish the stresses and worries which had infected the earlier conversation.

Mr. Hayes took his last sip of hot chocolate and excused himself to retire to his room. Those present continued to discuss what they had learned, and by the end of the evening, all had concurred that Mr. Hayes had hit on something.

Each person was able to discuss a problem they had which could be turned into a blessing.

The young man who was diagnosed with cancer was determined to use his experience to educate others on the importance of early detection.

The couple with a son who needed a kidney transplant dedicated themselves to join the campaign to encourage others to sign donor cards.

The woman who had lost her husband decided to carry on his memory by volunteering to pick up where her husband had left off in his community work.

The man who had lost his job, told himself that he would use this opportunity to do what he had always wanted to do -- write a book that he had been thinking about for years.

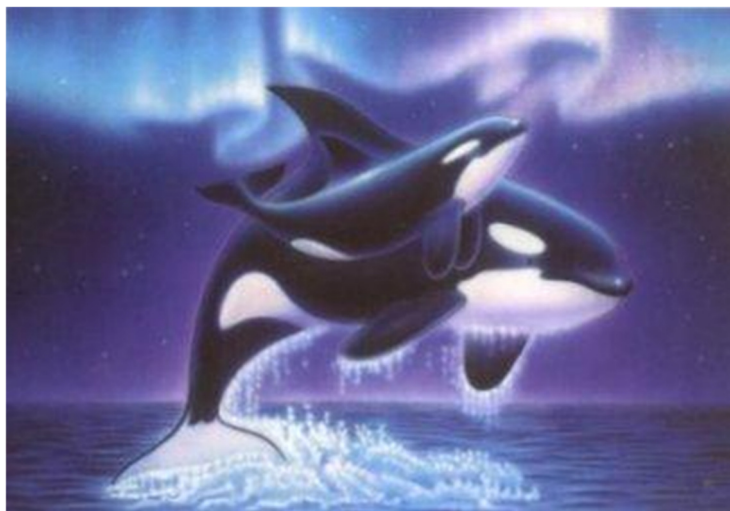
Rather than dwelling on their problems, everyone had learned to use their problems as a stepping stone toward bettering themselves and helping others.

Rather than getting wrapped up in self-pity, the experience of confronting their problems and seeking answers proved to be a valuable lesson indeed. Someone commented, "Now I finally realise what looking at the glass as half full means."

The next morning at breakfast, the hostess reported to the group that Mr. Hayes' room was empty and that he must have left very early.

During subsequent conventions, the friends often reminisced about their gathering at the secluded mountain resort and of their fond memories of the fireplace conversations and the time their problems ended up in a basket.

Interestingly, not a single person had seen or heard of Mr. Hayes' whereabouts since that time.



## A Brother Like That

Paul received an automobile from his brother as a Christmas present. On Christmas Eve when Paul came out of his office, a street urchin was walking around the shiny new car, admiring it.

"Is this your car, Mister?" he asked.

Paul nodded. "My brother gave it to me for Christmas." The boy was astounded. "You mean your brother gave it to you and it didn't cost you nothing? Boy, I wish..." He hesitated.

Of course Paul knew what he was going to wish for. He was going to wish he had a brother like that.

But what the lad said jarred Paul all the way down to his heels.

"I wish," the boy went on, "that I could be a brother like that."

Paul looked at the boy in astonishment, then impulsively he added, "Would you like to take a ride in my automobile?"

"Oh yes, I'd love that."

After a short ride, the boy turned and with his eyes aglow, said, "Mister, would you mind driving in front of my house?"

Paul smiled a little. He thought he knew what the lad wanted. He wanted to show his neighbours that he could ride home in a big automobile. But Paul was wrong again.

"Will you stop where those two steps are?" the boy asked. He ran up the steps.

Then in a little while Paul heard him coming back, but he was not coming fast. He was carrying his little crippled brother.

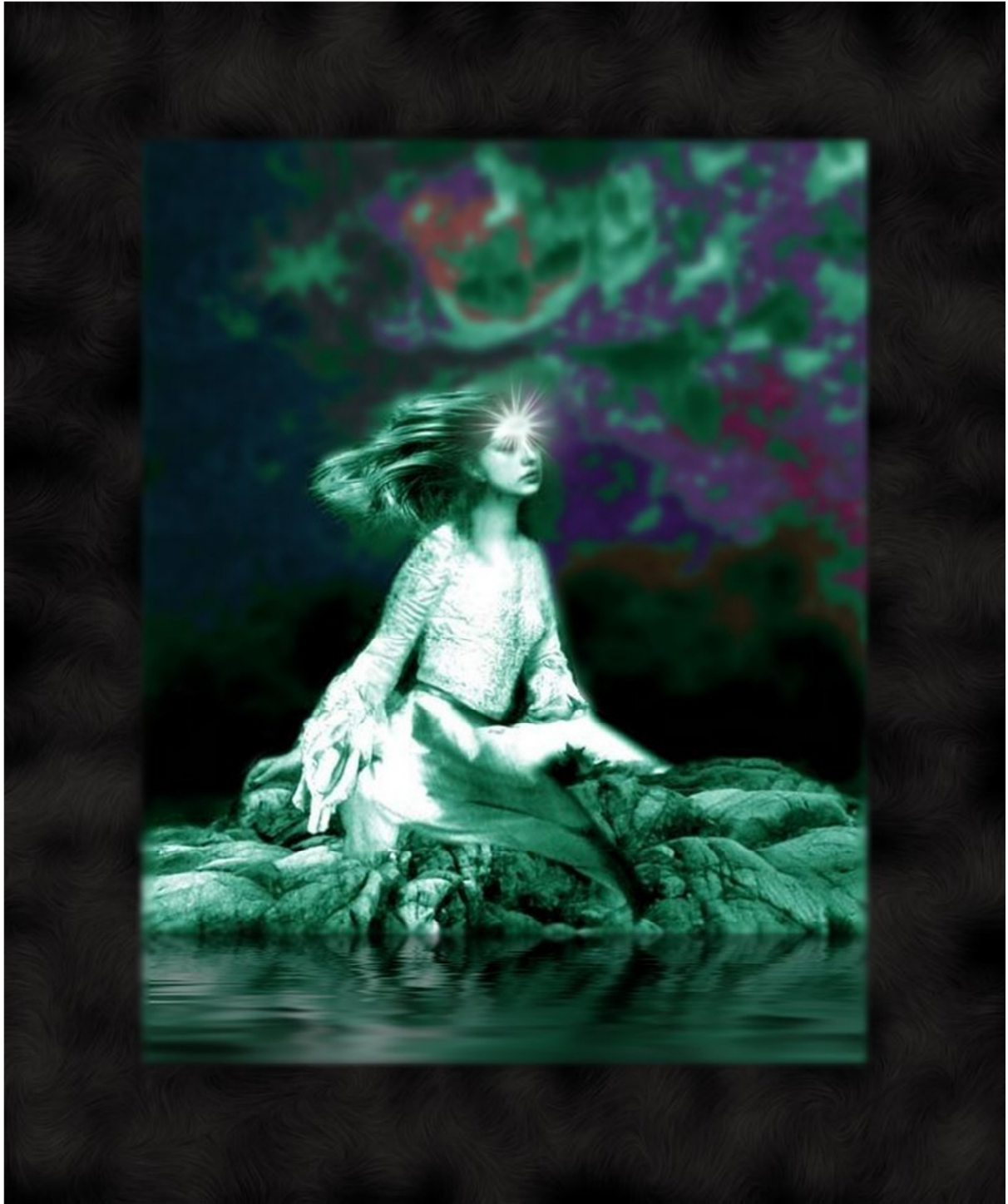
He sat him down on the bottom step, then sort of squeezed up against him and pointed to the car. "There she is, Buddy, just like I told you upstairs. His brother gave it to him for Christmas and it didn't cost him a cent.

And some day I'm gonna give you one just like it...then you can see for yourself all the pretty things in the Christmas windows that I've been trying to tell you about."

Paul got out and lifted the lad to the front seat of his car. The shining-eyed older brother climbed in beside him and the three of them began a memorable holiday ride.

That Christmas Eve, Paul learned what Jesus meant when he had said: "It is more blessed to give..."

My Holiday Wish for the World Is That  
We all Could Be Brothers Like That.



Cosmic Meditation

"What must I do to attain holiness?" said a traveller.

"Follow your heart," said the Master.

That seemed to please the traveller.

Before he left, however, the Master said to him in a whisper, "To follow your heart you are going to need a strong constitution."

Anthony de Mello, S.J.



"I have to say I had a different impression of what Reiki is all about."

**The intelligent man who is proud of his intelligence is like the condemned man who is proud of his large cell. --Simone Weil**

## The Last Supper



My wife, Marlene, created The Last Supper in a beautiful cross stitch tapestry. It took her four months to complete.

This tapestry hangs on the wall behind my chair on which I am sitting in front of my computer. It projects a large amount of energy and light.

Several people have asked me for prints. The above picture is the very first print that I took of the Last Supper Tapestry.

If you would like one of these beautiful prints please go to:-

<http://www.christianwordsearches.net/TheLastSupper.html>

May many Blessings be upon you

Geoffrey Keyte

Once there lived a hermit prophet, and thrice a moon he would go down to the great city and in the market places he would preach giving and sharing to the people. And he was eloquent, and his fame was upon the land.

Upon an evening three men came to his hermitage and he greeted them. And they said, "You have been preaching giving and sharing, and you have sought to teach those who have much to give unto those who have little; and we doubt not that your fame has brought you riches. Now come and give us of your riches, for we are in need."

And the hermit answered and said, "My friends, I have naught but this bed and this mat and this jug of water. Take them if it is in your desire. I have neither gold nor silver."

Then they looked down with disdain upon him, and turned their faces from him; and the last man stood at the door for a moment, and said, "Oh, you cheat! You fraud! You teach and preach that which you yourself do not perform."

From Kahlil Gibran's 'A Treasury of Wisdom'



Kahlil Gibran



I was telling my son that when he starts his new job, to give more than is expected – for then he will receive more and be more thought of--- and thus respected more.

I thought more about that and realised life is like that. The more we give, the more is given back to us.

Each deed and thought offers more to humanity's needs as well—for we feed the Collective in ways that enrich more than we know.

It just seemed important to embrace this fuller concept of giving now. I think more giving is needed now more than ever.

Heather Robb

On the road of life you learn there  
is a subtle difference between  
holding a hand and sharing a life.

You learn that love  
doesn't mean possession,  
Company doesn't mean security,  
and that loneliness is universal.

You learn that kisses aren't contracts,  
and that presents aren't promises.

You begin to accept your defeats.  
with your head up and your eyes open  
with the grace of an adult, not the grief of a child.

You learn to invest your hope on today's declarations  
knowing that sometimes plans have a way of falling apart.

Yet you come to respect that each step you take today  
in a new direction creates a path towards the promise  
of a newly designed future.

You learn that even sunshine burns  
if you get too much, and that  
dark clouds don't necessarily mean rain.

You learn that love, even true love,  
always has its joys and its sorrows.

And finally it occurs to you to plant your own garden  
and learn to nourish your own soul  
instead of waiting for someone  
to bring you flowers.

You recognize that through it all  
you really  
can endure,  
you really are strong,

you do have value, and

you can learn and grow.

You find yourself able to stand in an ending and

nurture its transformation into a beginning.

Even if from time to time you wonder what your life is becoming;

you know you

are alive.

## I am Blessed - indeed

Today upon a bus, I saw a lovely  
girl, I envied her:-  
She seemed so happy. And I wish I  
were as fair.  
And then, suddenly, she rose to  
leave, and I saw her hobble down  
the aisle,  
She had one leg and wore a crutch,  
But as she passed, a smile.

Oh God, forgive me when I whine, I  
have two legs,  
I am blessed indeed. The world is  
mine!

Later, walking down the street,  
I saw a man with eyes of blue.  
But he just stood and the watched the  
others play.  
So, I stopped a moment and then I said,  
"Why don't you join the others,  
sir?"  
But he looked ahead without a  
word.  
And then I knew he could not hear.

Oh God, forgive me when I whine, I  
have two ears,  
I am blessed indeed. The world is  
mine!

And later, I stopped to buy some  
sweets,  
The lad who sold them had such  
charm,  
I talked with him. If I were late, it  
would do no harm.

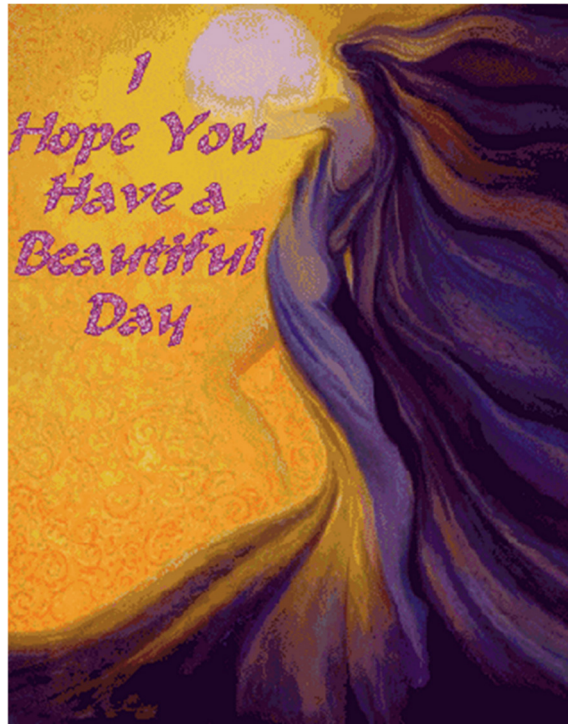
But as I turned to go, he said to me,  
"I thank you sir. You've been so  
kind.  
It's nice to talk with folks like you.  
You see", he said, "I'm blind"

Oh God, forgive me when I whine, I  
have two eyes,  
I am blessed indeed. The world is  
mine!

With legs to take me where I want  
to go,  
With ears to hear the things I need  
to know,  
With eyes to watch that radiant  
sunset glow,  
Oh God, forgive me when I whine.

I am blessed indeed!  
The world is mine!

We live to Learn  
And Learn to Live!



## My wish for you Today...

I wish you a day of ordinary miracles-

A fresh pot of coffee you didn't have to make yourself



An unexpected phone call from an old friend



Green stop lights on your way to work or shop.



I wish you a day of little things to rejoice in...



The fastest line at the grocery store

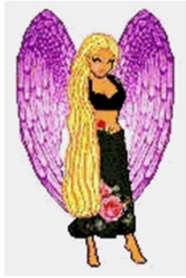


A good sing along song on the radio





Your keys right where you look.



I wish you a day of happiness and perfection – little  
bite-size pieces of perfection that give you the funny  
feeling that the Lord is smiling on you, holding you so  
gently because you are someone special and rare



I wish you a day of Peace

Happiness

and Joy

They say it takes a minute to find a special person,  
an hour to appreciate them,  
a day to love them,  
but then an entire life to forget them.



'Tis better to be silent and be thought a fool, than to speak and remove all doubt."  
--- Abraham Lincoln



This teenager lived alone with his mother, and the two of them had a very special relationship.

During school sports events, even though the son was always on the bench, his mother was always in the stands cheering.

She never missed a game.

This young man was the smallest of the class when he entered the school but she also made it very clear that he did not have to play football if he didn't want to.

But the young man loved football and decided to hang in there. He was determined to try his best at every practice, and perhaps he'd get to play when he became a senior.

All through high school he never missed a practice nor a game, but remained a bench warmer all four years. His faithful mother was always in the stands, always with words of encouragement for him.

When the young man went to college, he decided to try out for the football team as a "walk-on." Everyone was sure he could never make the cut, but he did. The coach admitted that he kept him on the roster because he always puts his heart and soul into every practice, and at the same time, provided the other members with the spirit and hustle they badly needed.

The news that he had survived the cut thrilled him so much that he rushed to the nearest phone and called his mother. His mother shared his excitement and was sent season tickets for all the college games.

This persistent young athlete never missed practice during his four years at college, but he never got to play in the game. It was the end of his senior football season, and as he trotted onto the practice field shortly before the big playoff game, the coach met him with a telegram.

The young man read the telegram and he became deathly silent. Swallowing hard, he mumbled to the coach, "My mother died this morning. Is it all right if I miss practice today?"

The coach put his arm gently around his shoulder and said, "Take the rest of the week off, son. And don't even plan to come back to the game on Saturday.

Saturday arrived, and the game was not going well. In the third quarter, when the team was ten points behind, a silent young man quietly slipped into the empty locker room and put on his football gear. As he ran onto the side-lines, the coach and his players were astounded to see their faithful team mate back so soon.

"Coach, please let me play. I've just got to play today," said the young man.

The coach pretended not to hear him. There was no way he wanted his worst player in this close playoff game. But the young man persisted. And finally feeling sorry for the kid, the coach gave in.

"All right," he said. "You can go in."

Before long, the coach, the players and everyone in the stands could not believe their eyes. This little unknown, who had never played before was doing everything right. The opposing team could not stop him.

He ran, he passed, blocked and tackled like a star. His team began to triumph. The score was soon tied. In the closing seconds of the game, this kid intercepted a pass and ran all the way for the winning touchdown. The fans broke loose. His teammates hoisted him onto their shoulders. Such cheering you've never heard!

Finally, after the stands had emptied and the team had showered and left the locker room, the coach noticed that the young man was sitting quietly in the corner all alone. The coach came to him and said, "Kid, I can't believe it. You were fantastic! Tell me what got into you? How did you do it?"

He looked at the coach, with tears in his eyes, and said, "Well, you knew my Mom died, but did you know that my Mom was blind?"

The young man swallowed hard and forced a smile, "Mom came to all my games, but today was the first time she could see me play, and I wanted to show her I could do it!"

May you always be reaching a little bit higher  
As to greater heights in your life you aspire.  
And may you be steadfast and honest and strong,  
And not be afraid to admit when you're wrong.

May you earn the blessings this life can afford,  
May you always live in the Love of the Lord.

May hope grow within you, your faith become firm,  
As you benefit from all the lessons you learn.  
May shadows not linger, and darkness of night  
Be lifted, because you walk in the Lord's Light.

May joy be your portion, and rainbows abound,  
As you pass on the Light and the Love you have found.

May you always remember the power of prayer,  
And because your Lord loves you, He always is there.  
So may you, my dear friend, as sands of time run  
Continue the journey your soul has begun.

May peace be within you, your cup overflow,  
As closer to God in your spirit you grow  
God Loves You and So Do I

Best is to know - and know that you know.....

Next best is to know that you don't know.....

Third best is knowing, but not realising it.....

Worst is not to know that you don't know!

**Answering a knock on the door of his African hut,  
a missionary found a native boy holding up a large fish.**

**The boy said, "Preacher, you taught us to give at least one-tenth,  
so here-I've brought you my tenth."**

**As the missionary gratefully took the fish,  
he questioned the young lad -**

**"Where are the other nine fish?"**

**At this, the boy beamed and said,**

**"Oh, they're still back in the river.**

**I'm going back to catch them now."**

It is said to be an old story, but it is new to me.

It tells of technicians gathering round a new super computer and feeding into it the profound question,

"Does God exist?"

The machine hummed for a few seconds, then released its pronouncement:-

"He does now!"



## THE LORD'S BASEBALL GAME

I hope you enjoy this as much as I did!

Bob and the Lord stood by to observe a baseball game. The Lord's team was playing Satan's team. The Lord's team was at bat, the score was tied zero to zero, and it was the bottom of the 9th innings with two outs.

They continued to watch as a batter stepped up to the plate whose name was Love. Love swung at the first pitch and hit a single, because Love never fails.

The next batter was named Faith, who also got a single because Faith works with Love.

The next batter up was named Godly Wisdom. Satan wound up and threw the first pitch. Godly Wisdom looked it over and let it pass: Ball one. Three more pitches and Godly Wisdom walked, because Godly Wisdom never swings at what Satan throws.

The bases were now loaded. The Lord then turned to Bob and told him He was now going to bring in His star player. Up to the plate stepped Grace. Bob said, "He sure doesn't look like much!"

Satan's whole team relaxed when they saw Grace. Thinking he had won the game, Satan wound up and fired his first pitch. To the shock of everyone, Grace hit the ball harder than anyone had ever seen.

But Satan was not worried; his centre fielder let very few get by. He went up for the ball, but it went right through his glove, hit him on the head and sent him crashing on the ground; then it continued over the fence for a home run!

The Lord's team won! The Lord then asked Bob if he knew why Love, Faith, and Godly Wisdom could get on base but could not win the game. Bob answered that he did not know why.

The Lord explained, "If your love, faith, and wisdom had won the game you would think you had done it by yourself. Love, Faith and Wisdom will get you on base but only My Grace can get you Home.

Psalm 84:11, *"For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly."*

## The Tale of the new Jaguar

A young and successful executive was traveling down a neighbourhood street, going a bit too fast in his new Jaguar. He was watching for kids darting out from between parked cars and slowed down when he thought he saw something.

As his car passed, no children appeared. Instead, a brick smashed into the Jag's side door!

He slammed on the brakes and backed the Jag back to the spot where the brick had been thrown.

The angry driver then jumped out of the car, grabbed the nearest kid and pushed him up against a parked car shouting, "What was that all about and who are you? Just what the heck are you doing? That's a new car, and that brick you threw is going to cost a lot of money. Why did you do it?"

The young boy was apologetic. "Please, mister...please. I'm sorry, but I didn't know what else to do," he pleaded. "I threw the brick because no one else would stop..."

With tears dripping down his face and off his chin, the youth pointed to a spot just around a parked car. "It's my brother," he said. "He rolled off the curb and fell out of his wheelchair and I can't lift him up."

Now sobbing, the boy asked the stunned executive, "Would you please help me get him back into his wheelchair?"

He's hurt, and he's too heavy for me."

Moved beyond words, the driver tried to swallow the rapidly swelling lump in his throat. He hurriedly lifted the handicapped boy back into the wheelchair, then took out a linen handkerchief and dabbed at the fresh scrapes and cuts. A quick look told him everything was going to be okay.

"Thank you and may God bless you," the grateful child told the stranger.

Too shook up for words, the man simply watched the boy push his wheelchair-bound brother down the sidewalk toward their home. It was a long, slow walk back to the Jaguar. The damage was very noticeable, but the driver never bothered to repair the dented side door. He kept the dent there to remind him of this message:

"Don't go through life so fast that someone has to throw a brick at you to get your attention!"

God whispers in our souls and speaks to our hearts. Sometimes when we don't have time to listen, He has to throw a brick at us. It's our choice to listen or not.

Thought for the Day: If God had a refrigerator; your picture would be on it. If He had a wallet, your photo would be in it. He sends you flowers every spring. He sends

you a sunrise every morning. Face it, friend - He is crazy about you!

God didn't promise days without pain, laughter without sorrow, sun without rain, but He did promise strength for the day, comfort for the tears, and light for the way.

Read this line very slowly and let it sink in...

If God brings you to it, He will bring you through it.

Send this to every "beautiful person" you wish to bless.

## **Life**

**"Life is like a game of cards. The hand that is dealt you represents determinism; the way you play it is free will."**

**Jawaharlal Nehru {1889-1964 Indian Statesman}**

## Survivor

I want you to know that if you are reading this,  
**YOU ARE A SURVIVOR!!**

Just about now, you may feel like giving up and you've gone the last mile.....

The fact is, you haven't given up and you are still on life's journey.

Or you may be contemplating ending your life, but you know that you didn't go through everything that you have gone through just to end it like this.

Or you feel weak and tired and maybe even a failure, but what you haven't realized is that all your experiences are making you stronger ... not weaker.

Think you're at the bottom and there is no where else to go?

Wrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrong!!

Dust yourself off, shake your body a little doing a little jiggle and stand up!!

Put one foot in front of the other and start taking steps going upward ..... remember, there's nowhere else to go!!

Feeling alone, unloved, defeated or hung like the Salem Witches or maybe in the Lion's Den or even nailed to a cross? Your trials and tribulations are crushing you and you can't breathe, you can't move ... you can't.....?

You are reading this, so you survived!!

Looking for a job, the pieces to a lost marriage, raising children that think they are already grown, suffering from an illness that hangs over you like a dark shadow, grieving over a loss of a friend, of a child, of a parent or grieving over losing yourself in despair?

Recovering from a long bout with alcohol, a disease or an illness? Or preparing for your very own transition and you haven't made peace with it yet?

Searching for life in all the wrong places? Unable to see the light at the end of your tunnel?

Stop trying so hard..... it's there.  
You just have to go a little further.  
It's as close as the beating of your heart.

Unable to find love or a place to call your own? Or you need and or want people to know and understand you and unconditionally love you?

Stop searching ... and learn to love yourself.  
How can anyone love you if you don't love yourself?  
Think about it.  
Think about it.  
Think about it.

Feeling confused, upset, frustrated and or angry?  
This certifies you as a human being!!

Life has to have humour!!

Depressed, feel like you are going crazy..... losing it, wandering aimlessly and wondering where to go next or what to do next?  
Looking to others for answers?

Asking all the wrong questions to all the wrong people?  
Seeking acceptance, gratification and again ... unconditional love?

GO WITHIN!!

These are words that I have just written. But they are written from my heart and this is why you feel the truth in them.  
Whatever part resonates with you, embrace it.

Now take action and become all that you are. You are a survivor, we both know that. You just need to prove it to yourself. Take a little rest, get a good night's sleep and eat a healthy meal at the beginning of your day ... you're going to need it!! There is much work to be done.

Write out

I AM A SURVIVOR!!

and tape it on your refrigerator, bathroom mirror, car visor, desk at work, your workbook, your front door, anywhere and everywhere and allow it to become your affirmation.  
The next thing is to start believing it!!

You are a SURVIVOR!!

I'm One!!

## The Sandpiper

She was six years old when I first met her on the beach near where I live. I drive to this beach, a distance of three or four miles, whenever the world begins to close in on me. She was building a sandcastle or something and looked up, her eyes as blue as the sea.

"Hello," she said.

I answered with a nod, not really in the mood to bother with a small child.

"I'm building," she said.

"I see that. What is it?" I asked, not really caring.

"Oh, I don't know, I just like the feel of sand."

That sounds good, I thought, and slipped off my shoes.

A sandpiper glided by.

"That's a joy," the child said.

"It's a what?"

"It's a joy. My mama says sandpipers come to bring us joy."

The bird went gliding down the beach. Good-bye joy, I muttered to myself, Hello pain, and turned to walk on. I was depressed, my life seemed completely out of balance.

"What's your name?" She wouldn't give up.

"Robert," I answered. "I'm Robert Peterson."

"Mine's Wendy... I'm six." "Hi, Wendy." She giggled.

"You're funny," she said.

In spite of my gloom, I laughed too and walked on. Her musical giggle followed me.

"Come again, Mr. P," she called. "We'll have another happy day."

After a few days of a group of unruly Boy Scouts, PTA meetings, and an ailing mother. The sun was shining one morning as I took my hands out of the dishwasher.

I need a sandpiper, I said to myself, gathering up my coat.

The ever-changing balm of the seashore awaited me. The breeze was chilly but I strode along, trying to recapture the serenity I needed.

"Hello, Mr. P," she said. "Do you want to play?"

"What did you have in mind?" I asked, with a twinge of annoyance.

"I don't know, you say."

"How about charades?" I asked sarcastically.

The tinkling laughter burst forth again. "I don't know what that is."

"Then let's just walk."

Looking at her, I noticed the delicate fairness of her face.

"Where do you live?" I asked.

"Over there." She pointed toward a row of summer cottages. Strange, I thought, in winter.

"Where do you go to school?"

"I don't go to school. Mommy says we're on vacation."

She chattered little girl talk as we strolled up the beach, but my mind was on other things. When I left for home, Wendy said it had been a happy day. Feeling surprisingly better, I smiled at her and agreed.

Three weeks later, I rushed to my beach in a state of near panic. I was in no mood to even greet Wendy. I thought I saw her mother on the porch and felt like demanding she keep her child at home.



"Look, if you don't mind," I said crossly when Wendy caught up with me, "I'd rather be alone today." She seemed unusually pale and out of breath.

"Why?" she asked.

I turned to her and shouted, "Because my mother died!" and thought, My God, why was I saying this to a little child?

"Oh," she said quietly, "then this is a bad day."

"Yes," I said, "and yesterday and the day before and--oh, go away!"

"Did it hurt?" she inquired.

"Did what hurt?" I was exasperated with her, with myself.

"When she died?"

"Of course it hurt!" I snapped, misunderstanding, wrapped up in myself. I strode off.

A month or so after that, when I next went to the beach, she wasn't there.

Feeling guilty, ashamed and admitting to myself I missed her, I went up to the cottage after my walk and knocked at the door. A drawn looking young woman with honey-coloured hair opened the door.

"Hello," I said, "I'm Robert Peterson. I missed your little girl today and wondered where she was."

"Oh yes, Mr. Peterson, please come in. Wendy spoke of you so much. I'm afraid I allowed her to bother you. If she was a nuisance, please, accept my apologies."

"Not at all -- she's a delightful child." I said, suddenly realizing that I meant what I had just said.

"Wendy died last week, Mr. Peterson. She had leukemia. Maybe she didn't tell you."

Struck dumb, I groped for a chair. I had to catch my breath.

"She loved this beach so when she asked to come, we couldn't say no. She seemed so much better here and had a lot of what she called happy days. But the last few weeks, she declined rapidly..." Her voice faltered,

"She left something for you ... if only I can find it. Could you wait a moment while I look?"

I nodded stupidly, my mind racing for something to say to this lovely young woman. She handed me a smeared envelope with "MR. P" printed in bold childish letters. Inside was a drawing in bright crayon hues --a yellow beach, a blue sea, and a brown bird. Underneath was carefully printed: A SANDPIPER TO BRING YOU JOY.

Tears welled up in my eyes and a heart that had almost forgotten to love opened wide. I took Wendy's mother in my arms. "I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry," I muttered over and over, and we wept together.

The precious little picture is framed now and hangs in my study. Six words -- one for each year of her life--that speak to me of harmony, courage, and undemanding love. A gift from a child with sea blue eyes and hair the color of sand -- who taught me the gift of love.

NOTE: This story serves as a reminder to all of us that we need to take time to enjoy living and life and each other. The price of hating other human beings is loving oneself less. Life is so complicated; the hustle and bustle of everyday traumas can make us lose focus about what is truly important or what is only a momentary setback or crisis.

This week, be sure to give your loved ones an extra hug, and by all means, take a moment...even if it is only ten seconds, to stop and smell the roses. This comes from someone's heart, and is shared with many and now I share it with you.

## The Deck of Cards

**This is a story about a soldier in the North Africa Campaign in World War II.  
After heavy fighting, the man returned to camp.**

**The next day being Sunday, the Chaplain had set up a church service. The men were asked to take out their Bibles or Prayer Books.**

**The Chaplain noticed one soldier looking at a deck of cards. After service, he was taken by the Chaplain to see the Major.**

**The Chaplain explained to the Major what he had seen. The Major told the young soldier he would have to be punished if he could not explain himself.**

**The young soldier told the Major that during the battle, he had neither a Bible or a Prayer Book so he would use his deck of cards and explained:  
"You see, Sir, when I look at the Ace, it tells me that there is one God and no other.**

**When I see the "2", it reminds me that there are two parts to the Bible, the Old Testament and the New Testament.**

**The "3" tells me of the Trinity Of God The Father. God The Son and God The Holy Spirit.**

**The "4" reminds me of the Four Gospels, Mathew, Mark, Luke and John.**

**When I see the "5", it tells me of the five unwise virgins who were lost and that five were saved.**

**The "6" makes me mindful that God created the earth in just six days, and God said that it was good.**

**When I see the "7", it reminds me that God rested on the seventh day.**

**As I look at the "8", it reminds me that God destroyed all life by water except for eight people, Noah, his wife, their three sons, and their three son's wives.**

**When I see the "9", I think of the nine lepers that God healed. There were ten lepers in all, but only one stopped to thank him.**

**The "10" reminds me of the Ten Commandments carved in stone by the hand of God.**

**The "Jack" makes me remember the Prince of Darkness. Like a roaring lion, he devours those that he can.**

**When I look at the "Queen", I see the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus.**

**As I look at the last card, "The King", it reminds me that Jesus is Lord of Lords and King of Kings!**

**There are 365 spots on a deck of cards, and that is the number of days in each year.**

**There are 52 cards to a deck and that is the number of weeks in a year.**

**There are 12 picture cards and that is the number of months in a year.**

**There are 4 different suits in a deck and that is the number of seasons in a year.**

**And so, the young soldier then said to the Major, "You see, Sir that my intentions were honourable.**

**My deck of cards serves as my Bible, my Prayer book and my Almanac."**

**A deck of cards should most importantly remind us that we need Jesus 365 days, 52 weeks and 12 months a year and that we should always Pray "4" others.**

**May you never look at a deck of cards the same way.**

**~Author Unknown ~**

**May you find serenity and tranquility  
in a world you may not always understand.**

**May the pain you have known and the  
conflict you have experienced  
give you the strength  
to walk through life facing each new  
situation with courage and optimism.**

**Always know that there are those  
whose love and understanding  
will always be there,  
even when you feel most alone.**

**May you discover enough goodness  
in others to believe in a world of peace.**

**May a kind word, a reassuring touch,  
a warm smile be yours every day of your life,  
and may you give these gifts  
as well as receive them.**

**Remember the sunshine  
when the storm seems unending.**

**Teach love to those who know hate,  
and let that love embrace you  
as you go into the world.**

**May the teaching of those you admire  
become part of you, so that you  
may call upon them.**

**Remember, those whose lives you  
have touched and who have touched yours  
are always a part of you, even  
if the encounters were less than  
you would have wished.**

**It is the content of the encounter  
that is more important than its form.**

**May you not become too concerned  
with material matters, but instead place  
immeasurable value on the  
goodness in your heart.**

**Find time in each day to see the  
beauty and love in the world around you.  
Realize that each person has  
limitless abilities, but each of  
us is different in our own way.**

**What you may feel you lack in  
one regard may be more than  
compensated for in another.**

**What you feel you lack in the present may become one of your strengths in the future.**

**May you see your future as one filled with promise and possibility.**

**May you always feel loved.**

**Author Unknown**

## **The Great Invocation**

**From the point of Light  
within the mind of God  
let light stream forth into  
the minds of men,  
let light descend on Earth.**

**From the point of Love  
within the heart of God  
Let Love stream forth into  
the hearts of men,  
May Christ return to Earth.**

**From the centre where the  
Will of God is known  
Let purpose guide the little  
wills of men----  
The purpose which the  
Masters know and serve.**

**From the centre which we  
call the race of men  
Let the Plan of Love and  
Light work out,  
And may it seal the door  
where evil dwells.**

**Let Light and Love and  
power restore the Plan on Earth.**





Too many people put off something that brings them joy just because they haven't thought about it, don't have it on their schedule, didn't know it was coming or are too rigid to depart from their routine.

I got to thinking one day about all those women on the Titanic who passed up dessert at dinner that fateful night in an effort to cut back. From then on, I've tried to be a little more flexible. How many women out there will eat at home because their husband didn't suggest going out to dinner until after something had been thawed?

Does the word "refrigeration" mean nothing to you?

How often have your kids dropped in to talk and sat in silence while you watched 'Jeopardy' on television? I cannot count the times I called my sister and said, "How about going to lunch in a half hour?" She would gasp and stammer, "I can't. I have clothes on the line. My hair is dirty. I Wish I had known yesterday, I had a late breakfast, it looks like rain."

And my personal favourite: "It's Monday."

She died a few years ago. We never did have lunch together. Because Americans cram so much into their lives, we tend to schedule our headaches. We live on a sparse diet of promises we make to ourselves when all the conditions are perfect!



We'll go back and visit the grandparents when we get Stevie toilet-trained. We'll entertain when we replace the living-room carpet. We'll go on a second honeymoon when we get two more kids out of college. Life has a way of accelerating as we get older. The days get shorter, and the list of promises to ourselves gets longer.

One morning, we awaken, and all we have to show for our lives is a litany of "I'm going to", "I plan on", and "Someday, when things are settled down a bit."

When anyone calls my 'seize the moment' friend, she is open to adventure and available for trips. She keeps an open mind on new ideas. Her enthusiasm for life is contagious. You talk with her for five minutes, and you're ready to trade your bad feet for a pair of Roller blades and skip an elevator for a bungee cord.

My lips have not touched ice cream in 10 years. I love ice cream. It's just that I might as well apply it directly to my stomach with a spatula and eliminate the digestive process. The other day, I stopped the car and bought a triple-decker. If my car had hit an iceberg on the way home, I would have died happy.



Now...go on and have a nice day. Do something you WANT to.....not something on your SHOULD DO list..

If you were going to die soon and had only one phone call you could make, who would you call and what would you say? And why are you waiting? Make sure you read this to the end; you will understand why I sent this to you.

Have you ever watched kids playing on a merry go round or listened to the rain lapping on the ground? Ever followed a butterfly's erratic flight or gazed at the sun into the fading night?

Do you run through each day on the fly? When you ask "How are you?" Do you hear the reply?

When the day is done, do you lie in your bed with the next hundred chores running through your head?

Ever told your child, "We'll do it tomorrow." And in your haste, not see his sorrow? Ever lost touch? Let a good friendship die? Just call to say "Hi"? When you worry and hurry through your day, It is like an unopened gift....Thrown away... Life is not a race. Take it slower.

Hear the music before the song is over.

Thanks for being my friend.

# FORGIVENESS

**Forgiveness is the bridge to love, peace, happiness and well being.**

**It allows us to say good-bye to guilt, blame and shame. It purifies the heart and soul and puts us in touch with all that is sacred.**

**Through forgiveness, we connect with that which is greater than ourselves and become the person God intended us to be.**

**The key to forgiveness is the willingness to make the effort. How long it takes depends on your belief system.**

**If you think it can't be done, it won't happen. If you believe it will take years, that will be your experience.**

**But if you are willing to believe that it can be done in an instant, that is all it will take.**

## The Stepping Stones to Forgiveness

**1. Be open to the possibility of changing your beliefs about forgiveness.**

**Recognize that forgiveness is an act of strength, not weakness.**

**2. Be willing to let go of being a victim. Choose to believe that holding on to grievances and unforgiving thoughts is choosing to suffer.**

**Find no value in self-pity.**

**3. Remind yourself that your anger and judgments can't change the past or punish someone else, but they can hurt you.**

**The events of the past cannot hurt you now, but your thoughts about the past can cause you immense distress and pain. Recognize that any emotional pain you feel this moment is caused only by your own thoughts.**

**4. See the value of giving up, not some, but all of your judgments. It is no coincidence that the happiest people are those who choose not to judge and know the value of forgiveness.**

**5. Recognize that holding on to anger will not bring you what you truly want.**

**Ask yourself this question, "Does holding on to my justified anger really bring me peace of mind?" Anger and peace; judgment and happiness do not occur at the same time.**

**6. See that there is no value in punishing yourself. Once you truly recognize that your angry, unhappy thoughts about the past are poisoning your life, you will embrace forgiveness and know the meaning of love.**

**7. Believe that forgiveness means giving up all hope for a better past! Accept your past, forgive your past, and embrace the present and future with hope! There is no law forcing you to remain a victim of the past.**

**8. Choose to be happy rather than right. When we stop trying to control others and focus instead on our own thoughts, we give ourselves the gift of freedom and peace.**

**9. Believe that you have the power to choose the thoughts you put into your mind.**

**Perhaps the greatest gift we have been given is the power to choose loving thoughts rather than angry ones.**

**Your mind is not a dumpster that will remain unaffected by the trash you put into it.**

**Treat it like a garden and it will blossom.**

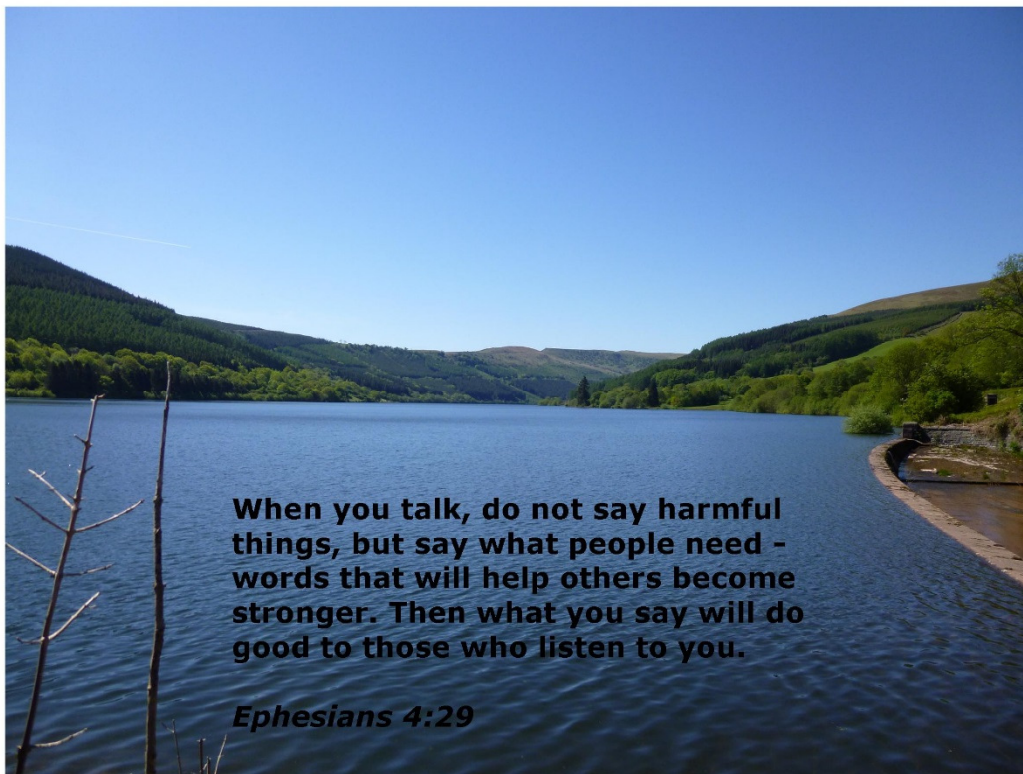
**10. Be willing to make peace of mind your only goal and believe that forgiveness is the key to happiness.**

**Regardless of the chaos around us, we can know peace if that is our single goal.**

**Choose not to let outside circumstances or people decide whether you will be happy.**

**Anger, judgments and unforgiving thoughts make suffer, and releasing them brings us joy.**

**It truly is that simple!**



## **Words from a Simple Heart**

A day that dawns bright and optimistic, can unravel as quickly and completely as one that begins with a tangle of trouble.

Whether I see it coming, or not, whether the undoing is of my own doing, or not, there are days when I find myself on the Backside of the bright side.

Life sends everyone for a ride on the backside. People let you down. You disappoint yourself or someone else.

Things hoped for, don't materialize. Jobs disappear. Finances escalate. Health deteriorates. Loved ones pass away.

Unless you live in an insulated bubble, a ride on the backside is inevitable.

Experience on the backside has taught me not to run to the company of misery -- those faithless, open, outstretched arms of self-pity and hopelessness. I am not pitiful.

I am not without hope and I am faith-filled. I have returned, victorious, to the bright side after every experience on the backside.

Where I am, is never as important as, who I am, while I'm there.

I can sit in darkness and I can despair over being there. I can moan and groan, pick up the phone and wail about my troubles to everyone who will listen.

I can pound people with my problems every chance I get. I can seek out the company of those who enjoy misery's embrace and learn nothing from the Experience.

Or...

I can poke a hole in the veil that separates the backside from the bright side and create a small stream of light to serve as reminder of the victory ahead.

I can pray, and I can work my way through trials with ever increasing patience and ever growing strength of endurance.

I can pay attention to the parts of my character that show up during difficult times and acknowledge the areas of weakness that need building up.

I can stand straighter and taller each step of the way, until the day I can rip the veil from top to bottom and claim my victory.

Even when life is at its darkest, you are never on the backside of nowhere.

The bright side is always there, waiting for you to step back into it and experience your victory.

## Helpful Husband

A man was sick and tired of going to work every day while his wife stayed home. He wanted her to see what he went through so he prayed:

Dear Lord, I go to work every day and put in 8 hours while my wife merely stays at home. I want her to know what I go through, so please allow her body to switch with mine for a day. Amen

God, in his infinite wisdom, granted the man's wish. The next morning, sure enough, the man awoke as a woman.

He arose, cooked breakfast for his mate, awakened the kids, set out their school clothes, fed them breakfast, packed their lunches, drove them to school, came home and picked up the dry cleaning, took it to the cleaners and stopped at the bank to make a deposit, went grocery shopping, then drove home to put away the groceries, paid the bills and balance the check book.

He cleaned the cat's litter box and bathed the dog. Then it was already 1pm and he hurried to make the beds, do the laundry, vacuum, dust, and sweep and mop the kitchen floor. Ran to the school to pick up the kids and got into an argument with them on the way home. Set out cookies and milk and got the kids organized to do their homework, then set up the ironing board and watched TV while he did the ironing.

At 4:30 he began peeling potatoes and washing vegetables for salad, breaded the pork chops and snapped fresh beans for supper. After supper he cleaned the kitchen, ran the dishwasher, folded laundry, bathed the kids, and put them to bed.

At 9pm he was exhausted and, though his daily chores weren't finished, he went to bed where he was expected to make love which he managed to get through without complaint.

The next morning he awoke and immediately knelt by the bed and said, "Lord, I don't know what I was thinking. I was so wrong to envy my wife's being able to stay home all day. Please, oh please, let us trade back."

The Lord, in his infinite wisdom, replied, "my son I feel you have learned your lesson and I will be happy to change things back to the way they were.

You'll just have to wait nine months, though. You got pregnant last night."



A little bird told me,  
that you're feeling down  
today.

I'm sending you this message,  
with love in what I say...

Remember you have friends,  
who really care for you.

Smile, laugh, and be happy,  
please don't be blue!!

## Keep Your Goals In Sight

When she looked ahead, Florence Chadwick saw nothing but a solid wall of fog. Her body was numb. She had been swimming for nearly sixteen hours.

Already she was the first woman to swim the English Channel in both directions. Now, at the age of 34, her goal was to become the first woman to swim from Catalina Island to the California coast.

On that Fourth of July morning in 1952, the sea was like an ice bath and the fog was so dense she could hardly see her support boats. Sharks cruised toward her lone figure, only to be driven away by rifle shots. Against the frigid grip of the sea, she struggled on - hour after hour - while millions watched on national television.

Alongside Florence in one of the boats, her mother and her trainer offered encouragement. They told her it wasn't much farther. But all she could see was fog. They urged her not to quit. She never had...until then. With only a half mile to go, she asked to be pulled out.

Still thawing her chilled body several hours later, she told a reporter, "Look, I'm not excusing myself, but if I could have seen land I might have made it." It was not fatigue or even the cold water that defeated her. It was the fog. She was unable to see her goal.

Two months later, she tried again. This time, despite the same dense fog, she swam with her faith intact and her goal clearly pictured in her mind.

She knew that somewhere behind the fog was land and this time she made it! Florence Chadwick became the first woman to swim the Catalina Channel, eclipsing the men's record by two hours!

Even when you can't see your goal with your eyes, you can always picture it in your mind. Let that be the strength to take you where you want to go!

## The Seven Wonders of the World

A group of students were asked to list the Seven Wonders of the World.

Though there was some disagreement, the following got the most votes:-

1. Egypt's Great Pyramids
2. Taj Mahal
3. Grand Canyon
4. Panama Canal
5. Empire State Building
6. St. Peter's Basilica
7. China's Great Wall

While gathering the votes, the teacher noted that one quiet student hadn't turned in her paper. So she asked the girl if she was having trouble with her list. The girl replied, 'Yes, a little. I couldn't quite make up my mind because there were so many.' The teacher said, 'Well, tell us what you have, and maybe we can help.'

The girl hesitated, then read,  
'I think the Seven Wonders of the World are:-

1. to touch

2. to taste

3. to see

4. to hear

She hesitated a little, and then added

5. to feel

6. to laugh

7. and to love

The room was so full of silence you could have heard a pin drop.

Those things we overlook as simple and 'ordinary' are truly wondrous.

A gentle reminder that the most precious things are in front of you.

Your family, your faith, your love, your good health!

**One day a while back, a man, his heart heavy with grief, was walking in the woods.**

**As he thought about his life this day, he knew many things were not right.**

**He thought about those who had lied about him back when he had a job.**

**His thoughts turned to those who had stolen his things and cheated him.**

**He remembered family that had passed on. His mind turned to the illness he had that no one could cure. His very soul was filled with anger, resentment and frustration.**

**Standing there this day, searching for answers he could not find, knowing all else had failed him, he knelt at the base of an old oak tree to seek the one he knew would always be there. And with tears in his eyes, he prayed:-**

**"Lord- You have done wonderful things for me in this life. You have told me to do many things for you, and I happily obeyed.**

**Today, you have told me to forgive. I am sad, Lord, because I cannot.**

**I don't know how.**

**It is not fair Lord. I didn't deserve these wrongs that were done against me and I shouldn't have to forgive.**

**As perfect as your way is Lord, this one thing I cannot do, for I don't know how to forgive.**

**My anger is so deep Lord, I fear I may not hear you, but I pray that you teach me to do this one thing I cannot do -**

**Teach me To Forgive."**

**As he knelt there in the quiet shade of that old oak tree, he felt something fall onto his shoulder.**

**He opened his eyes.**

**Out of the corner of one eye, he saw something red on his shirt. He could not turn to see what it was because where the oak tree had been was a large square piece of wood in the ground.**

**He raised his head and saw two feet held to the wood with a large spike through them.**

**He raised his head more, and tears came to his eyes as he saw Jesus hanging on a cross. He saw spikes in His hands, a gash in His side, a torn and battered body, deep thorns sunk into His head.**

**Finally he saw the suffering and pain on His precious face. As their eyes met, the man's tears turned to sobbing, and Jesus began to speak.**

**Have you ever told a lie, he asked? The man answered – yes, Lord.**

**Have you ever been given too much change and kept it? The man answered yes, Lord. And the man sobbed more and more.**

**Have you ever taken something from work that wasn't yours, Jesus asked?**

**And the man answered yes, Lord.**

**Have you ever sworn, using my Father's name in vain? The man, crying now, answered yes, Lord.**

**As Jesus asked many more times, "Have you ever?" The man's crying became uncontrollable, for he could only answer yes, Lord.**

**Then Jesus turned His head from one side to the other, and the man felt something fall on his other shoulder. He looked and saw that it was the blood of Jesus. When he looked back up, his eyes met those of Jesus, and there was a look of love the man had never seen or known before.**

**Jesus said, I didn't deserve this either, but I forgive you It may be hard to see how you're going to get through something, but when you look back in life, you realize how true this statement is.**

**If God brings you to it - He will bring you through it. Lord I love You and I need You, come into my heart, today.**

**For without You I can do nothing.**



## Baking A Cake

=====

A little boy is telling his Grandma how "everything" is going wrong: school, family problems, severe health problems, etc.

Meanwhile, Grandma is baking a cake.

She asks her grandson if he would like a snack, which, of course, he does.

"Here, have some cooking oil."

"Yuck" says the boy.

"How about a couple of raw eggs? "

"Gross, Grandma!"

"Would you like some flour then? Or maybe baking soda?"

"Grandma, those are all yucky!"

To which Grandma replies: "Yes, all those things seem bad all by themselves. But when they are put together in the right way, they make a wonderfully delicious cake!

God works the same way.

Many times we wonder why he would let us go through such bad and difficult times.

But God knows that when He puts these things all in His order, they always work for good!

We just have to trust Him and eventually, they will all make something wonderful!"

God is Crazy about You.

He sends you flowers every spring and a sunrise every morning. Whenever you want to talk, He'll listen.

He can live anywhere in the universe, and He chose your heart.





## The Box

I received this from a friend who had a choice to make. It said that I had a choice to make too. I've chosen. Now it's your turn to choose.

The story goes that some time ago a mother punished her 5 year old daughter for wasting a roll of expensive gold wrapping paper.

Money was tight and she became even more upset when the child used the gold paper to decorate a box to put under the Christmas tree.

Nevertheless, the little girl brought the gift box to her mother the next morning and said, "This is for you, Momma."

The mother was embarrassed by her earlier over reaction, but her anger flared again when she opened the box and found it was empty.

She spoke to her daughter in a harsh manner. "Don't you know, young lady, when you give someone a present there's supposed to be something inside the package?"

She had tears in her eyes and said, "Oh, Momma, it's not empty! I blew kisses into it until it was full."

The mother was crushed. She fell on her knees and put her arms around her little girl, and she begged her forgiveness for her thoughtless anger.

An accident took the life of the child only a short time later, and it is told that the mother kept that gold box by her bed for all the years of her life.

Whenever she was discouraged or faced difficult problems she would open the box and take out an imaginary kiss and remember the love of the child who had put it there.

In a very real sense, each of us, as human beings, have been given a Golden box filled with unconditional love and kisses from our children, family, friends and God.

There is no more precious possession anyone could hold.

You now have two choices:-

1. Pass this on to your friends, or
2. Delete it and act like it didn't touch your heart.

.

As you can see, I took choice No. 1.

Friends are like angels who lift us to our feet, when our wings have trouble remembering how to fly.

**"The game of life is the game of boomerangs. Our thoughts, deeds and words return to us sooner or later, with astounding accuracy."**

**Florence Shinn  
1871- 1940, Writer**

## **A Time to Believe**

**To believe is to know that  
every day is a new beginning.  
It is to trust that miracles happen,  
and dreams really do come true.**

**To believe is to see angels  
dancing among the clouds.  
To know the wonder of a stardust  
sky and the wisdom of the man in the moon.**

**To believe is to know the value of a nurturing heart,  
The innocence of a child's eyes  
and the beauty of an aging hand,  
for it is through their teachings we learn to love.**

**To believe is to find the strength  
and courage that lies within us.  
When it is time to pick up the  
pieces and begin again.**

**To believe is to know we are not alone,  
That life is a gift and this is our time to cherish it.**

**To believe is to know that wonderful  
surprises are just waiting to happen,  
And all our hopes and dreams  
are within reach.**



## Laughter is the best Medicine

A little child in church for the first time watched as the ushers passed the offering plates. When they neared the pew where he sat, the youngster piped up so that everyone could hear: "Don't pay for me Daddy, I'm under five."

\*\*\*\*\*

A little boy was attending his first wedding. After the Service, his cousin asked him, "How many women can a man marry?" "Sixteen," the boy responded.

His cousin was amazed that he had an answer so quickly. "How do you know that?"

"Easy," the little boy said. "All you have to do is add it up, like the Bishop said: 4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer."

\*\*\*\*\*

After a church service on Sunday morning, a young boy suddenly announced to his mother, "Mom, I've decide to become a minister when I grow up."

"That's fine with us, son, but what made you decide that?" "Well," said the little boy, "I have to go to church on Sunday anyway, and I figure it will be more fun to stand up and yell, than to sit and listen."

\*\*\*\*\*

A boy was watching his father, a pastor, write a sermon. "How do you know what to say?" he asked. "Why, God tells me", the father replied. The boy thought for a while then quietly said, "Then why do you keep crossing things out?"

\*\*\*\*\*

A little girl became restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on. Finally, she leaned over to her mother and whispered, "Mommy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"

\*\*\*\*\*

After the christening of his baby brother in church, little Johnny sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong.

Finally, the boy replied, "That priest said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, and I want to stay with you guys!"

\*\*\*\*\*

Terri asked her Sunday School class to draw pictures of their favourite Bible stories. She was puzzled by Kyle's picture, which showed four people on an airplane, so she asked him which story it was meant to represent.

"The flight to Egypt," said Kyle.

"I see ... And that must be Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus," Ms. Terri said. "But who's the fourth person?"

"Oh, that's Pontius -the Pilot.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Sunday School Teacher asks, "Now, Johnny, tell me frankly, do you say prayers before eating?" "No sir, "little Johnny replies, "I don't have to. My Mom is a good cook."

\*\*\*\*\*



A college drama group presented a play in which one character would stand on a trap door and announce, "I descend into hell!"

A stagehand below would then pull a rope, the trapdoor would open, and the character would plunge through. The play was well received.

One day the actor playing the part became ill, and another actor who was quite overweight took his place. When the new actor announced, "I descend into hell!" the stagehand pulled the rope, and the actor began his plunge, but became hopelessly stuck.

No amount of tugging on the rope could make him descend.

One student in the balcony jumped up and yelled: "Hallelujah! Hell is full!"

\*\*\*\*\*

Pastor Dave Charlton tells us, "After a worship service at First Baptist Church in Newcastle, KY, a mother with a fidgety seven-year old boy told how she finally got her son to sit still and be quiet.

About halfway through the sermon, she leaned over and whispered, 'If you don't be quiet, Pastor Charlton is going to lose his place and will have to start his sermon all over again!' It worked."

\*\*\*\*\*

A little girl was sitting on her grandfather's lap as he read her a bedtime story. From time to time, she would take her eyes off the book and reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek.

She was alternately stroking her own cheek, then his again. Finally she spoke up, "Grandpa, did God make you?"

"Yes, sweetheart," he answered, "God made me a long time ago." "Oh," she paused, "Grandpa, did God make me too?" "Yes, indeed, honey," he said, "God made you just a little while ago."

Feeling their respective faces again, she observed, "God's getting better at it, isn't he?"



## Inner Strength

If you can start the day without caffeine or pep pills,  
If you can be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,

If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles,  
If you can eat the same food everyday and be grateful for it,

If you can understand when loved ones are too busy to give you time,  
If you can overlook when people take things out on you when,

through no fault of yours, something goes wrong,  
If you can take criticism and blame without resentment,

If you can face the world without lies and deceit,  
If you can conquer tension without medical help,

If you can relax without liquor,  
If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,

If you can do all these things,  
Then you are probably the family dog.



## **10 Prosperity Principles**

**1. In this moment, choose to believe that the Universe is abundant and that you are a part of that abundance.**

**You are a part of the universal flow of energy in an ocean of abundance. One aspect of this energy is the concept we call money, and it is just as spiritual as anything else.**

**2. In this moment, feel the presence of Spirit in your life and know that Spirit is the true Source of your abundance, not your job or any other person.**

**You are always taken care of. You are safe. Remember that Spirit always has the solution for any challenge that confronts you.**

**Meditate daily to connect with Spirit so that you can truly feel that all is well.**

**3. In this moment, know that you are deserving of all the abundance of the Universe. Just because you exist, you are deserving.**

**There is nothing you need to do or be. Just be willing to accept the idea that you are deserving.**

**4. In this moment, be willing to give up your limiting beliefs about prosperity. The abundance of Spirit abounds everywhere!**

**Open your mind to the idea that there is plenty for everyone. Your personal beliefs in any area of your life create your personal reality.**

**As you change the beliefs that limit you, the outer reality changes!**

**5. In this moment, remember that you are connected with Infinite Mind. This Mind works through the Law of Attraction, and It is always responding to your thoughts and feelings.**

**Affirm and visualize the abundance that you want in your life. Include joy, peace, love, wonderful relationships, and health along with money and material things.**

**6. In this moment, practice feeling the joy of knowing that all is well in your life.**

**Relax. Smile. Dance. Enjoy the beauty of nature. Focus on this moment in time, not yesterday or tomorrow, and appreciate this moment.**

**Practice faith and trust.**

**7. In this moment, recognize that as you accept your prosperity, you encourage others to do the same.**

**When the consciousness of one person shifts, it affects everyone else. Your own acceptance of prosperity helps the entire planet.**

**8. In this moment, be willing to begin sharing your prosperity with others, even if it is only a dollar.**

**When you give freely to others, you are affirming that you are prosperous enough to share.**

**9. In this moment, remember that you are on this earth for a purpose, and that purpose is to be of service.**

**You have your own unique skills and abilities to offer in being of service. As you practice joyful service, your prosperity will increase.**

**10. In this moment, feel the attitude of gratitude. Be grateful for every-thing in your life, even those things you would say are challenging. Each morning when you wake up, think of everything you are grateful for.**

**Open your arms wide and say to Spirit, THANK YOU!**

**Enjoy the miracles that occur in your life as you practice these principles!**

## Five Minutes

While at the park one day, a woman sat down next to a man on a bench near a playground. "That's my son over there," she said, pointing to a little boy in a red sweater who was gliding down the slide.

"He's a fine looking boy" the man said.

"That's my daughter on the bike in the white dress."

Then, looking at his watch, he called to his daughter. "What do you say we go, Melissa?"

Melissa pleaded, "Just five more minutes, Dad. Please?"

Just five more minutes."

The man nodded and Melissa continued to ride her bike to her heart's content.

Minutes passed and the father stood and called again to his daughter. "Time to go now?"

Again Melissa pleaded, "Five more minutes, Dad. Just five more minutes." The man smiled and said, "O.K."

"My, you certainly are a patient father," the woman responded.

The man smiled and then said, "Her older brother Tommy was killed by a drunk driver last year while he was riding his bike near here. I never spent much time with Tommy and now I'd give anything for just five more minutes with him.

I've vowed not to make the same mistake with Melissa. She thinks she has five more minutes to ride her bike.

The truth is, I get Five more minutes to watch her play."

Life is all about making priorities; what are your priorities?



Stairway Bridge to Enlightenment

## Don't Quit

Wishing to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took her boy to a Paderewski concert.

After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her.

Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy rose and eventually explored his way through a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE."

When the houselights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that the child was missing.

Suddenly, the curtains parted and spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway on stage. In horror, the mother saw her son sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano, and whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing."

Then leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part.

Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child and he added a running obligatio.

Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience.

And the audience was mesmerized.

Whatever our situation in life and history--however outrageous, however desperate, whatever dry spell of the spirit, whatever dark night of the soul--  
- GOD is whispering deep within our beings,

"Don't quit. Keep playing. You are not alone, together we will transform the broken patterns into a masterwork of my creative art.

Together, we will mesmerize the world with our song of peace."

## Life is a Theatre...Invite Your Audience Carefully

Not everyone is healthy enough to have a front row seat in our lives.

There are some people in your life that need to be loved from a DISTANCE.

It's amazing what you can accomplish when you let go of or at least minimize your time with draining, negative, incompatible, not going anywhere relationships or friendships.

Observe the relationships around you. Pay close attention. Which ones lift and which ones lean? Which ones encourage and which ones discourage?

Which ones are on a path of growth uphill and which ones are going downhill?

When you leave certain people, do you feel better or feel worse?

Which ones always have drama or don't really understand, know or appreciate you?

The more you seek quality, respect, growth, peace of mind, love and truth around you...the easier it will become for you to decide who gets to sit in the front row and who should be moved to the balcony of your life.

Remember that the people we hang with will have an impact on both our lives and our income.

And so, we must be careful to choose the people we hang out with, as well as the information with which we feed our minds.

We should not share our dreams with negative people, nor feed them with negative thoughts.

Who's in your front row?



## **God Has Many Messengers**

**The unexpected kindness,  
From an unexpected place.  
A hand outstretched in friendship,  
A smile on someone's face.**

**A word of understanding,  
Spoken in an hour of trial.  
Are unexpected miracles,  
That make life more worthwhile.**

**We don't know how it happened,  
That in an hour of need;  
Somebody out of nowhere,  
Proved to be a friend indeed.**

**For God has many messengers,  
We fail to recognize.  
But He sends them when we need them,  
For His ways are wondrous and wise.**

**So keep looking for an angel.  
And keep listening to hear,  
For on life's busy crowded streets  
You will find God's presence near.**

"When you hold resentment  
toward another,  
you are bound to that person or  
condition  
by an emotional link that is  
stronger than steel.

Forgiveness is the only way to  
dissolve that link  
and get free."

-- Catherine Ponder

## Don't Quit

For many years I have carried around a poem called "Don't Quit."

One of the lines says, "Stick to the fight when you're hardest hit - It's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit." In our darkest hour it's hard to see the end of our circumstance.

All we can think of is our conditions worsening. But it's usually at this time that our greatest growth can occur if we'll see the moment as a growth opportunity.

If we'll see it as a time to learn how to control our thoughts toward an ideal that we cherish.

One thing I share with people who seek my advice when they think their life has come apart, is to help them understand the power that even the tiniest of actions can have when taken in a negative situation.

Remember in Science class when we learned that "a body at rest tends to remain at rest or a body in motion tends to remain in motion." This is especially true when overcoming circumstances because "paralysis" usually keeps us in the condition longer than we'd like.

But even more important, is that once we've started in motion, even though it may not seem like much, know this - it's now only a matter of time before you're out, totally out, of the situation that is causing you difficulty.

Let me repeat that again so you really understand the power of these words: Once you've started your move onward and upward, you can literally reduce your problem down to a matter of time before you're out, totally out, of the situation that has got you down today.

And that's worth thinking about.

## **The American Indian Legend of Crystals**

**In ancient times, people lived in harmony with Nature. They spoke the same language as the animals and plants.**

**They hunted for food only to satisfy their hunger and needs always offering a prayer of thanks for what they had taken from Nature.**

**As time went on, humans lost this innocence and harmony. They took more than they needed. They forgot their prayers of gratitude. They killed animals, and each other, for sport or pleasure.**

**The Bear Tribe, chief among the animals, called a meeting of all the animals. They decided that something had to be done.**

**The Bears suggested that they shoot back when the humans shot at them, but the bow and arrow required too great a sacrifice, for one bear would have to give up his life so that his sinew could be used for the bowstring.**

**The bear's claws were too long for shooting a bow anyway, and would become entangled on the string.**

**The Deer Tribe offered another method of dealing with the problem. One of their members said, "We will bring disease into the world. Each of us will be responsible for a different illness.**

**When humans live out of balance with Nature, when they forget to give thanks for their food, they will get sick." And in fact the Deer did invoke rheumatism and arthritis; each animal then decided to invoke a different disease.**

**The Plant Tribe was more sympathetic and felt that this was too harsh a punishment, so they volunteered their help. They said that for every disease a human gets, one of them would be present to cure it.**

**That way, if people used their intelligence, they would be able to cure their ailments and regain their balance.**

**All of Nature agreed to this strategy. One plant in particular spoke out. This was Tobacco, the chief of the plants. He said, "I will be the sacred herb.**

**I will not cure any specific disease, but I will help people return to the sacred way of life, provided I am smoked or offered with prayers and ceremony.**

**But if I am misused, If I am merely smoked for pleasure, I will cause cancer, the worst disease of all."**

**The close friends of the Plant Tribe, the Rock Tribe, and the Mineral Tribe agreed to help. Each mineral would have a spiritual power, a subtle vibration that could be used to regain perfect health.**

**The Ruby, worn as an amulet, would heal the heart; the Emerald would heal the liver and eyes and so on. The chief of the mineral tribe, Quartz Crystal, was clear, like the light of Creation itself.**

**Quartz put his arms around his brother Tobacco and said, "I will be the sacred mineral, I will heal the mind, I will help human beings see the origin of disease.**

**I will help to bring wisdom and clarity in dreams. And I will record their spiritual history, including our meeting today, so that in the future, if humans gaze into me, they may see their origin and the way of harmony." And so it is today.**

**This a Cherokee legend, but it has been told in almost every tribe in the Americas.**

**It tells of an ancient time of peace, a mythical Homeland known to every culture on Earth.**

**The Native Americans call it the "old way" or the "original way".**

## The Touch Of The Master's Hand

It was battered and scarred and the auctioneer thought it was  
scarcely worth his while,

To waste much time with the old violin, so he held it up with a  
smile.

"What am I bid, good people" said he, "who'll start the bidding  
for me?"

A guinea, a guinea, now two, only two, two guineas and who'll  
make it three?

Three guineas once, three guineas twice but from the room far  
back, a grey haired man came forward while stooping low,

He looked at the man on the auctioneer's stand and bowed as  
he picked up the bow.

The man wiped the dust from the old violin, then tightening up  
its strings,

He played a melody pure and sweet, as a laughing angel sings.

The music ceased and the auctioneer, in a voice that was quite  
low:

"What am I bid for the old violin?" and he held it up with its  
bow.

"A thousand guineas and who'll make it two, that's two and  
who'll make it three?

Three thousand once, three thousand twice, and going and  
gone," said he.

Then the people stared and demanded to speak: "We still do  
not quite understand,

3,000 guineas is too much to pay, for the touch of a master's  
hand."

It's the same for a man with his life out of tune, who's battered  
and torn with sin,

He's auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd, much like the old  
violin.

A mess of pottage, a glass of wine, a game and he travels on,  
He's going once, he's going twice, he's going and almost gone.

But the master comes and the foolish crowd, can never quite  
understand,

The worth of a soul and the change that is wrought,

By The Touch Of The Master's Hand.

## TEN INDIAN COMMANDMENTS

Remain close to the Great Spirit.

Show great respect for your fellow beings.

Give assistance and kindness wherever needed.

Be truthful and do what you know to be right.

Look after the well-being of mind and body

Treat the Earth and all that dwells on it with respect.

Take full responsibility for your actions.

Dedicate a share of your efforts to the greater good.

Work together for the benefit of all mankind.

and be honest at all times.



## MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

Peace is more than the silence of cannons,  
Health is much more than just no disease;  
Civilisation is more than mere techno-ology,  
Ecology more than saving big trees.

Spirituality is more than good Sunday sermons,  
Science is more than fast shuttles in space;  
Happiness more than a well filled fat belly,  
No state is higher that this live human race.

Man is much more than just bone and strong sinew,  
Thoughts are much more than just dreams in the dust,  
The God you are seeking is hidden within you,  
Life is a spiral, progression a must.

MY FRIEND:- THE FUN DEVA by Isabel Hurney

My fun Deva is my very good friend:

Helps me smile and laugh no end.

Anyone can have one Followed by a laugh, all makes life worthwhile.

Laughter is a tonic, takes away the gloom,

Makes the world a better place, lights up every room.

It's fun to see the humour spread,

As faces light up - some quite red,

Let's make the world a happy place

And put a smile upon our face.

Humour is a wonderful thing.

Lots of happiness it will bring

To you - to me - the rich, the poor,

Devas knock on any door.

To anyone who smiles and grins

The fun Deva will soon be in.

So, let's be jolly, let's be bright,

And everything will turn out right.

- it only takes a smile.

Imagine a bank which credits your account each morning with £86,400, carries no balance from day to day, allows you to keep no cash balance and every evening cancels whatever part of the amount you had failed to use during the day.

What would you do? You'd draw out every penny and spend the lot on yourself, on friends, on everyone you met who was in need, one way or another.

You'd have a great time and you'd go to sleep very happy at the end of every day, knowing you'd have another chance tomorrow to do the same again.

Well, we all do have this bank account to draw on: we call it TIME. Every morning TIME credits us with 86,400 seconds and tells us we are free to spend it in any way we wish.

Every night it has to write off as lost, every second we've wasted or that has passed by during the day.

As with the money, if we don't use it up it disappears forever and we have to wait for the morrow to start again.

When we get it right, we use every second to help our bodies become healthy, happy and successful.

We look after those around us who are not doing too well, but we do it in a right way so that our help does not shame them.

We give them help that helps them to help themselves in the future. Then, at the end of every day we go to bed and sleep happily.

## Myfriend

Flowers will die: the sun will set,

But you are a friend I won't forget:-

Your name is so precious, it'll never  
grow old,

It's engraved in my heart with letters of  
gold.

## A Message from My Young Dog

My life is likely to last ten to fifteen years.

Any separation from you will be very painful. Give me time to understand what you want of me.

Place your trust in me. Don't be angry with me for long and don't lock me up as a punishment: I have only you. Talk to me: even if I don't understand your words, I do understand the thoughts that are in them.

No matter how you treat me, I will only remember what was good.

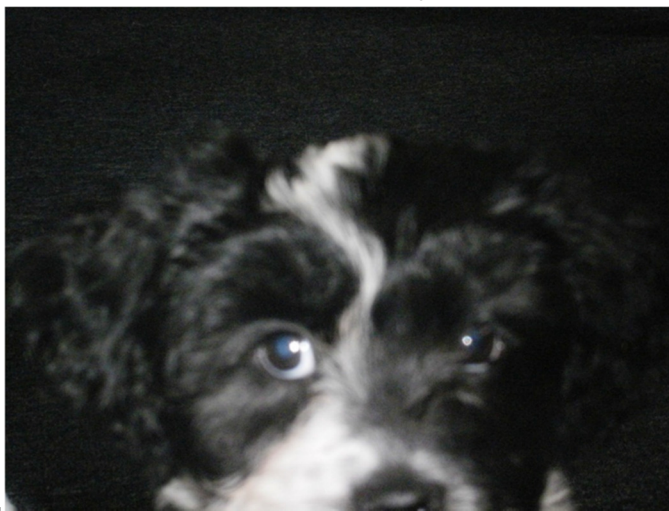
Before you scold me for being lazy, ask yourself if something might be bothering me.

Perhaps I'm not getting the right food or I've been out in the sun or in the cold for too long.

When I am old, maybe I will be getting weaker than you might expect me to.

And when the time comes, be with me when I go on that last most difficult journey of all: for everything will be easier for me if you are there: try to understand that I only came to earth to be with you and

to love you.



## TWO ANGELS

Two Angels, one was young, the second was ancient, stopped to spend the night in the home of a wealthy family. They were put down in the basement and asked to pay top rate.

While they got ready for bed, the older angel repaired a hole in the wall, looked at the young angel and remarked: "things are not always what they seem."

The next night the two angels stopped at the home of the poorest family the young angel had ever seen but the elderly couple gave them their own bed and looked after them as if they were royalty: they also charged very little for what they gave.

In the morning the angels found the old lady crying, the cow had died during the night. The young angel immediately blamed the older angel for having let such a thing happen after all the hospitality they had received.

The older angel looked at him and said again: "things are not always what they seem: in the mansion I saw gold stored in that hole in the wall, so I hid it. Greed and gold are bad bed- fellows.

Last night the angel of death came for the old man's wife. I made the best deal I could: I let him have the cow instead. Things are not always what they seem. We have enough gold between us to buy them another cow."

## Still in the Land of the Living

Just a line to say I'm living, that I'm not among  
the dead, Though I'm getting more forgetful and  
mixed up in my poor head.

I've got used to my arthritis, to my dentures  
I'm resigned. I can cope with my bifocals,  
but... ye gods... I miss my mind.

Sometimes I can't remember when I'm  
standing by the stair,  
If I should be going up for something or have just come down from  
there.

And before the fridge so often, my mind is full  
of doubt, did I put some dried up food away or  
come to take some out?

So, remember I do love you and wish that you  
lived near, And now it's time to send this note,  
a second time my dear.

For when I stood beside the box, my mind must  
have been dead, for instead of posting to you, I  
took it home instead.

## IF ONLY

If only someone told me many years ago,  
That what I want to reap in life, is the one thing I must sow.

If only folk had told me, don't hurt or lie or blame,  
Do not make others suffer or you will reap the same.

If only they had told me, how hurtful words can be,  
How the cruelty of the human tongue would soon return to me.

If only someone warned me to love and not to hate,  
I wouldn't now be hurting but the warning came too late.

I hurt so many people in my younger naive years,  
And now I feel the pain they felt and my eyes run down with tears.  
Oh how I hurt those people and laughed and mocked with glee  
Now all the pain I caused them, comes back to trouble me.

Such nasty things I said to them, I really didn't know,  
Was, deep beneath my troubled mind, I really loved them so.

I didn't mean to hurt them, I really didn't know,  
That what I want to reap in life is what I have to sow.

Why couldn't someone tell me the debt I must repay,  
I might have listened to them and what they had to say.  
I might have heard their warnings and tried to change my ways  
I'm older and much wiser now in very many ways.



I share with you this story, of pain I've had all year,  
And now I warn you good friends and pray that you will hear.  
I had no-one to tell me, but now through tears I weep:  
Be careful what you sow today, for tomorrow you must reap.

## You'll Never Walk Alone

By Ann Moulds

One day my child you will walk alone,  
And face this world on your own,  
Armed with wisdom, shielded with pride,  
To take each challenge in your stride,  
Never sit in judgement,  
Neither be a fool.

Give your love to others, never be cruel.  
The hand of friendship to those who need,  
Never give in to power or greed,  
Nor blame another when things go wrong,  
For from misfortune you will grow strong.  
And when you falter don't lose face.  
Rise up again but only with grace.  
Enjoy your achievements, don't mix  
them with sin: Always listen to your  
voice within.

For one day my child, when the day is through,  
There will be one lesson especially for you,  
Of all the other trials before,  
This is the one you must never ignore.  
But with deepened wisdom, guarded  
with faith, Used together will keep you  
safe.  
My promise to you, it is carved in stone,  
My child, you will never walk alone.

One day, a poor boy who was selling goods from door to door to pay his way through school, found he had only one thin dime left, and he was hungry. He decided he would ask for a meal at the next house. However, he lost his nerve when a lovely young woman opened the door.

Instead of a meal, he asked for a drink of water. She thought he looked hungry and so she brought him a large glass of milk. He drank it slowly, and then asked, "How much do I owe you?"

"You don't owe me anything," she replied. "Mother has taught us never to accept pay for a kindness." He said, "Then I thank you from my heart." As Howard Kelly left that house, he not only felt stronger physically, but his faith in God and man was strengthened also. He had been ready to give up and quit.

Years later, that young woman became critically ill. The local doctors were baffled. They finally sent her to the big city, where they called in specialists to study her rare disease.

Dr. Howard Kelly was called in for the consultation. When he heard the name of the town she came from, he went down the hall of the hospital to her room. Dressed in his doctor's gown, he went in to see her. He recognized her at once. He went back to the consultation room determined to do his best to save her life. From that day, he gave special attention to the case.

After a long struggle, the battle was won. Dr. Kelly requested from the business office to pass the final billing to him for approval. He looked at it, and then wrote something on the edge, and the bill was sent to her room. She feared to open it, for she was sure it would take the rest of her life to pay for it all.

Finally, she looked, and something caught her attention on the side of the bill. She read these words:

**"PAID IN FULL WITH ONE GLASS OF MILK..."**

(Signed)

Dr. Howard Kelly

## SCARS

Some years ago, on a hot summer day in south Florida, a little boy decided to go for a swim in the old swimming hole behind his house. In a hurry to dive into the cool water, he ran out the back door, leaving behind shoes, socks and shirt as he went. He flew into the water, not realizing that as he swam toward the middle of the lake, an alligator was swimming toward the shore.

His mother, in the house and looking out the window, saw the two as they got closer and closer together. In utter fear, she ran toward the water, yelling to her son as loudly as she could. Hearing her voice, the little boy became alarmed and made a U-turn to swim to his mother. It was too late. Just as he reached her, the alligator reached him.

From the dock, the mother grabbed her little boy by the arms just as the alligator snatched his legs. That began an incredible tug-of-war between the two. The alligator was much stronger than the mother, but the mother was much too passionate to let go.

A farmer happened to drive by, heard her screams, raced from his truck, took aim and shot the alligator. Remarkably, after weeks and weeks in the hospital, the little boy survived. His legs were extremely scarred by the vicious attack of the animal. And, on his arms, were deep scratches where his mother's fingernails dug into his flesh in her effort to hang on to the son she loved.

The newspaper reporter, who interviewed the boy after the trauma, asked if he would show him his scars. The boy lifted his pant legs. And then, with obvious pride, he said to the reporter, "But look at my arms. I have great scars on my arms, too. I have them because my Mom wouldn't let go."

You and I can identify with that little boy. We have scars, too. No, not from an alligator, but the scars of a painful past! Some of those scars are unsightly and have caused us deep regret. But, some wounds, my friend, are because God has refused to let go. In the midst of your struggle, He's been there holding on to you. The Scripture teaches that God loves you. You are a child of God. He wants to protect you and provide for you in every way.

But sometimes we foolishly wade into dangerous situations, not knowing what lies ahead. The swimming hole of life is filled with peril - and we forget that the enemy is waiting to attack. That's when the tug-of-war begins - and if you have the scars of His love on your arms be very, very grateful. He did not, and will not, ever let you go.

Please pass this on to those you love. God has blessed you, so that you can be a blessing to others. You just never know where a person is in his/her life and what they are going through. Never judge another person's scars, because you don't know how they got them.

Also, it is soooo important that we are not selfish to receive the blessings of these messages without forwarding them to someone else. Right now, someone needs to know that God loves them, and that you love them too: enough to not let them go.

## The Folded Napkin ... (True Story)

If this doesn't light your fire -- your wood is wet!!

I try not to be biased, but I had my doubts about hiring Stevie. His placement counsellor assured me that he would be a good, reliable busboy. But I had never had a mentally handicapped employee and wasn't sure I wanted one.

I wasn't sure how my customers would react to Stevie. He was short, a little dumpy with the smooth facial features and thick-tongued speech of Downs Syndrome.

I wasn't worried about most of my trucker customers because truckers don't generally care who buses tables as long as the meatloaf platter is good and the pies are homemade.

The four-wheeler drivers were the ones who concerned me; the mouthy college kids traveling to school; the yuppie snobs who secretly polish their silverware with their napkins for fear of catching some dreaded "truck stop germ"; the pairs of white shirted business men on expense accounts who think every truck stop waitress wants to be flirted with. I knew those people would be uncomfortable around Stevie so I closely watched him for the first few weeks.

I shouldn't have worried. After the first week, Stevie had my staff wrapped around his stubby little finger, and within a month my truck regulars had adopted him as their official truck stop mascot.

After that, I really didn't care what the rest of the customers thought of him. He was like a 21-year-old in blue jeans and Nikes, eager to laugh and eager to please, but fierce in his attention to his duties. Every salt and pepper shaker was exactly in its place, not a bread crumb or coffee spill was visible when Stevie got done with the table.

Our only problem was persuading him to wait to clean a table until after the customers were finished. He would hover in the background, shifting his weight from one foot to the other, scanning the dining room until a table was empty.

Then he would scurry to the empty table and carefully bus dishes and glasses onto a cart and meticulously wipe the table up with a practiced flourish of his rag. If he thought a customer was watching, his brow would pucker with added concentration. He took pride in doing his job exactly right, and you had to love how hard he tried to please each and every person he met.

Over time, we learned that he lived with his mother, a widow who was disabled after repeated surgeries for cancer. They lived on their Social Security benefits in public housing two miles from the truck stop. Their social worker, who stopped to check on him every so often, admitted they had fallen between the cracks.

Money was tight, and what I paid him was probably the difference between them being able to live together and Stevie being sent to a group home. That's why the restaurant was a gloomy place that morning last August, the first morning in three years that Stevie missed work.

He was at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester getting a new valve or something put in his heart. His social worker said that people with Downs Syndrome often had heart problems at an early age so this wasn't unexpected, and there was a good chance he would come through the surgery in good shape and be back at work in a few months.

A ripple of excitement ran through the staff later that morning when word came that he was out of surgery, in recovery, and doing fine. Frannie, the head waitress, let out a war cry and did a little dance in the aisle when she heard the good news.

Belle Ringer, one of our regular trucker customers, stared at the sight of the 50-year-old grandmother of four doing a victory shimmy beside his table. Frannie blushed, smoothed her apron and shot Belle Ringer a withering look.

He grinned. "OK, Frannie, what was that all about?" he asked. We just got word that Stevie is out of surgery and going to be okay."

"I was wondering where he was. I had a new joke to tell him. What was the surgery about?" Frannie quickly told Belle Ringer and the other two drivers sitting at his booth about Stevie's surgery, then sighed: "Yeah, I'm glad he is going to be OK" she said. "But I don't know how he and his Mom are going to handle all the bills.

From what I hear, they're barely getting by as it is."

Belle Ringer nodded thoughtfully, and Frannie hurried off to wait on the rest of her tables. Since I hadn't had time to round up a busboy to replace Stevie and really didn't want to replace him, the girls were busying their own tables that day until we decided what to do.

After the morning rush, Frannie walked into my office. She had a couple of paper napkins in her hand and a funny look on her face.

"What's up?" I asked.

"I didn't get that table where Belle Ringer and his friends were sitting cleared off after they left, and Pony Pete and Tony Tipper were sitting there when I got back to clean it off," she said. "This was folded and tucked under a coffee cup." She handed the napkin to me, and three \$20 bills fell onto my desk when I opened it.

On the outside, in big, bold letters, was printed "Something For Stevie."

"Pony Pete asked me what that was all about," she said, "so I told about Stevie and his Mom and everything, and Pete looked at Tony and Tony looked at Pete, and they ended up giving me this." She handed me another paper napkin that had "Something For Stevie" scrawled on its outside. Two \$50 bills were tucked within its folds.

Frannie looked at me with wet, shiny eyes, shook her head and said simply: "truckers."

That was three months ago. Today is Thanksgiving, the first day Stevie is supposed to be back to work. His placement worker said he's been counting the days until the doctor said he could work, and it didn't matter at all that it was a holiday.

He called ten times in the past week, making sure we knew he was coming, fearful that we had forgotten him or that his job was in jeopardy. I arranged to have his mother bring him to work, met them in the parking lot and invited them both to celebrate his day back.

Stevie was thinner and paler, but couldn't stop grinning as he pushed through the doors and headed for the back room where his apron and busing cart were waiting.

"Hold up there, Stevie, not so fast," I said. I took him and his mother by their arms. "Work can wait for a minute. To celebrate you coming back, breakfast for you and your mother is on me!" I led them toward a large corner booth at the rear of the room.

I could feel and hear the rest of the staff following behind as we marched through the dining room.

Glancing over my shoulder, I saw booth after booth of grinning truckers empty and join the procession. We stopped in front of the big table. Its surface was covered with coffee cups, saucers and dinner plates, all sitting slightly crooked on dozens of folded paper napkins.

"First thing you have to do, Stevie, is clean up this mess," I said. I tried to sound stern. Stevie looked at me, and then at his mother, then pulled out one of the napkins. It had "Something for Stevie" printed on the outside. As he picked it up, two \$10 bills fell onto the table.

Stevie stared at the money, then at all the napkins peeking from beneath the tableware, each with his name printed or scrawled on it. I turned to his mother.

"There's more than \$10,000 in cash and checks on that table, all from truckers and trucking companies that heard about your problems." "Happy Thanksgiving."

Well, it got real noisy about that time, with everybody hollering and shouting, and there were a few tears, as well. But you know what's funny?

While everybody else was busy shaking hands and hugging each other, Stevie, with a big, big smile on his face, was busy clearing all the cups and dishes from the table. Best worker I ever hired.

Plant a seed and watch it grow. At this point, you can bury this inspirational message or forward it fulfilling the need! If you shed a tear, hug yourself because you are a compassionate person.

WELL, DON'T JUST SIT THERE! SEND THIS STORY ON!



When you're lonely, I wish you LOVE.  
When you're down, I wish you JOY.  
When things get complicated, I wish you FAITH.  
When things look empty, I wish you HOPE.

## IF I KNEW

If I knew it would be the last time  
That I'd see you fall asleep,  
I would tuck you in more tightly  
and pray the Lord, your soul to keep.

If I knew it would be the last time  
that I see you walk out the door,  
I would give you a hug and kiss  
and call you back for one more.

If I knew it would be the last time  
I'd hear your voice lifted up in praise,  
I would video tape each action and word,  
so I could play them back day after day.

If I knew it would be the last time,  
I could spare an extra minute  
to stop and say "I love you,"  
instead of assuming you would KNOW I do.

If I knew it would be the last time  
I would be there to share your day,  
Well I'm sure you'll have so many more,  
so I can let just this one slip away.

For surely there's always tomorrow  
to make up for an oversight,  
and we always get a second chance  
to make everything just right.

There will always be another day  
to say "I love you,"  
And certainly there's another chance  
to say our "Anything I can do?"

But just in case I might be wrong,  
and today is all I get,  
I'd like to say how much I love you  
and I hope we never forget.

Tomorrow is not promised to anyone,  
young or old alike,  
And today may be the last chance  
you get to hold your loved one tight.

So if you're waiting for tomorrow,  
why not do it today?  
For if tomorrow never comes,  
you'll surely regret the day,

That you didn't take that extra time  
for a smile, a hug, or a kiss  
and you were too busy to grant someone,  
what turned out to be their one last wish.

So hold your loved ones close today,  
and whisper in their ear,  
Tell them how much you love them  
and that you'll always hold them dear

Take time to say "I'm sorry,"  
"Please forgive me," "Thank you," or "It's okay."  
And if tomorrow never comes,  
you'll have no regrets about today.

## GOD DIDN'T MAKE PERFECT MOTHERS

"May I go now?" the almost completed, eager mother asked.

"Not yet. There are essential parts and finishing touches to be added," her Maker replied.

"I look pretty good to me," she said, peering into the crystal pool at her feet.

"True, you're looking better all the time. But bear with me."

"What does a mother have to do, God, besides wash, feed, and clothe little bodies?"

God only smiled and continued working.

"What are you doing now?" the curious mother-to-be questioned.

"Tightening your anger valve. If this doesn't work, everyone is in trouble."

She watched as He reached for the container marked patience.

"And what do I need patience for?" she asked as He poured in quite a supply.

"After a week you will know, my child."

"And whatever could that be?"

"This is your bypass mechanism. It enables a mother to operate efficiently for long periods of time without compliments from her children."

"I'm sure I won't need that."

"I'm sure you will."

Then God reached for a bundle labeled insulation against loud noises.

"You can skip that," she told him. "I don't mind a little noise."

"That's nice," He said.

Seeing all the energy He was preparing to give her, she shifted uneasily from one foot to the other. "I wouldn't need all that energy in a million years."

"Little you know. You will use all of this and be begging for more before long."

"I didn't know there was so much involved in being a mother. You're not just putting me on, are you?"

"No, little mother."

With much apprehension, "Are you sure I can handle the job?"

"Quite sure...with help. I'm always available when you need me."

"I'm glad to know that. What could I possibly need all these for?"

"A certain amount of pain, so that you will be fully equipped to sympathize with and minister to the needs of your children when they feel pain; tears, so that you will be able to cry with them when they are hurt; and laughter to blend with theirs for happy times."

The mother-in-waiting fidgeted while God attached yes and no buttons.

"Wouldn't it be nicer just to say yes to my children all the time?"

"Definitely not. Good mothers need to say no--and often. Say it with kindness and they will respect you for it."

"Have you equipped me with this thing called kindness, Lord?"

"I have indeed."

"And what about respect? Do I have to respect my children?"

"Absolutely."

The anxious mother tried to be patient as God installed a question answered, advice giver, get along without sleep, and a pretender not to notice.

"I know I wouldn't use one of those!" she said, as God came toward her with a let-go lever.

"Sure you will, though it's hard. This is a vital piece of equipment. Until this little lever is released, your children will not have room to grow properly, make their own decisions, or develop their own personalities."

"I guess that is important."

God stood back a few steps to appraise His work, then reached for a coat of love and wrapped it around her. "Wear this at all times and you'll be a good mother."

But GOD DID MAKE GOOD MOTHERS



## And It's Au Revoir from me

This E-Book has proved a wondrous joy for me to compile and edit.

Many of the thought-provoking stories and poems have brought more than one tear to my eye.....

For once I am almost at loss for words (a most unusual occurrence for me!) – You will have to experience this book for yourself to truly understand the deep inner-meaning of every emotion to be found in every word and in every syllable.

If you have managed to get this far (the Editor inside me sincerely hopes that you will) please know that this e-book comes freely to you with all my love and blessings.

There is no obligation for you to make any payment whatsoever for this e-book but if you feel that you would like to do make a donation I would lovingly invite you to go to:-

<http://www.bethelmethodistchurchbeaufortgwent.co.uk/>

where you will be able to make a freewill offering.

Thank you for being.....

With many peaceful blessings

Geoffrey Keyte  
South Wales  
July 2013

