

Be careful what you ask for, you just might get it:
Your words, your dreams, and your thoughts have power
to create conditions in your life.

What you speak about, you can bring about. If you keep
saying you can't stand your job, you might lose your job.
If you keep saying you can't stand your body,
your body can become sick.

If you keep saying you can't stand your car,
your car could be stolen or just stop operating.

If you keep saying you're always broke, guess what?
You'll always be broke.

If you keep saying you can't trust a man or trust a
woman, you will always find someone in your life to
hurt and betray you.

If you keep saying you can't find a job,
you will remain unemployed.

If you keep saying you can't find someone to love you
or believe in you, your very thoughts will attract
more experiences to confirm your beliefs.

Turn your thoughts and conversations around to be
more positive and power packed with faith, hope, love
and action.

Don't be afraid to believe that you can have what you
want and deserve.

Watch your "Thoughts," they become words.

Watch your "Words," they become actions.

Watch your "Actions," they become habits.

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Watch your "Words," they become actions.

Watch your "Actions," they become habits.

Watch your "Habits," they become character.

Watch your "Character," for it becomes your "Destiny."

GET OUT OF YOUR OWN

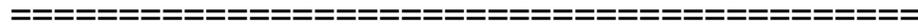
Proverbs 10:14 **Wise men lay up knowledge: but the
mouth of the foolish is near destruction.**



Merry Christmas to you and your family
A link to a christmas story

Christmas

<http://www.greatdanepro.com/Christmas/index.htm>



Martha Pendergrass Templeton

This was sent to us via: the internet, as you see it, less the scripture.
We pass it on in our Special in hopes God will use it to bless you.

I suppose everyone has a particular childhood Christmas that stands out more than any other. For me, it was the year that the Burlington factory in Scottsboro closed down. I was only a small child. I could not name for you the precise year; it is an insignificant blur in my mind, but the events of that Christmas will live forever in my heart.

My father, who had been employed at Burlington, never let on to us that we were having financial difficulties. After all, children live in a naive world in which money and jobs are nothing more than jabberwocky; and for us, the excitement of Christmas could never be squelched. We knew only that our daddy, who usually worked long, difficult hours, was now home more than we had ever remembered; each day seemed to be a holiday.

Mama, a homemaker, now sought work in the local textile mills, but jobs were scarce. Time after time, she was told no openings were available before Christmas, and it was on the way home from one such distressing interview that she wrecked our only car. Daddy's meager unemployment check would now be our family's only source of income. For my parents, the Christmas season brought mounds of worries, crowds of sighs and tears, and cascades of prayers.

I can only imagine what transpired between my parents during that time. I don't know for sure how they managed, but somehow they did. They made sure they scraped together enough money to buy each of us a Barbie doll. For the rest of our presents, they would rely on their talents, using scraps of materials they already had.

While dark, calloused hands sawed, hammered and painted, nimble fingers fed dress after dress after dress into the

sewing machine. Barbie-sized bridal gowns, evening gowns . . . miniature clothes for every imaginable occasion pushed forward from the rattling old machine. Where we were while all of this was taking place, I have no idea. But somehow my parents found time to pour themselves into our gifts, and the excitement of Christmas was once again born for the entire family.

That Christmas Eve, the sun was just setting over the distant horizon when I heard the roar of an unexpected motor in the driveway. Looking outside, I could hardly believe my eyes. Aunt Charlene and Uncle Buck, Mama's sister and her husband, had driven all the way from Georgia to surprise us. Packed tightly in their car, as though no air was needed, sat my three cousins, my Aunt Dean, who refused to be called "Aunt," and both my grandparents. I also couldn't help but notice innumerable gifts for all of us, all neatly packaged and tied with beautiful bows. They had known that it would be a difficult Christmas, and they had come to help.

The next morning we awoke to more gifts than I ever could have imagined. And, though I don't have one specific memory of what any of the toys were, I know that there were mountains of them.

And it was there, amidst all that jubilation, that Daddy decided not to give us his gifts. With all the toys we had gotten, there was no reason to give us the dollhouses that he had made. They were rustic and simple red boxes, after all. Certainly not as good as the store-bought gifts that Mama's family had brought. The music of laughter filled the morning, and we never suspected that, hidden somewhere, we each had another gift.

When Mama asked Daddy about the gifts, he confided his feelings, but she insisted he give us our gifts. And so, late that afternoon, after all of the guests had gone, Daddy reluctantly brought his gifts of love to the living room.

Wooden boxes. Wooden boxes painted red, with hinged lids, so that each side could be opened and used as a house. On either side was a compartment just big enough to store a Barbie doll, and all the way across, a rack on which to hang our Barbie clothes. On the outside was a handle, so that when it was closed, held by a magnet that looked remarkably

like an equal sign, the house could be carried suitcase style. And, though I don't really remember any of the other gifts I got that day, those boxes are indelibly etched into my mind. I remember the texture of the wood, the exact shade of red paint, the way the pull of the magnet felt when I closed the lid, the time-darkened handles and hinges. I remember how the clothes hung delicately on the hangers inside, and how I had to be careful not to pull Barbie's hair when I closed the lid. I remember everything that is possibly rememberable, because we kept and cherished those boxes long after our Barbie doll days were over.

I have lived and loved twenty-nine Christmases, each new and fresh with an air of excitement all its own. Each filled with love and hope. Each bringing gifts, cherished and longed for. But few of those gifts compare with those simple wooden boxes. So it is no wonder that I get teary-eyed when I think of my father, standing there on that cold Christmas morning, wondering if his gift was good enough.

Our Heavenly Father gave us a Christmas Gift: is it good enough for you?

Isaiah 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Karen L. Garrison

This was sent to us via: the internet, as you see it, less the scripture. We pass it on in our Special in hopes God will use it to bless you.

It had been the perfect winter night to view Christmas lights. "Hurry, kids!" I shouted upstairs to my children. "Daddy's already outside warming the van." Within minutes I heard excited voices.

"Mommy! Mommy!" my six-year-old daughter Abigail shouted, sliding on her behind down the carpeted stairs. "Is the hot chocolate ready?"

"It's in the van," I told her, smiling as my two-year-old son Simeon tugged at my shirt. We were all wearing our pajamas. After all, this was a Christmas tradition! Each year at Christmastime, we'd get into our sleepwear, pack a bag full of munchies and head to our van to go looking at decorations on neighboring houses. We had just stepped out of the door when Abigail surprised me by asking, "Mama, can you give me more money for doing my chores? I want

to buy you, Daddy and Simeon the best gifts for Christmas!”

“The best gifts are those that come from the heart,” I grinned, recalling how she had drawn me a picture of a rainbow the previous day after learning I hadn’t been feeling well.

“You mean that instead of buying people things at the stores, that there’s other ways to give them gifts?”

“Yep,” I answered, securing her seat belt. “All people have to do is look into their hearts, and they’ll find many good gifts to give.”

Settled into the van, we opened the bag of goodies, and the kids cheered as we passed house after house decorated with snowmen, Santa and his reindeer and nativity scenes, glowing brightly in Christmas lights.

Suddenly, it began snowing lightly just as we rounded the corner of a street that led into the neighborhood that my husband Jeff and I had lived in years before. The headlights flashed onto the first brick home of the street. The house appeared disturbingly dark compared to the bright lights displayed by its neighbors.

“The people who live there must not like Christmas,” Abigail noted from the back seat.

“Actually, honey,” my husband said, stopping the van briefly along the curb, “they used to have the best decorated house in the neighborhood.” Jeff clasped my hand, and I sighed, remembering Lena and her husband and how they used to take such joy in decorating their home for Christmas. “It’s for the children,” they’d say. “We like to imagine them in the back seat of their parents’ cars, their little faces full of Christmas magic as they look at our home.”

“Why don’t they decorate it anymore?” Abigail asked, bringing my attention to the present.

“Well,” I began, remembering the dark days when Lena’s husband had been hospitalized, “her husband died a few years ago, and Lena’s very old. She only has one child, and he’s a soldier living far away.”

“Tell me what she’s like,” Abigail said, and for the next few minutes Jeff and I filled her in on the kind things Lena used to do.

“And every Sunday after church, she’d make homemade cookies and invite us over. She’s an incredible person,” Jeff concluded.

“Can we visit her now?” asked Abigail.

Simeon met Abigail’s question with enthusiastic agreement, and I shared our children’s excitement. Both Jeff and I looked down at

our attire.

“I knew this would happen one day,” he said, rubbing his forehead. “First I let you talk me into wearing pajamas in the van, and now you’re going to want me to actually go visiting, right?”

I kissed his cheek and an hour later, after leaving Lena’s home, Abigail and Simeon clutched the crocheted tree ornaments she’d graciously given them.

“I wish I had a gift for her,” Abigail said, waving at the elderly woman standing in her doorway.

The next morning, my children gave me strict orders not to come upstairs. They said something about it being a secret mission for Christmas. After rummaging through drawers, closets and toy chests, they came down the stairs wearing toy construction hats, snow boots and Simeon’s play tool belts.

“What is all this?” I laughed. “Are you going to fix things around here?”

“Nope,” Abigail smiled brightly. “We’re going to give a gift to Lena. Since she’s too old and doesn’t have anyone to do it for her, we’re going to decorate her house for Christmas!”

Her words brought tears to my eyes. “That’s a wonderful idea,” I said, calling their father. “But I think you’ll need Daddy and me to help. Is it okay if we’re part of your secret mission?”

“Sure!” they replied. Hours later, we stood with Lena, who couldn’t have been happier, on the sidewalk in front of her now brightly glowing house. The lights we had found in her basement were shining with pride over snow-capped arches and windows. Candy canes lined the sidewalk and welcomed passersby to the nativity scene that Abigail and Simeon had positioned on the snow-covered lawn. A car cruising along slowed its speed to view the lights. Two children peeked from the back window, their faces full of excitement. Lena watched them, her eyes aglow.

It had been a day full of hard work, but it was worth every second to see the joy on Lena’s face. Suddenly, she disappeared inside her home and returned carrying a tray of freshly baked cookies.

Abigail reached her hand inside my coat pocket and clutched my fingers.

“You were right, Mom,” she sighed, her dark eyes content.

“About what, sweetie?”

She leaned her head against my arm and replied, “The best gifts are those from the heart.” I kissed the top of her head, so proud of

her for using her own heart to think of this, and then I turned to my husband. Our eyes met and he smiled.

“Looks like decorating Lena’s house can be added to our list of Christmas traditions,” he announced. The kids heartily agreed.

Isaiah 11:6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; **and a little child shall lead them.**

NIV: Similar

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Struggle

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole.

Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could, and it could go no further.

So the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon.

The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time.

Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly.

What the man, in his kindness and haste, did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes, God will have us struggle in life. That's because he has a plan for us. **He knows what's best and He knows what he is doing. Just trust him.**

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

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Satan's Convention

Satan called a worldwide convention. In his opening address to his evil/dark angels, he said... "We can't keep the Christians from going to Church.

We can't keep them from reading their Bibles and knowing the truth.

We can't even keep them from forming an intimate, abiding relationship experience in Christ. If they gain that connection with Jesus, our power over them is broken .

So, let them go to their churches. Let them have their conservative lifestyles, but steal their time, so they can't gain that relationship with Jesus Christ.

This is what I want you to do, angels.

Distract them from gaining hold of their Savior and maintaining that vital connection throughout their day!"

"How shall we do this?" shouted his angels.

"Keep them busy in the nonessentials of life and invent innumerable schemes to occupy their minds, ' he answered. 'Tempt them to spend, spend, spend, and borrow, borrow, borrow. Persuade the wives to go to work for long hours and the husbands to work 6 - 7 days a week, 10 - 12 hours a day, so they can afford their empty lifestyles.

Keep them from spending time with their children. As their family fragments, soon, their home will offer no escape from the pressures of work!"

"Over-stimulate their minds so that they cannot hear that still, small voice.

Entice them to play the radio or cassette player whenever they drive. To keep the TV, VCR, CDs and their PCs going constantly in their homes. And, see to it that every store and restaurant in the world plays non-biblical music constantly. This will jam their minds and break that union with Christ."

"Fill the coffee table with magazines and newspapers. Pound their minds with the news 24 hours a day. Invade their driving moments with billboards.

Flood their mailboxes with junk mail, mail order catalogues, sweepstakes, and every kind of newsletter and promotional offering, free products, services, and false hopes."

"Keep skinny, beautiful models on the magazines so the husbands will believe that external beauty is what's important, and they'll become dissatisfied with their wives.

Ha! That will fragment those families quickly!"

"Even in their recreation, let them be excessive. Have them return from their recreation exhausted, disquieted, and unprepared for the coming week.

Don't let them go out in nature to reflect on God's wonders. Send them to amusement parks, sporting events, concerts and movies instead.

Keep them busy, busy, busy!!

And, when they meet for spiritual fellowship, involve them in gossip and small talk so that they leave with troubled consciences and unsettled emotion."

"Go ahead, let them be involved in soul winning. But crowd their lives with so many good causes they have no time to seek power from Christ.

Soon they will be working in their own strength, sacrificing their health and family for the good of the cause. It will work! It will work!"

It was quite a convention. And the evil/dark angels went eagerly to their assignments causing Christians everywhere to get busy, busy, busy and to rush here and there.

I guess the question is: has the devil been successful at his scheme?

B - Being

U - Under

S - Satan's

Y - Yoke You be the judge!

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Romans 6:16 *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*

Strong women

--A strong woman works out every day to keep her body in shape...but
a

woman of strength kneels in prayer to keep her soul in shape...

--A strong woman isn't afraid of anything...but a woman of strength shows courage in the midst of her fear...

--A strong woman won't let anyone get the best of her...but a woman of

strength gives the best of herself to everyone...

--A strong woman walks sure-footedly...but a woman of strength knows God will catch her when she falls...

--A strong woman wears the look of confidence on her face...but a woman

of strength wears grace...

--A strong woman has faith that she is strong enough for the journey...but

a woman of strength has faith that it is in the journey that she will become strong...

Proverbs 3:5 *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*

Once there were three trees on a hill in the woods. They were discussing their hopes and dreams when **the first tree said, "Someday I hope to be a treasure chest. I could be decorated with intricate carvings and everyone would see the beauty."**

Then the second tree said, "Someday I will be a mighty ship. I will take kings and queens across the waters and sail to the corners of the world. Everyone will feel safe in me because of the strength of my hull."

Finally the third tree said, "I want to grow to be the tallest and straightest tree in the Forrest. People will see me on top of the hill and look up to my branches, and think of the heavens and God and how close to them I am reaching. I will be the greatest tree of all time and people will always remember me."

After a few years of praying that their dreams would come true, a group of woodsmen came upon the trees. When one came to the first tree, he said, "This looks like a strong tree, I think I should be able to sell the wood to a carpenter." And he began cutting it down. The tree was very happy, because he knew that the carpenter would make him into a treasure chest.

At the second tree the woodsmen said, "This looks like a strong tree. I should be able to sell it to the shipyard." The second tree was happy because he knew he was on his way to becoming a mighty ship.

When the woodsmen came upon the third tree, the tree was frightened because he knew if they cut him down his dreams would not come true. One of the woodsmen said, "Don't need anything special from my tree, I'll take this one," and he cut it down.

When the first tree arrived at the carpenters, he was made into a feed box for animals. He was then placed in a barn and filled with hay. This was not at all what he had prayed for.

The second tree was cut and made into a small fishing boat. His dreams of being a mighty ship and carrying kings had come to an end.

The third tree was cut into pieces and left in the dark.

The years went by and the trees forgot about their dreams. Then one day, a man and woman came to the barn. She gave birth and they placed the baby on the hay in the feed box that was made from the first tree. The man wished he could have made a crib for the baby, but this manger would have to do. The tree could feel the importance of this event and knew that it had held the greatest treasure of all time.

Years later, a group of men got in the fishing boat made from the second tree. One of them was tired and went to sleep. While they were out on the water, a great storm arose and the tree didn't think it was strong enough to

keep the men safe.

The men woke the sleeping man, and He stood and said, "Peace be still," and the storm stopped. **At this time the second tree knew that it had carried the King of Kings.**

Finally, someone came and got the third tree. It was carried through the streets as the people mocked the man who carrying it. When they came to a stop, the man was nailed to the tree and was raised in the air to die at the top of a hill. When suddenly, **the tree came to realize that it was strong enough to stand at the top of a hill and be as close to God as was possible, because Jesus had been crucified on it.**

The moral of this story is that when things don't seem to be going your way, always know that God has a plan for you. IF you place your trust in Him, God will give you great gifts.

Each of the trees got what they wanted, just not the way they had imagined.

We don't always know what God's plans are for us. We just know that His ways are not our ways, but His ways are always best.

Isaiah 55:9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Oct/12/14

8 Free Gifts You Should Give

THE GIFT OF LISTENING . . .

But you must REALLY listen. No interrupting, no daydreaming, no planning your response. Just listening.

THE GIFT OF AFFECTION . . .

Be generous with appropriate hugs, kisses, pats on the back and handholds. Let these small actions demonstrate the love you have for family and friends.

THE GIFT OF LAUGHTER . . .

Clip cartoons. Share articles and funny stories. Your gift will say, "I love to laugh with you."

THE GIFT OF A WRITTEN NOTE . . .

It can be a simple "Thanks for the help" note or a full sonnet. A brief, handwritten note may be remembered for a lifetime, and may even change a life.

THE GIFT OF A COMPLIMENT . . .

A simple and sincere, "You look great in red," "You did a super job" or "That was a wonderful meal" can make someone's day.

THE GIFT OF A FAVOR . . .

Every day, go out of your way to do something kind.

THE GIFT OF SOLITUDE . . .

There are times when we want nothing better, than to be left alone. Be sensitive to those times and give the gift of solitude to others.

THE GIFT OF A CHEERFUL DISPOSITION . . .

The easiest way to feel good is to extend a kind word to someone, really it's not that hard to say, Hello or Thank You.

John 13:35 *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

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the Barber

A man went to a barbershop to have his hair cut and his beard trimmed. As the barber began to work, they began to have a good conversation. They talked about so many things and various subjects. When they eventually touched on the subject of God, the barber said: "I don't believe that God exists."

"Why do you say that?" asked the customer.

"Well, you just have to go out in the street to realize that God doesn't exist. Tell me, if God exists, would there be so many sick people? Would there be abandoned children? If God existed, there would be neither suffering nor pain. I can't imagine a loving God who would allow all of these things."

The customer thought for a moment, but didn't respond because he didn't want to start an argument.

The barber finished his job and the customer left the shop. Just after he left the barbershop, he saw a man in the street with long, stringy, dirty hair and an untrimmed beard. He looked dirty and unkempt.

The customer turned back and entered the barber shop again and he said to the barber: "You know what? Barbers do not exist."

"How can you say that?" asked the surprised barber. "I am here, and I am a barber. And I just worked on you!"

"No!" the customer exclaimed. "Barbers don't exist because if they did, there would be no people with dirty long hair and untrimmed beards, like that man outside."

"Ah, but barbers DO exist!", answered the barber. "What happens, is, people do not come to me."

"Exactly!" - affirmed the customer. "That's the point! God, too, DOES exist! What happens, is, people don't go to Him and do not look for Him. That's why there's so much pain and suffering in the world."

Romans 10:14 *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

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The Lord's Home Run

Freddy 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 inning with two outs. They continued to watch as a batter stepped up to the plate named "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 he never swings at what Satan throws.

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

Satan's whole team relaxed when they saw Grace. Thinking he there was no way he could lose, Satan wound up and fired his first pitch. To the shock of everyone, Grace hit the ball harder than anyone had ever seen! However, Satan was not worried; his center 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; the roaring crowds went wild as the ball continued over the fence for a home run!

The Lord's team won!

The Lord then asked Freddy if he knew why Love, Faith, and Godly Wisdom could get on base but couldn't win the game. Freddy answered that he didn't 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.

Ephesians 2:8-9 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

A son and his father were walking on the mountains. Suddenly, the son falls hurts himself and screams: "AAAhhhhhhhhhhh!!!"

To his surprise, he hears the voice repeating, somewhere in the mountain: "AAAhhhhhhhhhhh!!!"

Curious, he yells: "Who are you?" He receives the answer: "Who are you?"

Angered at the response, he screams: "Coward!" He receives the answer:

"Coward!"

He looks to his father and asks: "What's going on?" The father smiles and says: "My son, pay attention."

And then he screams to the mountain: "I admire you!" ,The voice answers:

"I admire you!"

Again the man screams: "You are a champion!" The voice answers:

"You are a champion!"

The boy is surprised, but does not understand. Then the father explains:

"People call this Echo, but really this is Life.
It gives you back everything you say or do. Our life is simply a reflection of our actions. if you want more love in the world, create more love in your heart.

If you want more competence in your team, improve your competence.

This relationship applies to everything, in all aspects of life.

Life will give you back everything you have given to it.

~Author Unknown

Romans 10:10 *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Ephesians 4:29 *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*

Why Go To Church?

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. "I've gone for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this.. They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today . Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!" When you are DOWN to nothing... God is UP to something! Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible!

Thank God for our physical AND our spiritual nourishment!

All right, now that you're done reading, send it on! I think everyone should read this!

Matthew 4:4 *But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

Be Thankful

Be thankful that you don't already have everything you desire.

If you did, what would there be to look forward to?

Be thankful when you don't know something, for it gives you the opportunity to learn.

Be thankful for the difficult times.

During those times you grow.

Be thankful for your limitations, because they give you opportunities for improvement.

Be thankful for each new challenge, because it will build your strength and character.

Be thankful for your mistakes.

They will teach you valuable lessons.

Be thankful when you're tired and weary, because it means you've made a difference.

It's easy to be thankful for the good things.

A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who are also thankful for the setbacks.

This includes correction.

Gratitude can turn a negative into a positive.

Find a way to be thankful for your troubles, and they can become your blessings.

~ Helen Dowd

1Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

THE 5 FINGERS OF PRAYER

1. Your thumb is nearest to you. So begin your prayers by praying for **those closest to you**. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C.S. Lewis once said, a "sweet duty."

2. The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray **for those who teach, instruct and heal**. This includes teachers, doctors, priests and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.

3. The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leaders.

Pray for the president, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance.

4. The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger; as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to **pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain**. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.

5. And lastly comes our little finger; the smallest finger of all. Which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, "The least shall be the greatest among you. **"Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself.**" By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively. Should you find it hard to get to sleep tonight; Just remember the homeless family who has no bed to lie in Should you find yourself stuck in traffic; don't despair. There are people in this world for whom driving is an unheard of privilege Should you have a bad day at work; Think of the man who has been out of work for the last three months. Should you despair over a relationship gone bad; Think of the person who has never known what it's like to love and be loved in return. Should you grieve the passing of another weekend; Think of the woman in dire straits, working twelve hours a day, seven days a week, for \$15.00 to feed her family. Should your car break down, leaving you miles away from assistance, think of the paraplegic who would love the opportunity to take that walk. Should you notice a new gray hair in the mirror; Think of the cancer patient in chemo who wishes she had hair to examine. Should you find yourself at a loss and pondering; what is life all about, what is my purpose? Be thankful... there are those who didn't live long enough to get the opportunity. Should you find yourself the victim of other people's bitterness, ignorance, smallness or insecurities; Remember, things could be worse You could be them!!!

1Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing.

After 21 years of marriage, I discovered a new way of keeping alive the spark of love.

A little while ago, I went out with another woman. It was really my wife's idea.

"I know you'll love her," she said one day, taking me by surprise.

"But I love YOU too," I protested.

"I know, but you also love her."

The other woman who my wife wanted me to visit was my mother who had been a widow for 19 years, but the demands of my work and my three children had made it possible to visit her only occasionally.

That night I called to invite her to go out for dinner and a movie. "What's wrong, are you well," she asked?

My mother is the type of woman who suspects that a late night call or a surprise invitation is a sign of bad news.

"I thought that it would be pleasant to pass some time with you." I responded, "Just the two of us."

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"I thought that it would be pleasant to pass some time with you." I responded, "Just the two of us."

She thought about it for a moment and then said, "I would like that very much."

That Friday after work, as I drove over to pick her up, I was a bit nervous. When I arrived at her house, I noticed that she, too, seemed to be nervous about our date.

She waited in the door with her coat on. She had curled her hair and was wearing the dress that she had worn to celebrate her last wedding anniversary. She smiled from a face that was as radiant as an angel's.

"I told my friends that I was going to go out with my son, and they were impressed," she said, as she got into the car.

"They can't wait to hear about our meeting."

We went to a restaurant that, although not elegant, was very nice and cozy. My mother took my arm as if she were the First Lady. After we sat down, I had to read the menu. Her eyes could only read large print.

Halfway through the entree, I lifted my eyes and saw Mom sitting there staring at me. A nostalgic smile was on her lips.

"It was I who used to have to read the menu when you were small," she said.

"Then it's time that you relax and let me return the favor," I responded.

During the dinner, we had an agreeable conversation, nothing extraordinary but catching up on recent events of each other's life. We talked so much that we missed the movie.

As we arrived at her house later, she said, "I'll go out with you again, but only if you let me invite you."

I agreed.

"How was your dinner date?" asked my wife when I got home.

"Very nice. Much more so than I could have imagined," I answered.

A few days later, my mother died of a massive heart attack.

It happened so suddenly that I didn't have a chance to do anything for her. Some time later, I received an envelope with a copy of a restaurant receipt from the same place mother and I had dined.

An attached note said: "I paid this bill in advance. I was almost sure that I couldn't be there; but nevertheless, I paid for two plates; one for you and the other for your wife.

You will never know what that night meant for me. I love you."

At that moment I understood the importance of saying, in time: "I LOVE

YOU" and to give our loved ones the time that the deserve.

Nothing in life is more important than God and your family.

Give them the time they deserve because these things cannot be put off until "some other time."

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Matthew 26:11 *For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always*

Take 60 seconds to read this story. It will give you time to settle your brain, gather your thoughts, calm down and start your week off on a positive note.

Potato Chips

A little boy wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with a bag of potato chips and a sixpack of root beer and started his journey.

When he had gone about three blocks, he met an old man. He was sitting in the park, just staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to him and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the old man looked hungry, so he offered him some chips. He gratefully accepted it and smiled at him.

His smile was so pretty that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered him a root beer. Again, he smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word...

As twilight approached, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave; but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old man, and gave him a hug. He gave him his biggest smile ever...

When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?"

He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? He's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the old man, also radiant with joy, returned to his home. His son was stunned by the look of peace on his face and he asked, "dad, what did you do today that made you so happy?"

He replied "I ate potato chips in the park with God." However, before his son responded, he added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected."

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a

listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around. People come into our lives for a reason, a season, or a lifetime! Embrace all equally!

Have lunch with God.....bring chips.

Send this to people who have touched your life in a special way. Let them know how important they are. I did!!!!

Luke 21:34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you **unawares**.

=====

Typhoon Haiyan was one of the worst storms to ever hit the Philippines, claiming an estimated 10,000 lives. 23 year-old Jonathan Fitzpatrick didn't know if he would survive. He barricaded himself in a room at the Ormoc Villa Hotel on Thursday as 74 mph winds barreled through outside. But he didn't stay inside. He ventured out to help those in need.

"He admitted he thought that was going to be it," Jonathan's sister, Rachel, said. "But he decided he didn't want to go like that, and he wanted to go fighting."

Jonathan Skyped with his family, but mid-conversation, the storm cut off the connection.

Instead of staying inside where it was safe, Jonathan and four of his colleagues kicked down hotel room doors, shuttled people to the stairwell to seek refuge and handed out waters. He risked his life to save the lives of complete strangers.

Not only did he save people from the storm itself, but before he left he gave money to a man to help rebuild his home. According to authorities, approximately 9.7 million people in 41 provinces were affected by the typhoon. No buildings were spared.

"I don't believe there is a single structure that is not destroyed or severely damaged in some way -- every single building, every single house," U.S. Marine Brig. Gen. Paul Kennedy told the Associated Press after taking a helicopter flight over the city.

People fear that the area will be overrun by violence. Almost no aid is being given to those in the Philippines

Psalm 45:7

Thou **lovest** righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore **God**, thy **God**, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

=====

Once upon a time there was a village named Egoville hidden away in the mountains. Now, this village, like most villages, had their own idiot. His name was Hugh Millety.

Hugh, the village idiot, was the ridicule of Egoville.

The towns folk would often set him up with silly choices in order to laugh mercilessly at him when he made the wrong choice.

"Hugh," they'd say, "would you rather have this shiny new quarter or this dirty old torn dollar bill?"

"I'd like the shiny quarter," Hugh would reply. His tormentor would give him the quarter and walk away laughing, declaring Hugh a true village idiot. Hugh would just shrug and go about his business. Even though it was a poor village with little opportunity, this was repeated several times a day by many people. As the years went by, the ridicule became a ritual that dozens of townies took part in. The towns folk had little to their names, but at least they could feel better about themselves in comparison to the village idiot this way. It was their small comfort in the lap of poverty.

Not everyone would make fun of Hugh though. A few felt sorry for him and gave him hand-me-down clothes, leftover food, and even an old shack to live in at the edge of town. Hugh lived off of the handouts of the charitable few.

One day, Hugh showed up at the village square wearing a brand new suit. Everyone was amazed, for few people in the town could afford new clothing, let alone a nice suit. The small village didn't even have a new clothing store, only a used clothing store.

One of townfolk asked Hugh where he got his new suit, thinking he must have stolen it. He bought it, he told them. And furthermore he added, the fine new house being built on the mountainside that everyone was wondering about, that was his.

When questioned where he got the money, he told them it was the money they gave him. With people giving him food, clothing, and shelter, he simply saved and invested everything they gave him.

"I may be your village idiot," he smiled and said, "but I'm no fool."

But why then, they asked, did he always take the lesser amount of money they offered him if he was so cunning?

Hugh replied that if he had taken the greater amount of money, they would have stopped offering it to him. He earned his money by letting them laugh at him, but he knew the first time he took the greater amount they'd stop offering him money and find something else to laugh at him about.

"Now," said Hugh, "I'm the richest person in town and have all the money I need. I didn't waste money amusing myself at the expense of someone I falsely perceived to be a lesser person.

And you, all of you, have little more now than you had when you started ridiculing me. So tell me, who is the village idiot now?"

Hugh smiled again, then handed out hundred dollar bills to those who had been kind to him. The townfolk were shocked. It was true though, they had frittered away their money a little at a time, trying to make themselves feel big by comparison to the village idiot.

It just goes to show you, if you live in Egoville, take care not to become the village idiot by your vain perceptions. On the other hand, if you follow the wisdom of Hugh Millety, you might

just become the richest person in town.

~Author Unknown~

1Peter 3:14* But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

Proverbs 10:23* It is as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.

You Probably Know Me

I am your constant companion.

I am your greatest helper; and I am your heaviest burden.

I will push you onward or drag you down to failure.

I am at your command.

Half of the tasks you do might as well be turned over to me.

I'm able to do them quickly.

I'm able to do them the same every time if that's what you want.

I am easily managed. All you've got to do is be firm with me.

Show me exactly how you want it done and after a few lessons

I am at your command.

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I'm able to do them quickly.

I'm able to do them the same every time if that's what you want.

I am easily managed. All you've got to do is be firm with me.

Show me exactly how you want it done and after a few lessons

I'll do it automatically the rest of your life.

I am the servant of all great men and women, of course;

and I am servant to all the failures as well.

I've made all the great individuals who have ever been great.

And I've made all the failures that have ever failed.

But I work with all the precision of a marvelous computer.

I work with the intelligence of the human being.

Be easy on me and I will destroy you.

Be firm with me and I'll put the whole world at your feet.

What am I?

I am A Habit!

~Dr. Dennis P. Kimbro~

1Timothy 3:4 *One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;*

NIV He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect.

THIS IS A MUST READ. IT'S FANTASTIC AND INSPIRATIONAL AND IT'S ALSO A STORY THAN HAS NOT BEEN CIRCULATED.

It is over 12 yrs since 9/11 and here is a wonderful story about that terrible day. It is an amazing story from a flight attendant on Delta

Flight 15, written following 9-11.

On the morning of Tuesday, September 11, we were about 5 hours out of Frankfurt, flying over the North Atlantic.

All of a sudden the curtains parted and I was told to go to the cockpit, immediately, to see the captain. As soon as I got there I noticed that the crew had that "All Business" look on their faces. The captain handed me a printed message. It was from Delta's main office in Atlanta and simply read, "All airways over the Continental United States are closed to commercial air traffic. Land ASAP at the nearest airport. Advise your destination."

No one said a word about what this could mean. We knew it was a serious situation and we needed to find terra firma quickly. The captain determined that the nearest airport was 400 miles behind us in Gander, Newfoundland.

He requested approval for a route change from the Canadian traffic controller and approval was granted immediately -- no questions asked. We found out later, of course, why there was no hesitation in approving our request.

While the flight crew prepared the airplane for landing, another message arrived from Atlanta telling us about some terrorist activity in the New York area. A few minutes later word came in about the hijackings.

We decided to LIE to the passengers while we were still in the air. We told them the plane had a simple instrument problem and that we needed to land at the nearest airport in Gander, Newfoundland, to have it checked out.

We promised to give more information after landing in Gander. There was much grumbling among the passengers, but that's nothing new! Forty minutes later, we landed in Gander. Local time at Gander was 12:30 PM! that's 11:00 AM EST.

There were already about 20 other airplanes on the ground from all over the world that had taken this detour on their way to the U.S.

After we parked on the ramp, the captain made the following announcement: "Ladies and gentlemen, you must be wondering if all these airplanes around us have the same instrument problem as we have. The reality is that we are here for another reason." Then he went on to explain the little bit we knew about the situation in the U.S. There were loud gasps and stares of disbelief. The captain informed passengers that Ground Control in Gander told us to stay put.

The Canadian Government was in charge of our situation and no one was allowed to get off the aircraft. No one on the ground was allowed to come near any of the air crafts. Only airport police would come around periodically, look us over and go on to the next airplane. In the next hour or so more planes landed and Gander ended up with 53 airplanes from all over the world, 27 of which were U.S. commercial jets.

Meanwhile, bits of news started to come in over the aircraft radio and for the first time we learned that airplanes were flown into the World Trade Center in New York and into the Pentagon in DC. People were trying to use their cell phones, but were unable to connect due to a

different cell system in Canada. Some did get through, but were only able to get to the Canadian operator who would tell them that the lines to the U.S. were either blocked or jammed.

Sometime in the evening the news filtered to us that the World Trade Center buildings had collapsed and that a fourth hijacking had resulted in a crash. By now the passengers were emotionally and physically exhausted, not to mention frightened, but everyone stayed amazingly calm. We had only to look out the window at the 52 other stranded aircraft to realize that we were not the only ones in this predicament.

We had been told earlier that they would be allowing people off the planes one plane at a time. At 6 PM, Gander airport told us that our turn to deplane would be 11 am the next morning. Passengers were not happy, but they simply resigned themselves to this news without much noise and started to prepare themselves to spend the night on the airplane. Gander had promised us medical attention, if needed, water, and lavatory servicing. And they were true to their word. Fortunately we had no medical situations to worry about. We did have a young lady who was 33 weeks into her pregnancy. We took REALLY good care of her. The night passed without incident despite the uncomfortable sleeping arrangements.

About 10:30 on the morning of the 12th a convoy of school buses showed up. We got off the plane and were taken to the terminal where we went through Immigration and Customs and then had to register with the Red Cross.

After that we (the crew) were separated from the passengers and were taken in vans to a small hotel. We had no idea where our passengers were going. We learned from the Red Cross that the town of Gander has a population of 10,400 people and they had about 10,500 passengers to take care of from all the airplanes that were forced into Gander! We were told to just relax at the hotel and we would be contacted when the U.S. airports opened again, but not to expect that call for a while.

We found out the total scope of the terror back home only after getting to our hotel and turning on the TV, 24 hours after it all started.

Meanwhile, we had lots of time on our hands and found that the people of Gander were extremely friendly. They started calling us the "plane people." We enjoyed their hospitality, explored the town of Gander and ended up having a pretty good time.

Two days later, we got that call and were taken back to the Gander airport. Back on the plane, we were reunited with the passengers and found out what they had been doing for the past two days. What we found out was incredible.

Gander and all the surrounding communities (within about a 75 Kilometer radius) had closed all high schools, meeting halls, lodges, and any other large gathering places. They converted all these facilities to mass lodging areas for all the stranded travelers. Some had cots set up, some had mats with sleeping bags and pillows set up. ALL the high school students were required to volunteer their time to take care of the "guests." Our 218 passengers ended up in a town called Lewisporte, about 45 kilometers from Gander where they were put

up in a high school. If any women wanted to be in a women-only facility, that was arranged. Families were kept together. All the elderly passengers were taken to private homes.

Remember that young pregnant lady? She was put up in a private home right across the street from a 24-hour Urgent Care facility. There was a dentist on call and both male and female nurses remained with the crowd for the duration.

Phone calls and e-mails to the U.S. and around the world were available to everyone once a day. During the day, passengers were offered "Excursion" trips. Some people went on boat cruises of the lakes and harbors. Some went for hikes in the local forests. Local bakeries stayed open to make fresh bread for the guests.

Food was prepared by all the residents and brought to the schools. People were driven to restaurants of their choice and offered wonderful meals. Everyone was given tokens for local laundry mats to wash their clothes, since luggage was still on the aircraft. In other words, every single need was met for those stranded travelers.

Passengers were crying while telling us these stories. Finally, when they were told that U.S. airports had reopened, they were delivered to the airport right on time and without a single passenger missing or late. The local Red Cross had all the information about the whereabouts of each and every passenger and knew which plane they needed to be on and when all the planes were leaving. They coordinated everything beautifully.

It was absolutely incredible.

When passengers came on board, it was like they had been on a cruise. Everyone knew each other by name. They were swapping stories of their stay, impressing each other with who had the better time. Our flight back to Atlanta looked like a chartered party flight. The crew just stayed out of their way. It was mind-boggling.

Passengers had totally bonded and were calling each other by their first names, exchanging phone numbers, addresses, and email addresses.

And then a very unusual thing happened.

One of our passengers approached me and asked if he could make an announcement over the PA system. We never, ever allow that. But this time was different. I said "of course" and handed him the mike. He picked up the PA and reminded everyone about what they had just gone through in the last few days. He reminded them of the hospitality they had received at the hands of total strangers. He continued by saying that he would like to do something in return for the good folks of Lewisporte.

"He said he was going to set up a Trust Fund under the name of DELTA 15 (our flight number). The purpose of the trust fund is to provide college scholarships for the high school students of Lewisporte. He asked for donations of any amount from his fellow travelers. When the paper with donations got back to us with the amounts, names, phone numbers and addresses, the total was for more than \$14,000!

"The gentleman, a MD from Virginia, promised to match the donations and to start the administrative work on the scholarship. He also said that he

would forward this proposal to Delta Corporate and ask them to donate as well.

As I write this account, the trust fund is at more than \$1.5 million and has assisted 134 students in college education.

"I just wanted to share this story because we need good stories right now. It gives me a little bit of hope to know that some people in a faraway place were kind to some strangers who literally dropped in on them.

It reminds me how much good there is in the world."

"In spite of all the rotten things we see going on in today's world this story confirms that there are still a lot of good people in the world and when things get bad, they will come forward.

Psalms 112:4* Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

=====

A few years ago, I worked for a company that sent me out on the road to some of their remote sites to do maintenance work.

These sites were, for the most part, open fields approximately 100 to 160 acres in size.

On these sites were huge piles of metallic ores such as manganese, beryllium, chromium, ferrochrome, and many others.

Occasionally, these fields would have to be mowed and the buildings would need repairs, so I would go out and do the repairs, and if the weeds and grass hadn't gotten too much out of control, I would use a tractor with a brush hog type mower and cut it back down.

Sometimes though, I'd have to call contractors to come into the fields to mow the waist-high grass and weeds with their heavier equipment.

This one particular site was in an isolated area of central Pennsylvania that was prone to heavy rainstorms with an extraordinary amount of lightning, possibly attracted to the area by all the ore piles. It was surrounded by a 10-foot high cyclone fence for security, with gates to allow access to a road that went through the center of the property.

That day was another very hot, mid-August day, and I could see Kevin (the contractor) on the far side of the road, traveling back and forth across the field, baking in the hot sun.

Around 1:30 P.M., I noticed some very heavy rain clouds coming over the nearby hills and knew that another storm was coming.

I waited awhile to make sure that we actually were going to get rained out before calling Kevin in from the open area, hoping to let him get as much mowing done as possible.

When the sky started to darken and the wind picked up, I hopped

into my pick-up truck and went out to the field to call him back to the building.

As I stood by the edge of the field waving to Kevin, signaling him to get back to the shop building, the first few heavy began falling. Then, as the first burst of lightning lit up the sky and the first crash of thunder shook the air, Kevin sailed passed me on his tractor like an eighteen wheeler on Interstate 80.

After locking the gate on that side of the road, I got back into my pick-up and pulled inside the second gate. The latch was broken on this gate and I had to wrap a short length of chain around the gatepost and then through the edge of the gate.

By then the lightning was closer and the rain was just starting to get a little heavier. I shoved the thick chain around the post and threaded it through the diamond-shaped openings in the fence on the gate and held both ends in my one hand.

Next I took the open lock off the fence, where it had been hanging, with my other hand. Just when I was about to put the lock on the chain, a gnat flew into my open right eye.

That stung!

It stung so much that I instantly dropped the lock and the chain and put my hands to my eye, taking one step back at the same time.

Not a second later, lightning struck that fence somewhere close by, and I saw the whole fence in front of me light up and glow bright blue. That beautiful but lethal shade of light blue from high-voltage radiation nearly filled in all those little diamond-shaped openings in the fence.

I stood their awe struck as I realized what had just happened.

I was standing, wet, in rain, holding onto a chain that was threaded through a metal fence that was just about to be struck by lightning, when an insignificant insect, an annoying pest, a bug, flew into my eye and saved my life.

I was completely unharmed, not even a tingle.

Now, I've always believed that we each have a guardian angel, but I don't know for sure how they do their work. At night when I lie down to go to sleep, I thank those guardian angels for the work that they do. Who knows how many times they saved my life and I don't even know about it. ~Skip~

Psalms 91:11* For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

=====

During one of the many battles of the era, a young soldier found himself and his army being soundly defeated by the enemy.

He and his comrades hastily retreated from the battlefield in defeat, running away in fear of their very lives.

The enemy gave chase. The young man ran hard and fast, full of fear and desperation, and soon found himself cut off from his comrades. During one of the many battles of the era, a young soldier found himself and his army being soundly defeated by the enemy. He and his comrades hastily retreated from the battlefield in defeat, running away in fear of their very lives.

The enemy gave chase. The young man ran hard and fast, full of fear and desperation, and soon found himself cut off from his comrades. The soldier eventually came upon a rocky ledge containing a cave.

Knowing the enemy was close behind, and that he was exhausted from the chase, he chose to hide there. After he crawled in, he fell to his face in the darkness, desperately crying to God to save him and protect him from his enemies. He made a bargain with God. He promised that if God saved him, he would serve Him for the remainder of his days.

When he looked up from his despairing plea for help, he saw a spider beginning to weave its web at the entrance to the cave. As he watched the delicate threads being slowly drawn across the mouth of the cave, the young soldier pondered its irony. He thought,

"I asked God for protection and deliverance, and He sent me a spider instead. How can a spider save me?"

His heart was hardened, knowing the enemy would soon discover his hiding place and kill him. Soon he did hear the sound of his enemies, who were now scouring the area looking for those in hiding.

One soldier with a gun slowly walked up to the cave's entrance. As the young man crouched in the darkness, hoping to surprise the enemy in a last-minute desperate attempt to save his own life, he felt his heart pounding wildly out of control.

As the enemy cautiously moved forward to enter the cave, he came upon the spider's web, which by now was completely strung across the opening. He backed away and called out to a comrade, "There can't be anyone in here. They would have had to break this spider's web to enter the cave. Let's move on."

Years later, this young man, who made good his promise by becoming a preacher and evangelist, wrote about that ordeal. What he observed has stood by me in times of trouble, especially during those times when everything seemed impossible:

"Where God is, a spider's web is as a stone wall.

"There can't be anyone in here. They would have had to break this spider's web to enter the cave. Let's move on."

Years later, this young man, who made good his promise by becoming a preacher and evangelist, wrote about that ordeal. What he observed has stood by me in times of trouble, especially during those times when everything seemed impossible:

"Where God is, a spider's web is as a stone wall. Where God is not, a stone wall is as a spider's web."

~Author Unknown

Mark 11:22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, **Have faith in God.**

=====

From: Burning Bush Christian Crusades <bushbnr@telusplanet.net>

Subject: May Sunday Special

Date: May 31, 2014 9:22:52 PM MDT

He was just a little boy,

On a week's first day.

Wandering home from Sunday School,

And dawdling on the way.

He scuffed his shoes into the grass;

He even found a caterpillar.

He found a fluffy milkweed pod,

And blew out all the "filler."

A bird's nest in a tree overhead,

So wisely placed up so high.

Was just another wonder,

That caught his eager eye.

A neighbor watched his zig zag course,

And hailed him from the lawn;

Asked him where he'd been that day

And what was going on.

"I've been to Bible School ,"

He said and turned a piece of sod.

He picked up a wiggly worm replying,

"I've learned a lot about God."

"M'm very fine way," the neighbor said,

"For a boy to spend his time."

"If you'll tell me where God is,

I'll give you a brand new dime."

Quick as a flash the answer came!

Nor were his accents faint.

"I'll give you a dollar, Mister, if you can

Tell me where God ain't."

Author Unknown-

Revelation 22:13* I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

=====

Anyone who has pets will really like this. You'll like it even if you haven't and you may even decide you need one!

Mary and her husband Jim had a golden Lab named Lucky.

Lucky was a real character. Whenever Mary and Jim had company come for a weekend

visit they would warn their friends to not leave their luggage open because Lucky

would help himself to whatever struck his fancy. Inevitably, someone would forget

and something would come up missing.

Mary or Jim would go to Lucky's toy box in the basement and there the treasure would be, amid all of Lucky's other favorite toys. Lucky always stashed his finds in his toy box and he was very particular that his toys stay in the box..

It happened that Mary found out she had breast cancer. Something told her she was going to die of this disease....in fact; she was just sure it was fatal.

She scheduled the double mastectomy, fear riding her shoulders. The night before she was to go to the hospital she cuddled with Lucky. A thought struck her...what would happen to Lucky?

Although the three-year-old dog liked Jim, he was Mary's dog through and through. If I die, Lucky will be abandoned, Mary thought. He won't understand that I didn't want to leave him! The thought made her sadder than thinking of her own death.

The double mastectomy was harder on Mary than her doctors had anticipated and Mary was hospitalized for over two weeks. Jim took Lucky for his evening walk faithfully, but the little dog just drooped, whining and miserable.

Finally the day came for Mary to leave the hospital. When she arrived home, Mary was so exhausted she couldn't even make it up the steps to her bedroom.. Jim made his wife comfortable on the couch and left her to nap..

Lucky stood watching Mary but he didn't come to her when she called. It made Mary sad but sleep soon overcame her and she dozed.

When Mary woke for a second she couldn't understand what was wrong. She couldn't move her head and her body felt heavy and hot. But panic soon gave way to laughter when Mary realized the problem. She was covered, literally blanketed, with every treasure Lucky owned!

While she had slept, the sorrowing dog had made trip after trip to the basement bringing his beloved mistress all his favorite things in life.

He had covered her with his love.

Mary forgot about dying. Instead she and Lucky began living again, walking further and further together every day. It's been 12 years now and Mary is still cancer-free. Lucky, he still steals treasures and stashes them in his toy box but Mary remains his greatest treasure..

Remember.....live every day to the fullest. Each minute is a blessing. And never forget...the people who make a difference in our lives are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They are the ones that care for us. Live simply.. Love seriously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Leave the rest to God.

Daniel 4:3 How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.

Luke 1:72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

=====

One day, when I was a freshman in high school, I saw a kid from my class was walking home from school.

His name was Kyle.

It looked like he was carrying all of his books.. I thought to myself, 'Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday? He must really be a nerd.'

I had quite a weekend planned (parties and a football game with my friends tomorrow afternoon), so I shrugged my shoulders and went on.

As I was walking, I saw a bunch of kids running toward him.

They ran at him, knocking all his books out of his arms and tripping him so he landed in the dirt.

His glasses went flying, and I saw them land in the grass about ten feet from him...

He looked up and I saw this terrible sadness in his eyes My heart went out to him. So, I jogged over

to him as he crawled around looking for his glasses, and I saw a tear in his eye.

As I handed him his glasses, I said, 'Those guys are jerks.'

They really should get lives.

He looked at me and said, 'Hey thanks!' There was a big smile on his face. It was one of those smiles that showed real gratitude.

I helped him pick up his books, and asked him where he lived. As it turned out, he lived near me, so I asked him why I had never seen him before..

He said he had gone to private school before now.

I would have never hung out with a private school kid before.

We talked all the way home, and I carried some of his books.

He turned out to be a pretty cool kid. I asked him if he wanted to play a little football with my friends. He said yes.

We hung out all weekend and the more I got to know Kyle, the more I liked him, and my friends thought the same of him.

Monday morning came, and there was Kyle with the huge stack of books again. I stopped him and said, 'Boy, you are gonna really build some serious muscles with this pile of books everyday!

He just laughed and handed me half the books.

Over the next four years, Kyle and I became best friends..

When we were seniors we began to think about college. Kyle decided on Georgetown and I was going to Duke.

I knew that we would always be friends, that the miles would never be a problem.

He was going to be a doctor and I was going for business on a football scholarship..

Kyle was valedictorian of our class.. I teased him all the time about being a nerd.

He had to prepare a speech for graduation. I was so glad it wasn't me having to get up there and speak

Graduation day, I saw Kyle.. He looked great. He was one of those guys that really found himself during high school. He filled out and actually looked good in glasses.

He had more dates than I had and all the girls loved him. Boy, sometimes I was jealous! Today was

one of those days.

I could see that he was nervous about his speech. So, I smacked him on the back and said, 'Hey, big

guy, you'll be great!'

He looked at me with one of those looks (the really grateful one) and smiled.

Thanks,' he said.

As he started his speech, he cleared his throat, and began Graduation is a time to thank those who

helped you make it through those tough years. Your parents, your teachers, your siblings, maybe a

coach...but mostly your friends..... I am here to tell all of you that being a friend to someone is the best gift you can give them.

I am going to tell you a story.'

I just looked at my friend with disbelief as he told the first day we met.

He had planned to kill himself over the weekend. He talked of how he had cleaned out his locker so

his Mom wouldn't have to do it later and was carrying his stuff home.

He looked hard at me and gave me a little smile. Thankfully, I was saved. My friend saved me from doing the unspeakable..'

I heard the gasp go through the crowd as this handsome, popular boy told us all about his weakest moment..

I saw his Mom and dad looking at me and smiling that same grateful smile.

Not until that moment did I realize it's depth. Never underestimate the power of your actions..

With one small gesture you can change a person's life.

For better or for worse.....

God puts us all in each others lives to impact one another in some way.

Look for God in others.

1Thessalonians 5:14* **Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, support the weak, be patient toward all men**

=====

Death is certain but the Bible speaks about untimely death!

Make a personal reflection about this.... Very interesting, read until the end.....

It is written in the Bible (Galatians 6:7): "Be not deceived;
God is not mocked:for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall
he also reap.

Here are some men and women who mocked God:

John Lennon (Singer):

Some years before, during his interview with an American Magazine,
he said: "Christianity will end, it will disappear. I do not have
to argue about that. I am certain. Jesus was ok, but his subjects were
too simple, Today we are more famous than Him" (1966).

Lennon, after saying that the Beatles were more famous than
Jesus Christ, was shot six times.

Tancredo Neves (President of Brazil):

During the Presidential campaign, he said if he got 500,000 votes from his party, not even
God would remove him from Presidency.

Sure he got the votes, but he got sick a day before being made President, then he died.

Cazuza (Bi-sexual Brazilian composer, singer and poet):

During A show in Canecio (Rio de Janeiro), whilst smoking his cigarette, he puffed out some
smoke into the air and said "God, that's for you."

He died at the age of 32 of AIDS in a horrible manner

The man who built the Titanic

After the construction of Titanic, a reporter asked him how safe
the Titanic would be. With an ironic tone he said: "Not even God can sink it"

The result: I think you all know what happened to the Titanic.

Marilyn Monroe (Actress)

She was visited by a preacher during a presentation of a show.

He said the Spirit of God had sent him to preach to her. After hearing
what the Preacher had to say, she said: "I don't need your Jesus".

A week later, she was found dead in her apartment.

Bon Scott (Singer)

The ex-vocalist of the AC/DC. On one of his 1979 songs he sang:
"Don't stop me, I'm going down all the way, own the highway to hell".

On the 19th of February 1980,

Bon Scott was found dead, he had been choked by his own vomit.

Campinas (IN 2005)

In Campinas, Brazil a group of friends, drunk, went to pick up a friend.....

The mother accompanied her to the car and was so worried about the
drunkenness of her friends and she said to her daughter - holding her
hand, who was already seated in the car: My Daughter, Go With God
And May He Protect You..

"She responded: "Only If He (God) Travels In The Trunk, Cause Inside
Here... It's Already a Full House

Later, news came by that they had been involved in a fatal accident,
everyone had died, the car could not be recognized what type of car it had been, but
surprisingly, the trunk was intact. The police said there was no way the trunk could have
remained intact. To their surprise, inside the trunk was a crate of eggs, none were broken.

Christine Hewitt (Jamaican Journalist and entertainer)

Said the Bible (Word of God) was the worst book ever written.

In June 2006 she was found burnt beyond recognition in her motor vehicle.

Many more important people have forgotten that here is no other name that was given so
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Many more important people have forgotten that here is no other name that was given so much authority as the name of Jesus. Many have died, but only Jesus died and rose again, and he is still alive.

Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus" is the same Yesterday, Today and Forever.

Making Pancakes

Six-year-old Brandon decided one Saturday morning to fix his parents pancakes He found a big bowl and spoon, pulled a chair to the counter, opened the cupboard and pulled out the heavy flour canister, spilling it on the floor.

He scooped some of the flour into the bowl with his hands, mixed in most of a cup of milk and added some sugar, leaving a floury trail on the floor, which by now had a few tracks left by his kitten.

Brandon was covered with flour and getting frustrated. He wanted this to be something very good for Mom and Dad, but it was getting very bad. He didn't know what to do next, whether to put it all into the oven or on the stove and he didn't know how the stove worked! Suddenly he saw his kitten licking from the bowl of mix and reached to push her away, knocking the egg carton to the floor. Frantically he tried to clean up this monumental mess but slipped on the eggs, getting his pajamas white and sticky.

And just then, he saw Dad standing at the door. Big crocodile tears welled up in Brandon's eyes. All he'd wanted to do was something good, but he'd made a terrible mess. He was sure a scolding was coming, maybe even a spanking. But, his father just watched him.

Then, walking through the mess, he picked up his crying son, hugged him and loved him, getting his own pajamas white and sticky in the process!

That's how God deals with us. We try to do something good in life, but it turns into a mess. Our marriage gets all sticky or we insult a friend, or we can't stand our job, or our health goes sour.

Sometimes we just stand there in tears because we can't think of anything else to do. That's when God picks us up and loves us and forgives us, even though some of our mess gets all over Him.

But just because we might mess up, we can't stop trying to "make pancakes" for God or for others. Sooner or later we'll get it right, and then they'll be glad we tried.

Psalms 78:38 But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.

Jesus' Death - 60 seconds to understand 60 seconds with God...

**For the next 60 seconds,
set aside whatever you're doing and take this opportunity!**

Let's see if Satan can stop this.

THE (SCIENTIFIC) DEATH OF JESUS

At the age of 33, Jesus was condemned to the death penalty.

At the time crucifixion was the "worst" death. Only the worst criminals were condemned to be crucified. Jesus was to be nailed to the cross by His hands and feet.

Each nail was 6 to 8 inches long.

The nails were driven into His wrist.

Not into His palms as is commonly portrayed.

There's a tendon in the wrist that extends to the shoulder.

The Roman guards knew that when the nails were being hammered into the wrist, that tendon would tear and break, forcing Jesus to use His back muscles to support himself so that

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He could breathe.

Both of His feet were nailed together. Thus He was forced to

support Himself on the single nail that impaled His feet to the cross. Jesus could not support himself with His legs because of the pain, so He was forced to alternate between arching His back then using his legs just to continue to breathe. Imagine the struggle, the pain, the suffering, the courage.

Jesus endured this reality for over 3 hours.

Yes, over 3 hours!

Can you imagine this kind of suffering? A few minutes before He died, Jesus stopped bleeding. He was simply pouring water from his wounds.

From common images, we see wounds to His hands and feet and even the spear wound to His side... But do we realize His wounds were actually made in his body. A hammer driving large nails through the wrist,

the feet overlapped and an even large nail hammered through the arches, then a Roman guard piercing His side with a spear.

But before the nails and the spear, Jesus was whipped and beaten. The whipping was so severe that it tore the flesh from His body. The beating so horrific that His face was torn and his beard ripped from His face. The crown of thorns cut deeply into His scalp. Most men would not have survived this torture.

He had no more blood to bleed out, only water poured from His wounds. The human adult body contains about 3.5 liters (just less than a gallon) of blood.

Jesus poured all 3.5 liters of his blood; He had three nails hammered into His members;

a crown of thorns on His head, and beyond that, a Roman soldier who stabbed a spear into His chest.

All these without mentioning the humiliation passed after carrying His own cross for almost 2 kilometers, while the crowd spat in his face and threw stones and then being hung on the cross totally naked (the cross was almost 30 kg of weight, only for its higher part, where His hands were nailed).

Jesus had to endure this experience, so that we can have free access to God.

So that our sins could be "washed" away. All of them, with no exception! ALSO HEALING IS PART OF THE ATONEMENT
JESUS CHRIST DIED FOR US!

He died for us! It is easy to pass jokes and false witness face and threw stones and then being hung on the cross totally naked (the cross was almost 30 kg of weight, only for its higher part, where His hands were nailed).

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JESUS CHRIST DIED FOR US!

He died for us! It is easy to pass jokes and false witness statements by e-mail, but when it comes to God, sometimes we feel ashamed to forward to others because we are worried of what they may think about us.

Philippians 4:13.

Without Him, I am nothing, but with Him "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

John 14:27

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world

giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"..

=====

Who God Used

The next time you feel like God can't use you, just remember...

Noah was a drunk.

Abraham was too old.

Isaac was a daydreamer.

Jacob was a liar.

Leah was ugly.

Joseph was abused.

Moses had a stuttering problem.

Gideon was afraid.

Samson had long hair and was a womanizer.

Rahab was a prostitute.

Jeremiah and Timothy were too young.

David had an affair and was a murderer.

Elijah was suicidal.

Isaiah preached naked.

Jonah ran from God.

Naomi was a widow.

Job went bankrupt.

John the Baptist ate bugs.

Peter denied Christ.

The Disciples fell asleep while praying.

Martha worried about everything.

The Samaritan woman was divorced, more than once.

Zaccheus was too small.

Paul was too religious.

Timothy had an ulcer.

AND...

Lazarus was dead!

No more excuses now. God can use you to your full potential. Besides, you aren't the message; you are just the messenger.

1Corinthians 1:26* For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

=====

Remember Love

My Italian Grandmother was a wonderful woman. "Nanny" had a loving, vibrant soul that she carried around in a short, heavysset body. She had a passion for life that expressed itself in so many ways. It was in the hugs she gave, the meals she cooked, and the flowers she grew. It was even in the temper she lost from time to time. I think one of the reasons I was never taught Italian by my Dad was he was afraid I might learn the meaning of some of those words Nanny said when she was upset.

Nanny raised four sons and then helped my Mom and Dad raise me and my two brothers as well. I always felt blessed growing up in her home as a boy. She worked hard, laughed loud, and was never afraid of what life threw at her. Life wasn't that easy on her either. She suffered from health problems all her life and even survived an operation for a brain tumor. When she fell and broke her hip in her eighties, my Dad was forced to admit that he could no longer take care of her at home.

It was with a heavy heart that Dad moved Nanny into a nursing home. She lost weight and was confined to a wheelchair. Yet, even as her body shrunk and withered her spirit stayed strong. The nurses there loved her and her zest for life. Even her Italian temper brought smiles to them as they learned a few

"choice" words of Italian from her as well. Our whole family gathered together for her 90th birthday in the nursing home dining room. It was a wonderful celebration of her life and the love we all had for her.

Shortly after that birthday, however, life gave her the toughest challenge of all as age and illness started to take her mind from her too. The Dementia grew worse and worse over the last few years of her life. At times when I visited her she didn't know who I was. It was heartbreaking to see her this way. She spoke less and less and stayed in her bed more and more.

Sometimes all I could do was just sit by her bed and hold her hand.

During one of these visits I was holding her hand while she slept and remembering the person she used to be. My soul was in mourning that life could take everything from her like this. At that moment she awoke. Her eyes gazed up at me and I could tell she didn't recognize me. She looked down at my hand holding hers and instead of pulling hers away, she smiled at me. Then she closed her eyes and went peacefully back to sleep. I could see then that even though her mind didn't remember me, her spirit still remembered love and that was enough.

In the end this life takes away everything we have except our love. Our love can never be taken away. It can never be destroyed. It can never be forgotten. Our love is eternal. It makes us one with God. It lives in us all through this life and it lives on into the next. It was my Nanny's love that made her the special soul she was. And it is your love that makes you the special soul you are. Always remember to love then. It is who you are. It is what you are meant for. It is what life is all about.

Then she closed her eyes and went peacefully back to sleep. I could see then that even though her mind didn't remember me, her spirit still remembered love and that was enough.

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1Corinthians 13:2* And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity,(Love) I am nothing.

=====

~ ~ Author Unknown ~ ~

A mother asked this President... 'Why did my son have to die in Iraq ?'

A mother asked this President.. 'Why did my son have to die in Saudi Arabia ?'

A mother asked this President... 'Why did my son have to die in Kuwait ?'

Another mother asked this President... 'Why did my son have to die in Vietnam ?'

Another mother asked this President... 'Why did my son have to die in Korea ?'

Another mother asked this President... 'Why did my son have to die on Iwo Jima ?'

Another mother asked this President... 'Why did my son have to die on a battlefield in France ?'

Yet another mother asked this President... 'Why did my son have to die at Gettysburg ?'

And yet another mother asked this President... 'Why did my son have to die on a frozen field

near Valley Forge ?'

Then long, long ago, a mother asked..

'Heavenly Father... why did my Son have to die on a cross outside of Jerusalem ?'

The answer is always the same... 'So that others may live and dwell in peace, happiness, and

freedom.'

This was emailed to me with no author. I thought the magnitude and the simplicity were awesome

If you are not willing to stand BEHIND our troops, please, please feel free to stand in front of them....

Freedom is not free

Jesus died on the Cross - so we can have the freedom of choosing Heaven

Our soldiers died - so we can choose the freedom to serve Jesus

=====

The Cloud ~Spencer January

It was a morning in early March, 1945, a clear and sunny day. I was 24 years old and a member of the U.S. Army's 35th Infantry Division, 137th Infantry Company I.

Along with several other companies of American troops, we were making our way through dense woods, towards the Rhine River in the German Rhineland. Our objective was to reach and take the town of Ossenberg, where a factory was producing gunpowder and other products for use in the war.

For hours we had pressed through an unrelenting thicket. Shortly after midday word was passed that there was a clearing ahead. At last, we thought, the going would be easier. but then we approached a large stone house, behind which huddled a handful of wounded, bleeding soldiers who had tried to cross the clearing and failed.

Before us stretched at least 200 yards of open ground, bordered on the far side by more thick woods. As the first of us appeared on the edge of the clearing there was an angry rat-tat-tat and a ferocious volley of bullets sent soil spinning as far as we could see. Three nests of German machine guns, spaced 50 yards apart and protected by the crest of a small hill to the left, were firing across the field. As we got our bearings it was determined that the machine guns were so well placed that our weapons couldn't reach them. To cross that field meant suicide. Yet, we had no choice. The Germans had blockaded every other route into the town. In order to move on and secure a victory, we had to move forward.

I slumped against a tree, appalled at the grim situation. I thought of home, of my wife and my 5-month old son. I had kissed him good-bye just after he was born. I thought that I might never see my family again, and the possibility was overwhelming.

I dropped to my knees. "God," I pleaded desperately, "You've got to do something. Please do something."

Moments later the order was given to advance. Grasping my M-1 rifle, I go to my feet and started forward. After reaching the edge of the clearing I took a deep breath. But just before I stepped out from cover, I glanced to the left.

I stopped and stared in amazement. A white cloud - a long fluffy white cloud - had appeared out of nowhere. It dropped from over the trees and covered the area. The Germans' line of fire was obscured by the thick foggy mist. All of us bolted into the clearing and raced for our lives. The only sounds were of combat boots thudding against the soft earth as men dashed into the clearing, scrambling to reach the safety of the other side before the mist lifted. With each step the woods opposite came closer and closer. I was almost across! My pulse pounding in my ears, I lunged into the thicket and threw myself behind a tree.

I turned and watched as other soldiers following me dove frantically into the woods, some carrying and dragging the wounded. This has to be God's doing, I thought. The instant the last man reached safety, the cloud vanished! The day was again bright and clear.

The enemy, apparently thinking we were still pinned down behind the stone house on the other side, must have radioed their artillery. Minutes later the building was blown to bits but our company was safe and we quickly moved on.

We reached Ossenberg and went on to secure more areas for the Allies. But the image of that cloud was never far from my mind. I had seen the sort of smoke screens that were sometimes set off to obscure troop activity in such situations. That cloud had been different. It had appeared out of nowhere and saved our lives.

Two weeks later, as we bivouacked in eastern Germany, a letter arrived from my mother back in Dallas. I tore open the envelope eagerly. The letter contained words that sent a shiver down my spine. "You remember Mrs. Tankersly from our church?" my mother wrote.

Who could forget her? I smiled. Everybody called Mrs. Tankersly the prayer warrior.

"Well," continued Mom, "Mrs. Tankersly telephoned me one morning from the defense plant where she works. She said the Lord had awakened her the night before at one o'clock and told her, 'Spencer January is in terrible trouble. Get up now and pray for him!'"

My mother went on to explain that Mrs. Tankersly had interceded for me in prayer until six o'clock the next morning, when she had to go to her job. "She told me the last thing she prayed before getting off her knees was this "Lord, whatever danger Spencer is in, just cover him with a cloud!"

I sat there for a long time holding the letter in my trembling hand. My mind raced, quickly calculating. Yes, the hours Mrs. Tankersly was praying would indeed have corresponded to the time we were approaching the clearing. With a seven-hour time difference, her prayer for a cloud would have been uttered at one o'clock, the exact time Company I was getting ready to cross the clearing.

From that moment on, I intensified my prayer life. For the past 52 years I have gotten up early every morning to pray for others. I am convinced there is no substitute for the power of prayer and its ability to comfort and sustain others, even those facing the valley of the shadow of death.

Isaiah 65:24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

=====

Who wrote: "Precious Lord"?

AFTER READING THIS I THINK YOU WILL BE SURPRISED AT WHAT YOU LEARNED. I SURE DID NOT KNOW THIS. GUESS YOU DO LEARN SOMETHING NEW EACH DAY.

THE BIRTH OF THE HYMN "PRECIOUS LORD"

Back in 1932, I was a fairly new husband. My wife, Nettie and I were living in a little apartment on Chicago's south side. One hot August afternoon I had to go to St. Louis where I was to be the featured soloist at a large revival meeting. I didn't want to go; Nettie was in the last month of pregnancy with our first child, but a lot of people were expecting me in St. Louis . I kissed Nettie goodbye, clattered downstairs to our Model A and, in a fresh Lake Michigan breeze, chugged out of Chicago on Route 66.

However, outside the city, I discovered that in my anxiety at leaving, I had forgotten my music case. I wheeled around and headed back. I found Nettie sleeping peacefully. I hesitated by her bed; something was strongly telling me to stay But eager to get on my way, and not wanting to disturb Nettie, I shrugged off the feeling and quietly slipped out of the room with my music.

The next night, in the steaming St. Louis heat, the crowd called on me to sing again and again. When I finally sat down, a messenger boy ran up with a Western Union telegram. I ripped open the envelope....

Pasted on the yellow sheet were the words:

YOUR WIFE JUST DIED.

People were happily singing and clapping around me, but I could hardly keep from crying out. I rushed to a phone and called home. All I could hear on the other end was "Nettie is dead. Nettie is dead."

When I got back, I learned that Nettie had given birth to a boy. I swung between grief and joy. Yet that same night, the baby died. I buried Nettie and our little boy together, in the same casket. Then I fell apart. For days I closeted myself. I felt that God had done me an injustice. I didn't want to serve Him anymore or write gospel songs I just wanted to go back to that jazz world I once knew so well. But then, as I hunched alone in that dark apartment those first sad days, I thought back to the afternoon I went to St. Louis .

Something kept telling me to stay with Nettie. Was that something God? Oh, if I had paid more attention to Him that day, I would have stayed and been with Nettie when she died.

From that moment on I vowed to listen more closely to Him. But still I was lost in grief. Everyone was kind to me, especially one friend. The following Saturday evening he took me up to Maloney's Poro College , a neighborhood music school. It was quiet; the late evening sun crept through the curtained windows.

I sat down at the piano, and my hands began to browse over the keys. Something happened to me then. I felt at peace. I felt as though I could

reach out and touch God. I found myself playing a melody. Once in my head they just seemed to fall into place: 'Precious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand, I am tired, I am weak, I am worn, through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light, take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.'

The Lord gave me these words and melody, He also healed my spirit. I learned that when we are in our deepest grief, when we feel farthest from God, this is when He is closest, and when we are most open to His restoring power.

And so I go on living for God willingly and joyfully, until that day comes when He will take me and gently lead me home.

- - -Tommy Dorsey

For those too young to know who he is, Tommy Dorsey was a well-known band leader in the 1930's and 40's.

Did you know that Tommy Dorsey wrote this song? I surely didn't. What a wonderful story of how God CAN heal the brokenhearted! Beautiful, isn't it?

Matthew 11:28* Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

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Fifth Grade Assignment

Wouldn't this be great if it was taught in every school.

A fifth grade teacher in a Christian school asked her class to look At TV commercials and see if they could use them in 20 ways To communicate ideas about God.

Here are some of the results: scroll down.

God is like.

BAYER ASPIRIN

He works miracles.

God is like.

A FORD

He's got a better idea..

God is like.

COKE

He's the real thing.

(This is great)

God is like.

HALLMARK CARDS

He cares enough to send His very best.

God is like.

TIDE

He gets the stains out others leave behind. ...

God is like.

GENERAL ELECTRIC

He brings good things to life.

God is like.

WAL-MART

He has everything.

God is like.

GENERAL ELECTRIC

He brings good things to life.

God is like.

WAL-MART

He has everything.

God is like.

ALKA-SELTZER

Try Him, you'll like Him

God is like.

SCOTCH TAPE

You can't see Him, but you know He's there.

God is like..

DELTA

He's ready when you are.

God is like.

ALLSTATE

You're in good hands with Him.

God is like.

VO-5 Hair Spray; He holds through all kinds of weather

God is like.

DIAL SOAP

**Aren't you glad you have Him? Don't you wish everybody did?
(that one is my favorite)**

God is like .

The U.S. POST OFFICE

Neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet nor ice will keep Him from

His appointed destination.

God is like.

Chevrolet.the heart beat of America

God is like

Maxwell House.

Good to the very last drop

God is like.

His appointed destination.

God is like.

Chevrolet.the heart beat of America

God is like

Maxwell House.

Good to the very last drop

God is like.

B o u n t y

He is the quicker picker upper. . Can handle the tough jobs. ..

And He won't fall apart on you

2Timothy 3:15* *And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

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From: Burning Bush Christian Crusades <bushbnr@telusplanet.net>

Date: February 22, 2014 9:05:40 PM MST

Subject: Feb/Specials

A Quarter for Jesus

Several years ago, a preacher from out-of-state accepted a call to a church in Houston , Texas . Some weeks after he arrived, he had an occasion to ride the bus from his home to the downtown area. When he sat down, he discovered that the driver had accidentally given him a quarter too much change.. As he considered what to do, he thought to himself, 'You'd better give the quarter back. It would be wrong to keep it.' Then he thought, 'Oh, forget it, it's only a quarter. Who would worry about this little amount? Anyway, the bus company gets too much fare; they will never miss it. Accept it as a 'gift from God' and keep quiet.'

When his stop came, he paused momentarily at the door, and then he handed the quarter to the driver and said, 'Here, you gave me too much change ..'

The driver, with a smile, replied, 'Aren't you the new preacher in town?'

'Yes' he replied.

'Well, I have been thinking a lot lately about going somewhere to worship. I just wanted to see what you would do if I gave you too much change. I'll see you at church on Sunday.'

When the preacher stepped off of the bus, he literally grabbed the nearest light pole, held on, and said, 'Oh God, I almost sold your Son for a quarter.' Our lives are the only Bible some people will ever read. This is a really scary

example of how much people watch us as Christians, and will put us to the test! Always be on guard -- and remember -- You carry the name of Christ on your shoulders when you call yourself 'Christian.'

Watch your thoughts ; they become words.

Watch your words; they become actions.

Watch your actions; they become habits..

Watch your habits; they become character.

Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.

Being a Christian is a whole lot like being on Candid Camera. When you least expect it, expect it!

2Corinthians 8:21* Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

=====
God's Wife

An Eye Witness Account from New York City on a cold day in December some years ago:

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God's Wife

An Eye Witness Account from New York City on a cold day in December some years ago:

A little boy of about 10 years old was standing before a shoe store on the roadway, barefooted, peering through the window and shivering with cold. A lady approached the boy and said, "My little fellow, why are you looking so earnestly in that window?"

"I was asking God to give me a pair of shoes," was the boy's reply. The lady took him by the hand and went into the store and asked the clerk to get half a dozen pairs of socks for the boy. She then asked if he could give her a basin of water and a towel. He quickly brought them to her.

She took the little fellow to the back part of the store and, removing her gloves, knelt down, washed his little feet, and dried them with a towel. By this time, the clerk had returned with the socks. Placing a pair upon the boy's feet, she purchased him a pair of shoes. She tied up the remaining pairs of socks and gave them to him. She patted him on the head and said, "No doubt, my little fellow, you feel more comfortable now?"

As she turned to go, the astonished lad caught her by the hand and looking up in her face, with tears in his eyes, answered the question with these words: "Are you God's Wife?"

Matthew 21:22* And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

=====
Isn't It Funny...

Funny how a \$20.00 bill looks so big when you pay your tiths, but so small when you take it to the mall.

Funny how big an hour serving God looks and how small 60 minutes are when spent watching television, playing sports, sleeping or taking a lunch break.

Funny how long a couple of hours spent at church are but how short they are when watching a good movie.

Funny how we get thrilled when a football game goes into overtime, but we complain when a sermon is longer than the regular time.

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Funny how long a couple of hours spent at church are but how short they are when watching a good movie.

Funny how we get thrilled when a football game goes into overtime, but we complain when a sermon is longer than the regular time.

Funny how laborious it is to read a chapter in the Bible and how easy it is to read 200-300 pages of a best selling novel.

Funny how we believe what newspapers say, but question what the Bible says.

Funny how people scramble to get a front seat at a concert, but scramble to get a back seat at the church service.

Funny how we cannot fit a gospel meeting into our schedule with our yearly planner but we can schedule for other events at a moment's notice.

Funny how we look forward to that big date on Friday night, but complain about getting up for church on Sunday morning.

Funny how we are rarely late to work, but always late to church.

Funny how we call God our Father and Jesus our brother, but find it hard to introduce them to our family.

Funny how small our sins seem, but how big their sins are.

Funny how we demand justice for others, but expect mercy from God.

Funny how much difficulty some have learning the gospel well enough to tell others, but how simple it is to understand and explain the latest gossip about someone else.

Funny how we can't think of anything to say

when we pray, but don't have any difficulty thinking of things to talk about to a friend.
Funny how we are so quick to take directions
Funny how much difficulty some have learning the gospel well enough to tell others, but how simple it is to understand and explain the latest gossip about someone else.

Funny how we can't think of anything to say when we pray, but don't have any difficulty thinking of things to talk about to a friend.
Funny how we are so quick to take directions from a total stranger when we are lost, but are hesitant to take God's direction for our lives.

Funny how so many church goers sing "Standing on the promises" but all they do is sit on the premises.
Funny how people want God to answer their prayers, but refuse to listen to His counsel.
Funny how we sing about heaven, but live only for today.

Funny how people think they are going to Heaven but don't think there is a Hell.
Funny how it is okay to blame God for evil and suffering in the world, but it is not necessary to thank Him for what is good and pleasant.

Funny how when something goes wrong, we cry, "Lord, why me?" but when something goes right, we think, "Hey, it must be me!"

Mark 4:24* And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.

=====

An Interesting and very thoughtful message for all to read.
A successful businessman was growing old and knew it was time to choose a successor to take over the business. Instead of choosing one of his Directors or his children, he decided to do something different. He called all the young executives in his company together.
He said, "It is time for me to step down and choose the next CEO. I have decided to choose one of you. "The young executives were Shocked, but the boss continued. "I am going to give each one of you a SEED today
A successful businessman was growing old and knew it was time to choose a successor to take over the business. Instead of choosing one of his Directors or his children, he decided to do something different. He called all the young executives in his company together.
He said, "It is time for me to step down and choose the next CEO. I have

decided to choose one of you. "The young executives were Shocked, but the boss continued. "I am going to give each one of you a SEED today - one very special SEED. I want you to plant the seed, water it, and come back here one year from today with what you have grown from the seed I have given you. I will then judge the plants that you bring, and the one, I choose will be the next CEO."

One man, named Jim, was there that day and he, like the others, received a seed. He went home and excitedly, told his wife the story. She helped him get a pot, soil and compost and he planted the seed.

Everyday, he would water it and watch to see if it had grown. After about three weeks, some of the other executives began to talk about their seeds and the plants that were beginning to grow.

Jim kept checking his seed, but nothing ever grew

Three weeks, four weeks, five weeks went by, still nothing.

By now, others were talking about their plants,

but Jim didn't have a plant and he felt like a failure.

Six months went by -- still nothing in Jim's pot. He just knew he had killed his seed. Everyone else had trees and tall plants, but he had nothing. Jim didn't say anything to his colleagues, however, he just kept watering and fertilizing the soil - He so wanted the seed to grow.

A year finally went by and all the young executives of the company brought their plants to the CEO for inspection.

Jim told his wife that he wasn't going to take an empty pot. But she asked him to be honest about what happened. Jim felt sick to his stomach, it was going to be the most embarrassing moment of his life, but he knew his wife was right. He took his empty pot to the board room.

When Jim arrived, he was amazed at the variety of plants grown by the other executives. They were beautiful - in all shapes and sizes. Jim put his empty pot on the floor and many of his colleagues laughed, a few felt sorry for him!

When the CEO arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted his young executives.

Jim just tried to hide in the back. "My, what great plants, trees and flowers you have grown," said the CEO. "Today one of you will be appointed the next CEO!"

When Jim arrived, he was amazed at the variety of plants grown by the other executives. They were beautiful - in all shapes and sizes. Jim put his empty pot on the floor and many of his colleagues laughed, a few felt sorry for him!

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Jim just tried to hide in the back. "My, what great plants, trees and flowers you have grown," said the CEO. "Today one of you will be appointed the next CEO!"

All of a sudden, the CEO spotted Jim at the back of the room with his empty pot. He ordered the Financial Director to bring him to the front. Jim was terrified.. He thought, "The CEO knows I'm a failure! Maybe he will have me fired!"

When Jim got to the front, the CEO asked him what had happened to his seed,

Jim told him the story.

The CEO asked everyone to sit down except Jim. He looked at Jim, and then announced to the young executives, "Behold your next Chief Executive Officer!

His name is "Jim!" Jim couldn't believe it. Jim couldn't even grow his seed.

"How could he be the new CEO?" the others said.

Then the CEO said, "One year ago today, I gave everyone in this room a seed. I told you to take the seed, plant it, water it, and bring it back to me today. But I gave you all boiled seeds; they were dead - it was not possible for them to grow.

All of you, except Jim, have brought me trees and plants and flowers. When you found that the seed would not grow, you substituted another seed for the one I gave you. Jim was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my seed in it. Therefore, he is the one who will be the new Chief Executive Officer!"

- * If you plant honesty, you will reap trust
- * If you plant goodness, you will reap friends
- * If you plant humility, you will reap greatness
- * If you plant perseverance, you will reap contentment
- * If you plant consideration, you will reap perspective
- * If you plant hard work, you will reap success
- * If you plant forgiveness, you will reap reconciliation

So, be careful what you plant now;
it will determine what you will reap later.

Think about this for a minute.

- * If you plant goodness, you will reap friends
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So, be careful what you plant now;
it will determine what you will reap later.

Think about this for a minute.

If I happened to show up on your door step crying, would you care?

If I called you and asked you to pick me up
because something happened, would you come?

If I had one day left to live my life, would you be part of that last day?

If I needed a shoulder to cry on, would you give me yours?

This is a test to see who your real
friends are or if you are just someone to talk to you when they are
bored.

Do you know what the relationship is between your two eyes?

They blink together,
they move together,
they cry together,

they see things together,
and they sleep together,
but they never see each other;
that's what friendship is.

Your aspiration is your motivation, your
motivation is your belief ,
your belief is your peace,
your peace is your target,
your target is heaven.

**Galatians 6:7* Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever
a man soweth, that shall he also reap**

God Said...

If you never felt pain,
Then how would you know that I'm a Healer?
If you never went through difficulties,
Then how would you know that I'm a Deliverer?
If you never had a trial,
Then how could you call yourself an over-comer?
If you never felt sadness,
Then how would you know that I'm a Comforter?
If you never made a mistake,
Then how would you know that I'm forgiving?
If you knew all,
Then how would you know that I will answer your questions?
If you never were in trouble,
Then how would you know that I will come to your rescue?
If you never were broken,
Then how would know that I can make you whole?
If you never had a problem,
Then how would you know that I can solve them?
If I gave you all things,
Then how would you appreciate them?
If I never corrected you,
Then how would you know that I love you?
If you had all power,
Then how would you learn to depend on me?
If your life was perfect,
Then what would you need Me for?

**James 2:26* For as the body without the spirit is dead,
so faith without works is dead also.**

=====

My friend Kevin and I are volunteers at a national cemetery in Oklahoma and
put in a few days a month in a 'slightly larger' uniform.
Today had been a long, long day and I just wanted to get the day over with
and go down to Smokey's and have a cold one. Sneaking a look at my watch,
I saw the time, 16:55. Five minutes to go before the cemetery gates are
closed for the day. Full dress was hot in the August sun. Oklahoma
summertime was as bad as ever--the heat and humidity at the same level--

both too high.

I saw the car pull into the drive, '69 or '70 model Cadillac Deville, looked factory-new. It pulled into the parking lot at a snail's pace. An old woman got out so slow I thought she was paralyzed; she had a cane and a sheaf of flowers--about four or five bunches as best I could tell.

I couldn't help myself. The thought came unwanted, and left a slightly bitter taste: 'She's going to spend an hour, and for this old soldier, my hip hurts like hell and I'm ready to get out of here right now!' But for this day, my duty was to assist anyone coming in.

Kevin would lock the 'In' gate and if I could hurry the old biddy along, we might make it to Smokey's in time.

I broke post attention. My hip made gritty noises when I took the first step and the pain went up a notch. I must have made a real military sight: middleaged man with a small pot gut and half a limp, in marine full-dress uniform, which had lost its razor crease about thirty minutes after I began the watch at the cemetery.

I stopped in front of her, halfway up the walk. She looked up at me with an old woman's squint.

'Ma'am, may I assist you in any way? '

She took long enough to answer.

'Yes, son. Can you carry these flowers? I seem to be moving a tad slow these days. '

'My pleasure, ma'am. ' (Well, it wasn't too much of a lie.)

She looked again. ' Marine, where were you stationed? '

'Vietnam, ma'am. Ground-pounder. '69 to '71. '

She looked at me closer. ' Wounded in action, I see. Well done, Marine. I'll be as quick as I can. '

I lied a little bigger: ' No hurry, ma'am. '

She smiled and winked at me. ' Son, I'm 85-years-old and I can tell a lie from a long way off. Let's get this done. Might be the last time I can do this. My name's Joanne Wieserman, and I've a few Marines I'd like to see one more time. '

'Yes, ma'am. At your service. '

She headed for the World War I section, stopping at a stone. She picked one of the flower bunches out of my arm and laid it on top of the stone. She murmured something I couldn't quite make out. The name on the marble was Donald S. Davidson, USMC: France 1918 .

She turned away and made a straight line for the World War II section, stopping at one stone. I saw a tear slowly tracking its way down her cheek. She put a bunch on a stone; the name was Stephen X. Davidson, USMC, 1943 .

She went up the row a ways and laid another bunch on a stone, Stanley J. Wieserman, USMC, 1944 .

She paused for a second and more tears flowed. ' Two more, son, and we'll be done '

I almost didn't say anything, but, ' Yes, ma'am. Take your time. '

She looked confused. ' Where's the Vietnam section, son? I seem to have lost my way. '

I pointed with my chin. ' That way, ma'am. '

'Oh!' she chuckled quietly. ' Son, me and old age ain't too friendly. '

She headed down the walk I'd pointed at. She stopped at a couple of stones before she found the ones she wanted. She placed a bunch on Larry Wieserman, USMC, 1968 , and the last on Darrel Wieserman, USMC, 1970. She stood there and murmured a few words I still couldn't make out and more tears flowed.

'OK, son, I'm finished. Get me back to my car and you can go home. '

'Yes, ma'am. If I may ask, were those your kinfolk? '

She paused. ' Yes, Donald Davidson was my father, Stephen was my uncle, Stanley was my husband, Larry and Darrel were our sons. All killed in action, all Marines. '

She stopped. Whether she had finished, or couldn't finish, I don't know.

She made her way to her car, slowly and painfully. I waited for a polite distance to come between us and then double-timed it over to Kevin, waiting by the car.

'Get to the 'Out' gate quick. I have something I've got to do. '

Kevin started to say something, but saw the look I gave him. He broke the rules to get us there down the service road fast. We beat her. She hadn't made it around the rotunda yet.

'Kevin, stand at attention next to the gatepost. Follow my lead.'

I humped it across the drive to the other post. When the Cadillac came pattering around from the hedges and began the short straight traverse to the gate, I called in my best gunny's voice:

'TeheHut! Present Haaaarms! '

I have to hand it to Kevin; he never blinked an eye--full dress attention and a salute that would make his DI proud.

She drove through that gate with two old worn-out soldiers giving her a sendoff she deserved, for service rendered to her country, and for knowing duty, honor and sacrifice far beyond the realm of most. I am not sure, but I think I saw a salute returned from that Cadillac.

Instead of 'The End' , just think of 'Taps'.

As a final thought on my part, let me share a favorite prayer:

'Lord, keep our servicemen and women safe, whether they serve at home or overseas. Hold them in your loving hands and protect them as they protect us.'

Let's all keep those currently serving and those who have gone before in our thoughts. They are the reason for the many freedoms we enjoy.

'In God We Trust.'

Sorry about your monitor; it made mine blurry too!

If we ever forget that we're one nation under God, then we will be a nation gone under!

**Deuteronomy 32:43 Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will
avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his
adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.**

=====

WHAT HAPPENS IN HEAVEN WHEN WE PRAY?

This is one of the nicest e-mails I've seen:

I dreamed that I went to Heaven and an angel was showing me around. We

walked side-by-side inside a large workroom filled with angels. My angel guide stopped in front of the first section and said, "This is the Receiving Section. Here, all petitions to God said in prayer are received. I looked around in this area, and it was terribly busy with so many angels sorting out petitions written on voluminous paper sheets and scraps from people all over the world.

Then we moved on down a long corridor until we reached the second section. The angel then said to me, "This is the Packaging and Delivery Section. Here, the graces and blessings the people asked for are processed and delivered to the living persons who asked for them."

I noticed again how busy it was there. There were many angels working hard at that station, since so many blessings had been requested and were being packaged for delivery to Earth.

Finally at the farthest end of the long corridor we stopped at the door of a very small station. To my great surprise, only one angel was seated there, idly doing nothing. "This is the Acknowledgment Section, my angel friend quietly admitted to me. He seemed embarrassed." How is it there is no work going on here? "

"So sad," the angel sighed. "After people receive the blessings they asked for, very few send back an acknowledgment."

"How does one acknowledge God's blessings?" I asked.

"Simple," the angel answered. Just say, "Thank you, Lord."

"What blessings should they acknowledge?" I asked.

"If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep you are richer than 75% of this world."

"If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish, you are among the top 8% of the worlds wealthy."

"And if you get this on your own computer, you are part of the 1% in the world who has that opportunity."

"If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than many who will not even survive this day."

"If you have never experienced the fear in battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation ... You are ahead of 700 million people in the world."

"If you can attend a church without fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death you are envied by, and more blessed than three billion people in the world."

"If your parents are still alive and still married ... you are very rare."

"If you can hold your head up and smile, you are not the norm; you're unique to all those in doubt and despair....."

Ok, what now? How can I start?

If you can read this message, you just received a double blessing in that someone was thinking of you as very special and you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world who cannot read at all.

Have a great day and count your blessings.

ATTN: Acknowledge Department –

"Thank you Lord for giving me the ability to share this message and for giving me so many wonderful people with whom to share it."

I thank God for everything, especially all my family and friends.

Proverbs 17:22 A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.

=====

I Refuse!

I refuse to be discouraged, To be sad, or to cry;
I refuse to be downhearted, and here's the reason why:
I have a God who's mighty, Who's sovereign and supreme;
I have a God who loves me, and I am on His team.
He is all-wise and powerful. Jesus is His name;
Though everything is changeable, My God remains the same.
My God knows all that's happening; Beginning to the end;
His presence is my comfort; He is my dearest Friend.
When sickness comes to weaken me, To bring my head down low,
I call upon my mighty God; Into His arms I go.
When circumstances threaten to rob me of my peace;
He draws me close unto His breast, Where all my strivings cease.
When my heart melts within me, and weakness takes control;
He gathers me into His arms, He soothes my heart and soul.
The great "I AM" is with me. My life is in His hand.
The "Son of the Lord" is my hope. It's in His strength I stand.
I refuse to be defeated. My eyes are on my God;
He has promised to be with me, As through this life I trod.
I'm looking past all my circumstances, To Heaven's throne above;
My prayers have reached the heart of God I'm resting in His love.
I give God thanks in everything. My eyes are on His face;
The battle's His, the victory mine; He'll help me win the race.

John 15:5* I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

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