



**Think Abouts 09**

**Condensed and annotated  
by  
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### Introduction

Welcome to this collection, one of several in a series. . .

Mostly about life, and living, but some on Nursing, Religion, etc., no jokes here though. These again are mostly from the email circuit, passed around until their origins are lost in the paperless trail!

I hope that they may cause you to pause and consider them as they did for me.

If I feel strongly enough about any essay my comments will follow it!

In thoughts we live,



Pray

Sally jumped up as soon as she saw the surgeon come out of the operating room. She said: "How is my little boy? Is he going to be O.K.? When can I see him?"

The surgeon said, "I'm sorry, we did all we could."

Sally said, "Why do little children get cancer, doesn't GOD care anymore?

GOD, where were you when my son needed you?"

The surgeon said, "One of the nurses will be out in a few minutes to let you spend time with your son's remains before it's transported to the university".

Sally asked that the nurse stay with her while she said good-bye to her son. Sally ran her fingers through his thick red curly hair. The nurse said, "Would you like a lock of his hair?" Sally nodded yes. The nurse cut a lock of his hair and put it in a plastic bag and handed it to Sally.

Sally said, "It was Jimmy's idea to give his body to the university for study. He said it might help somebody else, and that is what he wanted. I said no at first, but Jimmy said, 'Mom, I won't be using it after I die, maybe it will help some other little boy to be able to spend one more day with his mother.' Sally said, "My Jimmy had a heart of gold, always thinking of someone else and always wanting to help others if he could."

Sally walked out of the Children's Hospital for the last time now after spending most of the last six months there. She set the bag with Jimmy's things in it on the seat beside her in the car. The drive home was hard and it was even harder to go into an empty house.

She took the bag to Jimmy's room and started placing the model cars and things back in his room exactly where he always kept them.

She lay down across his bed and cried herself to sleep holding his pillow.

Sally woke up about midnight and lying beside her on the bed, was a letter folded up. She opened the letter. It said:

Dear Mom,

I know you're going to miss me, but don't think that I will ever forget you or stop loving you because I'm not around to say I LOVE YOU. I'll think of you every day Mom and I'll love you even more each day.

Someday we will see each other again. If you want to adopt a little boy so you won't be so lonely, he can have my room and my old stuff to play with. If you decide to get a girl instead, she probably wouldn't like the same things as us boys do, so you will have to buy her dolls and stuff girls like.





Don't be sad when you think about me, this is really a great place. Grandma and Grandpa met me as soon as I got here and showed me around some, but it will take a long time to see everything here. The angels are so friendly, and I love to watch them fly. Jesus doesn't look like any of the pictures I saw of Him but I knew it was Him as soon as I saw Him.

Jesus took me to see GOD! And guess what Mom? I got to sit on GOD'S knee and talk to Him like I was somebody important. I told GOD that I wanted to write you a letter and tell you good-bye and everything, but I knew that wasn't allowed. God handed me some paper and His own personal pen to write you this letter with. I think Gabriel is the name of the angel that is going to drop this letter off to you. God said for me to give you the answer to one of the questions you asked Him about: "Where was He when I needed him?"

God said, "The same place He was when Jesus was on the cross." He was right there, as He always is with all His children. Tonight I get to sit at the table with Jesus for supper. I'm sure the food will be great.

I almost forgot to let you know. Now don't hurt anymore, the cancer is all gone. I'm glad because I couldn't stand that pain anymore and God couldn't stand to see me suffer the pain either, so He sent The Angel of Mercy to get me. The

Angel said I was Special Delivery!

Signed with love from: God & Jesus & Me

**JUST TALK TO HIM. ENJOY YOUR DAY!**

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.  
Proverbs 3:5-6

Prayer to NYC

When tomorrow starts without me  
And I'm not there to see  
If the sun should rise and find your eyes  
All filled with tears for me  
I wish so much you wouldn't cry  
The way you did today  
While thinking of the many things  
We didn't get to say

I know how much you love me  
As much as I love you  
And each time that you think of me  
I know you'll miss me too



But when tomorrow starts without me  
 Please try to understand  
 That an angel came and called my name  
 And took me by the hand  
 And said my place was ready  
 In heaven far above  
 And that I'd have to leave behind  
 All those I dearly love

But when I walked through heaven's gates  
 I felt so much at home  
 When God looked down and smiled at me  
 From His great golden throne  
 He said "This is eternity  
 And all I've promised you"  
 Today for life on earth is past  
 But here it starts anew  
 I promise no tomorrow  
 For today will always last  
 And since each day's the same way  
 There's no longing for the past  
 So when tomorrow starts without me  
 Don't think we're far apart  
 For every time you think of me  
 I'm right here in your heart

#### Quote of the Day

Each second we live in a new and unique moment of the universe, a moment that never was before and will never be again. And what do we teach our children in school? We teach them that two and two make four, and that Paris is the capital of France. When will we also teach them what they are? You should say to each of them: Do you know what you are? You are unique. In all the world there is no other child exactly like you. In the millions of years that have passed there has never been a child like you. And look at your body-what a wonder it is! Your legs, your arms, your cunning fingers, the way you move! You may be a

Shakespeare, a Michelangelo, a Beethoven. You have the capacity for anything. Yes, you are a marvel.

— Pablo Casals

#### Quote of the Week

When our eyes see our hands doing the work of our hearts, the circle of Creation is completed inside us, the doors of our souls fly open and love steps forth to heal everything in sight.

—Michael Bridge

Quote 101

Many people will walk in and out of your life,  
but only true friends will leave footprints in your heart.

To handle yourself, use your head,  
To handle others, use your heart.

Anger is only one letter short of danger.

Great minds discuss ideas;  
Average minds discuss events;  
Small minds discuss people.

God Gives every bird it's food,  
but He does not throw it into it's nest.

He who loses money, loses much;  
He who loses a friend, loses more;  
He who loses faith, loses all.

Beautiful young people are acts of nature,  
but beautiful old people are works of art.

Learn from the mistakes of others.  
You can't live long enough to make them all yourself.

The tongue weighs practically nothing,  
but so few people can hold it.

Friends, you and me..you brought another friend...  
And then there were 3....we started our group....  
Our circle of friends.....and like that circle.....  
There is no beginning.....there is no end.

“Be what you are. This is the first step toward becoming better than you are.”—Julius Charles Hare

“You are all you will ever have for certain.”—June Havoc

“Don't take anyone else's definition of success as your own. (This is easier said than done.)”—Jacqueline Briskin

Don't let your hopes run wild:

“He that lives upon hope will die fasting.”—Benjamin Franklin

“Hope is a good breakfast, but it is a bad supper.”—Francis Bacon





“Hope is the most treacherous of human fancies.”—James Fenimore Cooper

### SHAME ON YOU!!!

**IT'S A SHAME YOU CAN'T TELL A STORY, OR WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS, WITHOUT USING SWEAR WORDS. I WAS ONCE TOLD THAT THE REASON PEOPLE SWEAR IS BECAUSE THEY CAN'T THINK OF A BETTER WORD TO EXPRESS THEIR THOUGHTS.**

This is an area that has been a difference for me: I don't swear! At least not that others can hear, nor recognize as swearing. My equivalent of “G\*\* DA\*\* SH\*\*” is a deep quick intake of a breath. I was raised or assimilated that cussing was undignified, beneath an intelligent human being. That it is lowering yourself.

I don't swear or cuss, and I feel that carries over into a certain mind set, which controls your view of the world and people, alters your reality.

Geeeeeez! Damn! are about the strongest I use.

### RIGHT NOW:

**Right now:**

somebody is very proud of you.  
 somebody is thinking of you.  
 somebody is caring about you.  
 somebody misses you.  
 somebody wants to talk to you.  
 somebody wants to be with you.  
 somebody hopes you are not in trouble.  
 somebody is thankful for the support you have provided.  
 somebody wants to hold your hand.  
 somebody hopes everything turns out all right.  
 somebody wants you to be happy.  
 somebody want you to find him/her.  
 somebody wants to give you a gift.  
 somebody wants to hug you.  
 somebody thinks you ARE a gift.  
 somebody admires your strength.  
 somebody is thinking of you and smiling.  
 somebody wants to protect you.  
 somebody can't wait to see you.  
 somebody loves you for who you are.  
 somebody treasures your spirit.  
 somebody is glad that you are their friend.  
 somebody want to get to know you better.  
 somebody wants to be near you.  
 somebody wants you to know they are there for you.  
 somebody would do anything for you.





somebody wants to share their dreams with you.  
 somebody is alive because of you  
 somebody needs your support.  
 somebody will cry when they read this.  
 somebody needs you to have faith in them.  
 somebody trusts you.  
 somebody hears a song that reminds them of you.  
**SOMEBODY NEEDS YOU TO SEND THIS TO THEM**

### Roses For Her

Red roses were her favorites.  
 And every year her husband sent them, tied with pretty bows.  
 The year he died, the roses were delivered to her door.  
 The card said, "Be my Valentine," like all the years before.

Each year he sent her roses, and the note would always say,  
 "I love you even more this year, than last year on this day."  
 "My love for you will always grow, with every passing year."  
 She knew this was the last time that the roses would appear.

She thought, he ordered roses in advance before this day.  
 Her loving husband did not know, that he would pass away.  
 He always liked to do things early, way before the time.  
 Then, if he got too busy, everything would work out fine.

She trimmed the stems, and placed them in a very special vase.  
 Then, sat the vase beside the portrait of his smiling face.  
 She would sit for hours, in her husband's favorite chair.  
 While staring at his picture, and the roses sitting there.

A year went by, and it was hard to live without her mate.  
 With loneliness and solitude, that had become her fate.  
 Then, the very hour, as on Valentines before,  
 The doorbell rang, and there were roses, sitting by her door.

She brought the roses in, and then just looked at them in shock.  
 Then, went to get the telephone, to call the florist shop.  
 The owner answered, and she asked him, if he would explain,  
 Why would someone do this to her, causing her such pain?

"I know your husband passed away, more than a year ago,"  
 The owner said, "I knew you'd call, and you would want to know."  
 "The flowers you received today, were paid for in advance."  
 "Your husband always planned ahead, he left nothing to chance."

"There is a standing order, that I have on file down here,  
 And he has paid, well in advance, you'll get them every year.



There also is another thing, that I think you should know,  
He wrote a special little card...he did this years ago.”

“Then, should ever, I find out that he’s no longer here,  
That’s the card...that should be sent, to you the following year.”  
She thanked him and hung up the phone, her tears now flowing hard.  
Her fingers shaking, as she slowly reached to get the card.

Inside the card, she saw that he had written her a note.  
Then, as she stared in total silence, this is what he wrote...  
“Hello my love, I know it’s been a year since I’ve been gone,  
I hope it hasn’t been too hard for you to overcome.”

“I know it must be lonely, and the pain is very real.  
For if it was the other way, I know how I would feel.  
The love we shared made everything so beautiful in life.  
I loved you more than words can say, you were the perfect wife.”

“You were my friend and lover, you fulfilled my every need.  
I know it’s only been a year, but please try not to grieve.  
I want you to be happy, even when you shed your tears.  
That is why the roses will be sent to you for years.”

“When you get these roses, think of all the happiness,  
That we had together, and how both of us were blessed.  
I have always loved you and I know I always will.  
But, my love, you must go on, you have some living still.”

“Please...try to find happiness, while living out your days.  
I know it is not easy, but I hope you find some ways.  
The roses will come every year, and they will only stop,  
When your door’s not answered, when the florist stops to knock.”

“He will come five times that day, in case you have gone out.  
But after his last visit, he will know without a doubt,  
To take the roses to the place, where I’ve instructed him,  
And place the roses where we are.....together once again.”

### Scars

Guess this is the reason I hold onto things so much, GOD is behind me giving me the strength.

Some years ago on a hot summer day in south Florida. A little boy decided to go for a swim in the old swimming hole behind his house. In a hurry to dive into the cool water, he ran out the back door, Leaving behind shoes, socks, and shirt as he went. He flew into the water, not realizing that as he swam toward the middle of the lake, an alligator was swimming toward the shore.



His mother in the house was looking out the window saw the two as they got closer and closer together. In utter fear, she ran toward the water, yelling to her son as loudly as she could. Hearing her voice, the little boy became alarmed and made a U-turn to swim to his mother. It was too late. Just as he reached her, the alligator reached him.

From the dock, the mother grabbed her little boy by the arms just as the alligator snatched his legs. That began an incredible tug-of-war between the two. The alligator was much stronger than the mother, but the mother was much too passionate to let go. A farmer happened to drive by, heard her screams, raced from his truck, took aim and shot the alligator.

Remarkably, after weeks and weeks in the hospital, the little boy survived.

His legs were extremely scarred by the vicious attack of the animal, and, on his arms, were deep scratches where his mother's fingernails dug into his flesh in her effort to hang on to the son she loved.

The newspaper reporter, who interviewed the boy after the trauma, asked if he would show him his scars. The boy lifted his pant legs. And then, with obvious pride, he said to the reporter, "But look at my arms. I have great scars on my arms, too. I have them because my Mom wouldn't let go."

You and I can identify with that little boy. We have scars, too. No, not from an alligator, or anything quite so dramatic. But the scars of a painful past, Some of those scars are unsightly and have caused us deep regret.

But, some wounds, my friend, are because God has refused to let go. In the midst of your struggle, He's been there holding on to you.

The Scripture teaches that God loves you. If you have Christ in your life, you have become a child of God. He wants to protect you and provide for you in every way. But sometimes we foolishly wade into dangerous situations.

The swimming hole of life is filled with peril - and we forget that the enemy is waiting to attack. That's when the tug-of-war begins - and if you have the scars of His love on your arms be very, very grateful.

He did not and will not - let you go.

If you see someone without a smile, stop .... and give them yours (-) God has blessed you, so that you can be a blessing to others.

You just never know where a person is in his/her life and what they are going through.



### SIMPLE FRIEND/REAL FRIEND

**Anyone can stand by you when you are right,  
but a friend will stand by you even when you are wrong...**

**A simple friend identifies himself when he calls.  
A real friend doesn't have to.**

**A simple friend opens a conversation with a full news bulletin on his life.  
A real friend says, "What's new with you?"**

**A simple friend thinks the problems you whine about are recent.  
A real friend says, "You've been whining about the same thing for 14 years.  
Get off your duff and do something about it."**

**A simple friend has never seen you cry.  
A real friend has shoulders soggy from your tears.**

**A simple friend doesn't know your parents' first names.  
A real friend has their phone numbers in his address book.**

**A simple friend brings a bottle of wine to your party.  
A real friend comes early to help you cook and stays late to help you clean.**

**A simple friend hates it when you call after he has gone to bed.  
A real friend asks you why you took so long to call.**

**A simple friend seeks to talk with you about your problems.  
A real friend seeks to help you with your problems.**

**A simple friend wonders about your romantic history.  
A real friend could blackmail you with it.**

**A simple friend, when visiting, acts like a guest.  
A real friend opens your refrigerator and helps himself.**

**A simple friend thinks the friendship is over when you have an argument.  
A real friend knows that it's not a friendship until after you've had a fight.**

**A simple friend expects you to always be there for them.  
A real friend expects to always be there for you!**

Six Steps

## 1. Be a No-limit Person starting now.

Don't just read this. Teach yourself: *"Everything that makes me feel inadequate results from **my perceptions** of what's out there."*

The difference between being a No-Limit Person and feeling frustrated, resentful, unhappy and neurotic is **not** because you have problems. We all have to deal with sickness, getting older, our children disappointing us. So just keep reminding yourself:

I CANNOT always control what goes on outside.  
I CAN always control what goes on inside.

## 2. Start making good choices.

Don't ever forget that you are the sum total of the *choices* you make. And stop making excuses for bad choices. Are you shy? Scared to get up in front of a group? Afraid to speak out? Do you get angry too much? Just remember:

Anything inside that immobilizes me, gets in my way, keeps me from my goals, is all MINE. I can throw it away IF I CHOOSE.

## 3. Take some risks and stop worrying.

And start listening to those inner signals that help you make the right choices---no matter what anyone thinks. The next time you get nervous about others' opinions, look them mentally in the eye and say:

What you think of me is none of my business. (This happens to be a book title - one of the greatest I've ever heard and also great advice - so start using it!)

## 4. Expect to stay healthy:

It's amazing how expectations affect not only your life but you health. You get a sniffle and say: "Oh, boy, here it comes. Tomorrow it'll be in my chest and the next day a fever; and I'll have to miss work. Or you can say:

I don't want this. I'll get some extra rest, keep active, not focus on this, just not let it get in my way.

You can set yourself up, to be sick, or you can CHOOSE to stay well.

## 5. Take charge of your feelings and regain control of your life.

People who panic or get depressed usually do so because they have lost control – they give up responsibility for how badly they feel. Because it's





easier to let others take charge of life and blame them for your troubles than to say:

“I created these feelings myself .”

6. Live this day as if it were your last.

A lot of people have bumper stickers that say, “This is the first day of the rest of your life. I prefer to think, “This is the last day of my life. And I am going to live it as if I didn’t have any more.”

Because the truth is, I don’t. And you don’t. The past is over and gone. The future is not guaranteed. We all know someone - our own age - who was killed in an accident, or dropped dead of a heart attack. So, if you get nothing else out of this, keep this one idea in your mind and:

STOP acting as if life is a rehearsal.

Their hard to follow, but worth it! My personal favorite is No. 6.

### Slow Dance

Have you ever watched kids?  
 On a merry-go-round?  
 Or listened to the rain?  
 Slapping on the ground?  
 Ever followed a butterfly’s erratic flight?  
 Or gazed at the sun into the fading night?  
 You better slow down.  
 Don’t dance so fast.  
 Time is short.  
 The music won’t last.  
 Do you run through each day  
 On the fly?  
 When you ask “How are you?”  
 Do you hear the reply?  
 When the day is done  
 Do you lie in your bed  
 With the next hundred chores  
 Running through your head?  
 You’d better slow down.  
 Don’t dance so fast.  
 Time is short.  
 The music won’t last.  
 Ever told your child,  
 We’ll do it tomorrow?  
 And in your haste,  
 Not see his sorrow?  
 Ever lost touch,



Let a good friendship die  
Cause you never had time  
To call and say, "Hi"?  
You'd better slow down.  
Don't dance so fast.  
Time is short.  
The music won't last.  
When you run so fast to get somewhere  
You miss half the fun of getting there.  
When you worry and hurry through your day,  
It is like an unopened gift....  
Thrown away.  
Life is not a race.  
Do take it slower  
Hear the music  
Before the song is over.

**SMILE!!!!**

She smiled at a sorrowful stranger.  
The smile seemed to make him feel better.  
He remembered past kindnesses of a friend  
And wrote him a thank you letter.  
The friend was so pleased with the thank you  
That he left a large tip after lunch.  
The waitress, surprised by the size of the tip,  
Bet the whole thing on a hunch.  
The next day she picked up her winnings,  
And gave part to a man on the street.  
The man on the street was grateful;  
For two days he'd had nothing to eat.  
After he finished his dinner,  
He left for his small dingy room.  
He didn't know at that moment  
that he might be facing his doom.  
On the way he picked up a shivering puppy  
And took him home to get warm.  
The puppy was very grateful  
To be in out of the storm.  
That night the house caught on fire.  
The puppy barked the alarm.  
He barked till he woke the whole household  
And saved everybody from harm.  
One of the boys that he rescued  
Grew up to be President.  
All this because of a simple smile  
That hadn't cost a cent.



## God's under the Bed

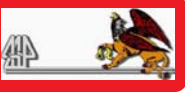
My brother Kevin thinks God lives under his bed. At least that's what I heard him say one night. He was praying out loud in his dark bedroom, and I stopped outside his closed door to listen. "Are you there, God?" He said. "Where are you? Oh, I see. Under the bed." I giggled softly and tiptoed off to my own room.

Kevin's unique perspectives are often a source of amusement. But that night something else lingered long after the humor. I realized for the first time the very different world Kevin lives in. He was born 30 years ago, mentally disabled as a result of difficulties during labor. Apart from his size (he's 6-foot-2), there are few ways in which he is an adult. He reasons and communicates with the capabilities of a 7-year-old, and he always will. He will probably always believe that God lives under his bed, that Santa Claus is the one who fills the space under our tree every Christmas, and that airplanes stay up in the sky because angels carry them.

I remember wondering if Kevin realizes he is different. Is he ever dissatisfied with his monotonous life? Up before dawn each day, off to work at a workshop for the disabled, home to walk our cocker spaniel, returning to eat his favorite macaroni-and-cheese for dinner, and later to bed. The only variation in the entire scheme are laundry days, when he hovers excitedly over the washing machine like a mother with her newborn child. He does not seem dissatisfied. He lopes out to the bus every morning at 7:05, eager for a day of simple work. He wrings his hands excitedly while the water boils on the stove before dinner, and he stays up late twice a week to gather our dirty laundry for his next day's laundry chores.

And Saturdays, oh, the bliss of Saturdays! That's the day my dad takes Kevin to the airport to have a soft drink, watch the planes land, and speculate loudly on the destination of each passenger inside. "That one's goin' to Chi-car-go!" Kevin shouts as he claps his hands. His anticipation is so great he can hardly sleep on Friday nights. I don't think Kevin knows anything exists outside his world of daily rituals and weekend field trips.

He doesn't know what it means to be discontent. His life is simple. He will never know the entanglements of wealth of power, and he does not care what brand of clothing he wears or what kind of food he eats. He recognizes no differences in people, treating each person as an equal and a friend. His needs have always been met, and he never worries that one day they may not be. His hands are diligent. Kevin is never so happy as when he is working. When he unloads the dishwasher or vacuums the carpet, his heart is completely in it. He does not shrink from a job when it is begun, and he does not leave a job until it is finished.







But when his tasks are done, Kevin knows how to relax. He is not obsessed with his work or the work of others. His heart is pure. He still believes everyone tells the truth, promises must be kept, and when you are wrong, you apologize instead of argue. Free from pride and unconcerned with appearances, Kevin is not afraid to cry when he is hurt, angry or sorry. He is always transparent, always sincere.

And he trusts God. Not confined by intellectual reasoning, when he comes to Christ, he comes as a child. Kevin seems to know God, to really be friends with Him in a way that is difficult for an educated person to grasp. God seems like his closest companion.

In my moments of doubt and frustrations with my Christianity, I envy the security Kevin has in his simple faith. It is then that I am most willing to admit that he has some divine knowledge that rises above my mortal questions. It is then I realize that perhaps he is not the one with the handicap, I am.

My obligations, my fear, my pride, my circumstances they all become disabilities when I do not submit them to Christ.

Who knows if Kevin comprehends things I can never learn? After all, he has spent his whole life in that kind of innocence, praying after dark and soaking up the goodness and love of the Lord. And one day, when the mysteries of heaven are opened, and we are all amazed at how close God really is to our hearts, I'll realize that God heard the simple prayers of a boy who believed that God lived under his bed. Kevin won't be surprised at all.

### Soar with Eagles

Did you know that an eagle knows when a storm is approaching long before it breaks? The eagle will fly to some high spot and wait for the winds to come.

When the storm hits, it sets its wings so that the wind will pick it up and lift it above the storm. While the storm rages below, the eagle is soaring above it.

The eagle does not escape the storm; it simply uses the storm to lift it higher, it rises on the winds that bring the storm.

When the storms of life come upon us — and all of us will experience them — we can rise above them by setting our minds and our belief toward God (or Spirit).

The storms do not have to overcome us. We can allow God's power to lift us above them.

God enables us to ride the winds of the storm that bring sickness, tragedy, failure, and disappointment in our lives. We CAN soar above the storm.

Remember, it is not the burdens of life that weigh us down; it is how we handle them.



### Something to think about....

Name the five wealthiest people in the world.

Name the last five Heismann trophy winners.

Name the last five winners of the Miss America contest.

Name ten people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer prize.

Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for best actor or actress.

Name the last decade's worth of World Series winners.

### **How did you do?**

**The point is,**

none of us remember the headliners of yesterday.

These are no second-rate achievers. They are the best in their fields.

But the applause dies. Awards tarnish. Achievements are forgotten.

Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

**Here's another quiz.**

**See how you do on this one:**

List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.

Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time.

Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.

Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special.

Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.

Name half a dozen heroes whose stories have inspired you.

**Easier?**



## The lesson?

The people who make a difference in your life  
are not the ones with the most credentials,  
the most money,  
or the most awards.

**They are the ones who care.**

### Sorry

I have received this email a few times before, but now, more than ever, seems to be the perfect time to send this to those we care about. Because as we all saw by the tragic events that occurred two weeks ago, life is too short and anything can happen at any time.

I'm Sorry... For all the mean things I might have said.

I'm Sorry... For all the things I did or didn't do.

I'm Sorry... If I ever ignored you.

I'm Sorry... If I ever made you feel bad or put you down.

I'm Sorry... If I ever thought I was or better than you

I Love You... Don't ever forget that! Through bad times and good, I'll always be here for you.

I'm Sorry... For everything wrong I've ever done.

I'm writing this because what if tomorrow never comes? What if you never get to say good-bye or give a BIG hug to the people you care about? What if you never get to say I'm sorry or I love you!

### Speeding!

Jack took a long look at his speedometer before slowing down: 73 in a 55 zone. Fourth time in as many months. How could a guy get caught so often? When his car had slowed to 10 miles an hour, Jack pulled over, but only partially. Let the cop worry about the potential traffic hazard. Maybe some other car will tweak his backside with a mirror.

The cop was stepping out of his car, the big pad in hand. Bob? Bob from church? Jack sunk farther into his trench coat. This was worse than the



coming ticket. A Christian cop catching a guy from his own church. A guy who happened to be a little anxious to get home after a long day at the office. A guy he was about to play golf with tomorrow. Jumping out of the car, he approached a man he saw every Sunday, a man he'd never seen in uniform.

“Hi, Bob. Fancy meeting you like this.” “Hello, Jack.”

No smile. “Guess you caught me red-handed in a rush to see my wife and kids.” “Yeah, I guess.” Bob seemed uncertain. Good. “I’ve seen some long days at the office lately. I’m afraid I bent the rules a bit—just this once.” Jack toed at a pebble on the pavement. “Diane said something about roast beef and potatoes tonight. Know what I mean?”

“I know what you mean. I also know that you have a reputation in our precinct.”

Ouch! This was not going in the right direction.

Time to change tactics. “What’d you clock me at?”

“Seventy-one. Would you sit back in your car, please?” “Now wait a minute here, Bob. I checked as soon as I saw you. I was barely nudging 65.” The lie seemed to come easier with every ticket.

“Please, Jack, in the car.”

Flustered, Jack hunched himself through the still-open door. Slamming it shut, he stared at the dashboard. He was in no rush to open the window. The minutes ticked by. Bob scribbled away on the pad. Why hadn’t he asked for a driver’s license? Whatever the reason, it would be a month of Sundays before Jack ever sat near this cop again. A tap on the door jerked his head to the left. There was Bob, a folded paper in hand. Jack rolled down the window a mere two inches, just enough room for Bob to pass him the slip. “Thanks.” Jack could not quite keep the sneer out of his voice.

Bob returned to his car without a word. Jack watched his retreat in the mirror. Jack unfolded the sheet of paper. How much was this one going to cost? Wait a minute. What was this? Some kind of joke? Certainly not a ticket. Jack began to read: “Dear Jack, Once upon a time I had a daughter. She was six when killed by a car. You guessed it — a speeding driver. A fine and three months in jail, and the man was free. Free to hug his daughters. All three of them. I only had one, and I’m going to have to wait until heaven before I can ever hug her again. A thousand times I’ve tried to forgive that man. A thousand times I thought I had. Maybe I did, but I need to do it again. Even now. . . Pray for me. And be careful. My son is all I have left.

“Bob”



Jack twisted around in time to see Bob's car pull away and head down the road. Jack watched until it disappeared. A full 15 minutes later, he, too, pulled away and drove slowly home, praying for forgiveness and hugging a surprised wife and kids when he arrived.

Life is precious. Handle with care.

Please, teach the children...

His promise. The countless shining stars at night - one for each man now living showing the burning hope of all mankind. Santa gently laid the star upon the fireplace mantle and drew forth from the bag a glittering red Christmas ornament.

"Teach the Children, red is the first color of Christmas. It was first used by the faithful people to remind them of the blood which was shed for all people by the Savior, Christ gave his life and shed his blood that every man might have God's gift to all, eternal life. Red is deep, intense, vivid. It is the greatest color of all. It is the symbol of the gift of God." As Santa was twisting and pulling another object out of his bag, I heard the kitchen clock begin to strike twelve. I wanted to say something, but he went right on.

"Teach the Children", he said as the twisting and, pulling suddenly dislodged a small Christmas tree from the depths of the toy bag. He placed it before the mantle and gently hung the red ornament on the big Christmas tree. The deep green of the fir tree was perfect background for the ornament. Here was the second color of Christmas. "The pure color of the stately fir tree remains green all year round," he said. "This depicts the everlasting hope of mankind. Green is the youthful, hopeful, abundant color of nature. All the needles point heavenward - symbolic of man's returning thoughts toward heaven. The great, green tree has been man's best friend. It has sheltered him, warmed him, made beauty for him, and formed his furniture." Santa's eyes were beginning to twinkle now as he stood there. Suddenly I *heard* a soft tinkling sound. As it grew louder, it seemed like the sound of long ago.

"Teach the Children, that as the lost sheep are found by sounds of the bell, so should it ring for men to return to the fold; it means guidance and return; it further signifies that all, are precious in the eyes of the Lord." As the soft sound of the bell faded into the night, Santa drew forth a candle. He placed it on the mantle and the soft glow from its tiny flame cast an eerie glow about the darkened room. Odd shapes in the shadow slowly danced and weaved upon the walls.

"Teach the Children," whispered Santa, "that the candle shows man's thanks for the star of long ago. It's small, light is the mirror of starlight. At first candles were placed on the Christmas Tree - they were like many glowing stars shining against the dark green. Safety now has removed the candles from the tree and the colored lights have taken over in the remembrance."



Santa turned the small Christmas tree lights on and picked up a gift from under ‘the tree. He pointed to the large bow ribbon and said, “A bow is placed on a present to remind us of the spirit of the brotherhood of man. We should remember that the bow is tied as men should be tied all of us together, with the bonds of good will toward each other. Goodwill forever is the message of the bow,”

Now I wondered what else Santa had in his bag. Instead of reaching in his bag, he slung it over his shoulder and began to reach up on the Christmas tree. I thought he was hungry as he reached for a candy cane, purposely placed high on the tree. He unfastened it and reached out toward me with it.

“Teach the Children that the candy cane represents the shepherds crook. The crook on the staff helps bring back the strayed sheep to the fold. The candy cane represents the helping hand we should show at Christmas time. The candy is the symbol that we are our brother’s keeper,” Santa then paused. He seemed to realize he should be on his way.

Later would be his big day. As he looked about the room, a feeling of satisfaction showed in his face. He read wonderment in his eyes and I am sure he sensed my admiration on this night. He was his old self as he approached the front door. The ‘twinkle in his eye gave Santa away; I knew he wasn’t ‘through yet. He reached into his bag and brought forth a large holly wreath. He placed it on the fireplace and said, “Please Teach the Children the wreath symbolizes the eternal nature of love; it never ceases, stops or ends. It is one continuous round of affection. The wreath does double duty. It is made of many things and in many colors. It reminds us all of the things of Christmas.

Please Teach the Children.

I pondered *and* wondered and thrilled with delight,  
As I saw and viewed all those symbols that night.  
I dozed as I sat in the soft candle light,  
And my thoughts were of Santa and all he made right.

To give and to help, to love and to serve,  
Are the best things of life, all men can deserve.  
Old Santa Claus that jolly fat little elf,  
Is the very best symbol of Christmas itself.

He’s the sign of the gift of love and of life,  
The ending of evil, the ceasing of strife.  
His message to me on the pre-Christmas night,  
Has opened a treasure of deepest insight.

The one thing on earth we all ought to do,  
Is the teaching of children the right and the true.



## Telling It Like It Tis'

This is an interesting prayer given in Kansas at the opening session of their Senate. It seems prayer still upsets some people. When Minister Joe Wright was asked to open the new session Of the Kansas Senate, everyone was expecting the usual generalities, but this is what they heard:

“Heavenly Father, we come before you today to ask your forgiveness and to seek your direction and guidance. We know Your Word says, “Woe to those who call evil good,” but that is exactly what we have done. We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and reversed our values. We confess that. We have ridiculed the absolute truth of Your Word and called it Pluralism. We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery, We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare, We have killed our unborn and called it choice, We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable,

We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self-esteem,

We have abused power and called it politics, We have coveted our neighbor’s possessions and called it ambition, We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression, We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment. Search us, Oh, God, and know our hearts today; cleanse us from every sin and set us free. Guide and bless these men and women who have been sent: to direct us to the center of Your will and to openly ask these things in the name of Your Son, the living Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen!”

The response was immediate. A number of legislators walked out during the prayer in protest.

In 6 short weeks, Central Christian Church, where Rev. Wright is pastor, logged more than 5,000 phone calls with only 47 of those calls responding negatively. The church is now receiving international requests for copies of this prayer from India, Africa, and Korea.

Commentator Paul Harvey aired this prayer on his radio program,” The Rest of the Story,” and received a larger response to this program than any other he has ever aired.

With the Lord’s help, may this prayer sweep over our nation and wholeheartedly become our desire so that we again can be called “one nation under God.”

If possible, please pass this prayer on to your friends. “If you don’t stand for something, you’ll fall for everything.” Think about this: if you forward this prayer to everyone on your email list, in less than 30 days it would be heard by the world.

I’m sure this is a repeat, so be it!





### really cool test

Make sure to answer questions 1-10 before moving on...

Read the following questions, imaging the scenes in your mind, and write down the FIRST thing that you visualize. Do not think about the question excessively.

1. You are walking in the woods. Who are you walking with?
2. You are walking in the woods. You see an animal. What kind of animal is it?
3. What interaction takes place between you and the animal?
4. You walk deeper in to the woods. You enter a clearing and before you is your dream house. Describe its size.
5. Is your dream house surrounded by a fence?
6. You enter the house. You walk to the dining area and see the dining table. Describe what you see on and around the table.
7. You exit the house through the back door. Lying in the grass is a cup. What material is the cup made of?
8. What do you do with the cup?
9. You walk to the edge of the property. Where you find yourself standing at the edge of a body of water. What type of body of water is it?
10. How will you cross the water?

The whole purpose of this test is to find yourself and who you really are...

1. The person you are walking with is the most important person in your life.
2. The size of the animal represents the size of your problems.
3. The interaction you have with the animal represents how you deal with your problems. (passive/aggressive)
4. The size of your dream house is the size of your ambition to resolve your problems.
5. No fence indicates an open personality, and a fence indicates a closed personality.
6. If your answer did not include food, people or flowers then you are generally unhappy.
7. The durability of the material the cup is made of is the durability of your





relationship with the person in question 1.

8. Your disposition of the cup represents your attitude towards the person in question 1.

9. The size of the body of water represents the size of your sexual desire.

10. How wet you get crossing the water is the importance of your sex life.

### Thanks T

I read of a man who stood to speak  
 At the funeral of a friend  
 He referred to the dates on her tombstone  
 From the beginning...to the end.

He noted that first came her date of birth  
 And spoke the following date with tears,  
 But he said what mattered most of all  
 Was the dash between those years.

For that dash represents all the time  
 That she spent alive on earth...  
 And now only those who loved her  
 Know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own;  
 The cars...the house...the cash,  
 What matters is how we live and love  
 And how we spend our dash.

So think about this long and hard...  
 Are there things you'd like to change?  
 For you never know how much time is left,  
 That can still be rearranged.

If we could just slow down enough  
 To consider what's true and real,  
 And always try to understand  
 The way other people feel.

And be less quick to anger,  
 And show appreciation more  
 And love the people in our lives  
 Like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect,  
 And more often wear a smile..  
 Remembering that this special dash  
 Might only last a little while.



So, when your eulogy's being read  
With your life's actions to rehash...  
Would you be proud of the things they say  
About how you spent your dash?

The Baggy Yellow Shirt  
a nice read

The baggy yellow shirt had long sleeves, four extra-large pockets trimmed in black thread and snaps up the front. It was faded from years of wear, but still in decent shape. I found it in 1963 when I was home from college on Christmas break, rummaging through bags of clothes Mom intended to give away. You're not taking that old thing, are you?" Mom said when she saw me packing the yellow shirt. "I wore that when I was pregnant with your brother in 1954!"

"It's just the thing to wear over my clothes during art class, Mom. Thanks!" I slipped it into my suitcase before she could object. The yellow shirt became a part of my college wardrobe. I loved it. After graduation, I wore the shirt the day I moved into my new apartment and on Saturday mornings when I cleaned. The next year, I married. When I became pregnant, I wore the yellow shirt during big-belly days. I missed Mom and the rest of my family, since we were in Colorado and they were in Illinois. But that shirt helped. I smiled, remembering that Mother had worn it when she was pregnant, 15 years earlier.

That Christmas, mindful of the warm feelings the shirt had given me, patched one elbow, wrapped it in holiday paper and sent it to Mom. When Mom wrote to thank me for her "real" gifts, she said the yellow shirt was lovely. She never mentioned it again.

The next year, my husband, daughter and I stopped at Mom and Dad's to pick up some furniture. Days later, when we uncrated the kitchen table, I noticed something yellow taped to its bottom. The shirt!

And so the pattern was set.

On our next visit home, I secretly placed the shirt under Mom and Dad's mattress. I don't know how long it took for her to find it, but almost two years passed before I discovered it under the base of our living-room floor lamp. The yellow shirt was just what I needed now while refinishing furniture. The walnut stains added character.

In 1975 my husband and I divorced. With my three children, I prepared to move back to Illinois. As I packed, a deep depression overtook me. I wondered if I could make it on my own. I wondered if I would find a job. I paged through the Bible, looking for comfort.



In Ephesians, I read, “So use every piece of God’s armor to resist the enemy whenever he attacks, and when it is all over, you will be standing up.” I tried to picture myself wearing God’s armor, but all I saw was the stained yellow shirt.

Slowly, it dawned on me. Wasn’t my mother’s love a piece of God’s armor? My courage was renewed. Unpacking in our new home, I knew I had to get the shirt back to Mother. The next time I visited her, I tucked it in her bottom dresser drawer.

Meanwhile, I found a good job at a radio station. A year later I discovered the yellow shirt hidden in a rag bag in my cleaning closet. Something new had been added. Embroidered in bright green across the breast pocket were the words “I BELONG TO PAT.” Not to be outdone, I got out my own embroidery materials and added an apostrophe and seven more letters. Now the shirt proudly proclaimed, “I BELONG TO PAT’S MOTHER.” But I didn’t stop there. I zigzagged all the frayed seams, then had a friend mail the shirt in a fancy box to Mom from Arlington, VA. We enclosed an official-looking letter from “The Institute for the Destitute,” announcing that she was the recipient of an award for good deeds. I would have given anything to see Mom’s face when she opened the box.

But, of course, she never mentioned it. Two years later, in 1978, I remarried. The day of our wedding, Harold and I put our car in a friend’s garage to avoid practical jokers. After the wedding, while my husband drove us to our honeymoon suite, I reached for a pillow in the car to rest my head. It felt lumpy. I unzipped the case and found, wrapped in wedding paper, the yellow shirt. Inside a pocket was a note: “Read John 14: 27-29. I love you both, Mother.”

That night I paged through the Bible in a hotel room and found the verses: “I am leaving you with a gift: peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give isn’t fragile like the peace the world gives. So don’t be troubled or afraid. Remember what I told you: I am going away, but I will come back to you again. If you really love me, you will be very happy for me, for now I can go to the Father, who is greater than I am. I have told you these things before they happen so that when they do, you will believe in me.”

The shirt was Mother’s final gift. She had known for three months that she had terminal Lou Gehrig’s disease. Mother died the following year at age 57. I was tempted to send the yellow shirt with her to her grave. But I’m glad I didn’t, because it is a vivid reminder of the love-filled game she and I played for 16 years. Besides, my older daughter is in college now, majoring in art. And every art student needs a baggy yellow shirt with big pockets.

#### PRAYER

Slow me down Lord. Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind. Steady my hurried pace with the vision of the eternal reach of time. Give me amidst the confusion of my day, the calmness of the everlasting hills.



Teach me the art of taking time—to be with a friend, to look at a flower, to say a prayer. Slow me down Lord, so that I do one thing at a time and am all there when I do it. Inspire me to give the gift of time to those I love, and to send my roots deep into the soil of life’s enduring values.

Amen

### The Lord’s Prayer

(person)- ‘Our Father which art in heaven...’

(God)—Yes?

(person) Don’t interrupt me. I’m praying.

(God)—But you called me.

(person) Called you? I didn’t call you. I’m praying. “Our Father which art in heaven.”

(God)—There you did it again.

(person)-Did what?

(God) Called me. You said, “Our Father which art in heaven. Here I am. What’s on your mind?

(person)-But I didn’t mean anything by it. I was, you know, just saying my prayers for the day. I always say the Lord’s Prayer. It makes me feel good, kind of like getting a duty done.

(God)—All right. Go on.

(person)-”Hallowed be thy name...”

(God)—Hold it. What do you mean by that?

(person) By what?

(God)—By “hallowed be thy name”?

(person)-It means... it means... Good grief, I don’t know what it means. How should I know? It’s just a part of the prayer. By the way, what does it mean?

(God)—It means honored, holy, and wonderful.

(person)-Hey, that makes sense. I never thought about what “hallowed” meant before. “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”



(God)—Do you really mean that?

(person)-Sure, why not?

(God)—What are you doing about it?

(person)-Doing? Nothing, I guess. I just think it would be kind of neat if you got control of everything down here like you have up there.

(God)—Have I got control of you?

(person)-Well, I go to church.

(God)—That isn't what I asked you. What about the way you belittle your peers? You've really got a problem there, you know. And then there's the way you spend your money—all on yourself. And what about the kind of books you read?

(person)-Stop picking on me! I'm just as good as some of the rest of those people at the church.

(God)—Excuse me. I thought you were praying for my will to be done. If that is to happen, it will have to start with the ones who are praying for it, like you, for example.

(person)-Oh, all right. I guess I do have some hang-ups. Now that you mention it, I could probably name some others.

(God)—So could I.

(person)-I haven't thought about it very much until now, but I really would like to cut out some of those things. I would like to, you know, be really free.

(God)—Good. Now we're getting somewhere. We'll work together, you and I. Some victories can truly be won. I'm proud of you.

(person)-Look, Lord, I need to finish up here. This is taking a lot longer than it usually does. "Give us this day, our daily bread."

(God)—You need to cut out the bread. You're overweight as it is.

(person)-Hey, wait a minute! What is this, "Criticize me day"? Here I was doing my religious duty, and all of a sudden you break in and remind me of all my hang-ups.

(God)—Praying is a dangerous thing. You could wind up changed, you know. That's what I'm trying to get across to you. You called me, and here I



am. It's too late to stop now. Keep praying, I'm interested in the next part of your prayer...(pause). Well, go on.

(person)-I'm scared to.

(God)—Scared? Of what?

(person)-I know what you'll say.

(God)—Try me and see.

(person)-"Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us."

(God)—What about Ann?

(person)-See? I knew it! I knew you would bring her up! Why, Lord, she's told lies about me, spread stories about my family. She never paid back the debt she owes me. I've sworn to get even with her!

(God)—But your prayer? What about your prayer?

person)-I didn't mean it.

(God)—Well, at least you're admitting it. But it's not much fun carrying that load of bitterness around inside, is it?

(person)-No. But I'll feel better as soon as I get even. Boy, have I got some plans for that neighbor. She'll wish she had never moved into this neighborhood.

(God)—You won't feel any better. You'll feel worse. Revenge isn't sweet. Think of how unhappy you already are. But I can change all that.

(person)-You can? How?

(God)—Forgive Ann. Then I'll forgive you. Then the hate and sin will be Ann's problem and not yours. You will have settled your heart.

(person)-Oh, you're right. You always are. And more than I want to revenge Ann, I want to be right with you....(pause)...(sigh).All right. All right. I forgive her. Help her to find the right road in life, Lord. She's bound to

be awfully miserable now that I think about it. Anybody who goes around doing the things she does to others has to be out of it. Someway, somehow, show her the right way.

(God)—There now! Wonderful! How do you feel?



(person)-Hmmm. Well, not bad. Not bad at all. In fact, I feel pretty great! You know, I don't think I'll have to go to bed uptight tonight for the first time since I can remember. Maybe I won't be so tired from now on because I'm not getting enough rest.

(God)—You're not through with your prayer. Go on.

(person)-Oh, all right. "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

(God)—Good! Good! I'll do that. Just don't put yourself in a place where you can be tempted.

(person)-What do you mean by that?

(God)—Don't turn on the TV when you know the laundry needs to be done and the house needs to be picked up. Also, about the time you spend coffee breaking with your friends, if you can't influence the conversation to positive things, perhaps you should rethink the value of those friendships. Another thing, your neighbors and friends shouldn't be your standard for "keeping up". And please don't use me for an escape hatch.

(person)-I don't understand the last part.

(God)—Sure you do. You've done it a lot of times. You get caught in a bad situation. You get into trouble and then you come running to me, "Lord, help me out of this mess, and I promise you I'll never do it again. "You remember some of those bargains you tried to make with me?

(person)-Yes, and I'm ashamed, Lord. I really am.

(God)—Which bargain are you remembering?

(person)-Well, there was the night that the children and I were home alone. The wind was blowing so hard I thought the roof would go any minute and tornado warnings were out. I remember praying, "Oh, God, if you spare us, I'll never skip my devotions again."

(God) —Did you?

(person)-I'm sorry, Lord, I really am. Up until now I thought that if I just prayed the Lord's Prayer every day, then I could do what I liked. I didn't expect anything to happen like it did.

(God)—Go ahead and finish your prayer.

(person)-"For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever."



**Amen**

**(God)—Do you know what would bring me glory? What would really make me happy?**

**(person)-No, but I'd like to know. I want now to please you. I can see what a mess I've made of my life. And I can see how great it would be to really be one of your followers.**

**(God)—You just answered the question.**

**(person)-I did?**

**(God)—Yes. The thing that would bring me glory is to have people like you truly love me. And I see that happening between us. Now that some of these old sins are exposed and out of the way, well, there is no telling what we can do together.**

**(person)-Lord, let's see what we can make of me, OK? Amen!**

**May I Always Remember To:**

**Encourage youth.**

**Find the time.**

**Keep a promise.**

**Forego a grudge.**

**Forgive an enemy.**

**Listen.**

**Think first of someone else.**

**Laugh a little.**

**Gladden the heart of a child.**

**Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth.**

**Speak God's love.**

### **The Miracle of Love**

**A very powerful message...please take a minute to read.**

**Like any good mother, when Karen found out that another baby was on the way, she did what she could to help her 3-year-old son, Michael, prepare for a new sibling. They found out that the new baby was going to be a girl, and day after day, night after night, Michael sang to his sister in Mommy's tummy. He was building a bond of love with his little sister before he even met her.**

**The pregnancy progressed normally for Karen, an active member of the Panther Creek United Methodist Church in Morristown, Tennessee. In time, the labor pains came. Soon it was every five minutes ...every three....every minute. But serious complications arose during delivery and Karen found herself in**





hours of labor. Would a C-section be required? Finally, after a long struggle, Michael's little sister was born.

But she was in very serious condition. With a siren howling in the night, the ambulance rushed the infant to the neonatal intensive care unit at St. Mary's Hospital, Knoxville, Tennessee.

The days inched by. The little girl got worse. The pediatric specialist regretfully had to tell the parents, "There is very little hope. Be prepared for the worst."

Karen and her husband contacted a local cemetery about a burial plot. They had fixed up a special room in their home for the new baby - but now they found themselves having to plan for a funeral.

Michael, however, kept begging his parents to let him see his sister. "I want to sing to her," he kept saying. Week two in intensive care looked as if a funeral would come before the week was over. Michael kept nagging about singing to his sister, but kids are never allowed in Intensive Care.

Karen made up her mind, though. She would take Michael whether they liked it or not! If he didn't see his sister right then, he may never see her alive. She dressed him in an oversized scrub suit and marched him into ICU. He looked like a walking laundry basket. But the head nurse recognized him as a child and bellowed, "Get that kid out of here now! No children are allowed.

The mother rose up strong in Karen, and the usually mild-mannered lady glared steel-eyed right into the head nurse's face, her lips a firm line. "He is not leaving until he sings to his sister!"

Karen towed Michael to his sister's bedside. He gazed at the tiny infant losing the battle to live. After a moment, he began to sing. In the pure-hearted voice of a 3-year-old, Michael sang: "You are my sunshine, my only sunshine, you make me happy when skies are grey —" Instantly the baby girl seemed to respond. The pulse rate began to calm down and become steady. "Keep on singing, Michael," encouraged Karen with tears in her eyes. "You never know, dear, how much I love you, Please don't take my sunshine away-" As Michael sang to his sister, the baby's ragged, strained breathing became as smooth as a kitten's purr. "Keep on singing, sweetheart!!!" "The other night, dear, as I lay sleeping, I dreamed I held you in my arms..."

Michael's little sister began to relax as rest, healing rest, seemed to sweep over her. "Keep on singing, Michael." Tears had now conquered the face of the bossy head nurse. Karen glowed. "You are my sunshine, my only sunshine. Please don't, take my sunshine away..."

The next, day...the very next day...the little girl was well enough to go home! Woman's Day Magazine called it "The Miracle of a Brother's Song." The medi-



cal staff just called it a miracle. Karen called it a miracle of God's love!

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

### THE NEW SCHOOL PRAYER

This was written by a teen in Bagdad, Arizona.

Now I sit me down in school  
Where praying is against the rule  
For this great nation under God  
Finds mention of Him very odd.

If Scripture now the class recites,  
It violates the Bill of Rights.  
And anytime my head I bow  
Becomes a Federal matter now.

Our hair can be purple, orange or green,  
That's no offense; it's a freedom scene.  
The law is specific, the law is precise.  
Prayers spoken aloud are a serious vice.

For praying in a public hall  
Might offend someone with no faith at all.  
In silence alone we must meditate,  
God's name is prohibited by the state.

We're allowed to cuss and dress like freaks,  
And pierce our noses, tongues and cheeks.  
They've outlawed guns, but FIRST the Bible.  
To quote the Good Book makes me liable.

We can elect a pregnant Senior Queen,  
And the 'unwed daddy,' our Senior King.  
It's "inappropriate" to teach right from wrong,  
We're taught that such "judgments" do not belong.

We can get our condoms and birth controls,  
Study witchcraft, vampires and totem poles.  
But the Ten Commandments are not allowed,  
No word of God must reach this crowd.

It's scary here I must confess,  
When chaos reigns the school's a mess.  
So, Lord, this silent plea I make:  
Should I be shot; My soul please take! Amen



## TWAS THE NIGHT JESUS CAME

**Twask' the night Jesus came and all through the house,  
Not a person was praying, not one in the house.  
The Bible was left on the shelf without care,  
For no one thought Jesus would ever come there.**

**The children were dressing to crawl into bed,  
Not once ever kneeling or bowing their head.  
And Mom in the rocking chair with baby on her lap,  
Was watching the Late Show as I took a nap.**

**When out of the East there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang to my feet to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and lifted the sash.**

**When what to my wondering eyes should appear,  
But Angels proclaiming that Jesus was here.**

**The light of His face made me cover my head,  
It was Jesus returning just like He'd said.**

**And though I possessed worldly wisdom and wealth,  
I cried when I saw Him in spite of myself.  
In the Book of Life that He held in His hand,  
Was written the name of every saved man.**

**He spoke not a word as He searched for my name,  
When He said "it's not here". My head hung in shame.  
The peoples who's names had been written with love,  
He gathered to take to His Father above.**

**With those who were ready He rose without a sound,  
While all the others were left standing around.  
I feel to my knees but it was too late,  
I waited too long and thus sealed my fate.**

**I stood and I cried as they rose out of sight,  
Oh, if only I'd known that this was the night.  
In the words of this poem the meaning is clear,  
The coming of Jesus is now drawing near.**

**There's only one life and when comes the last call,  
We'll find out that the Bible was true after all.....**

**JESUS LOVES YOU AND SO DO I!**



## THE PICKLE JAR

The pickle jar as far back as I can remember sat on the floor beside the dresser in my parents' bedroom. When he got ready for bed, Dad would empty his pockets and toss his coins into the jar.

As a small boy I was always fascinated at the sounds the coins made as they were dropped into the jar. They landed with a merry jingle when the jar was almost empty. Then the tones gradually muted to a dull thud as the jar was filled. I used to squat on the floor in front of the jar and admire the copper and silver circles that glistened like a pirate's treasure when the sun poured through the bedroom window.

When the jar was filled, Dad would sit at the kitchen table and roll the coins before taking them to the bank. Taking the coins to the bank was always a big production. Stacked neatly in a small cardboard box, the coins were placed between Dad and me on the seat of his old truck. Each and every time, as we drove to the bank, Dad would look at me hopefully.

"Those coins are going to keep you out of the textile mill, son. You're going to do better than me. This old mill town's not going to hold you back." Also, each and every time, as he slid the box of rolled coins across the counter at the bank toward the cashier, he would grin proudly.

"These are for my son's college fund. He'll never work at the mill all his life like me." We would always celebrate each deposit by stopping for an ice cream cone. I always got chocolate. Dad always got vanilla. When the clerk at the ice cream parlor handed Dad his change, he would show me the few coins nestled in his palm. "When we get home, we'll start filling the jar again." He always let me drop the first coins into the empty jar. As they rattled around with a brief, happy jingle, we grinned at each other.

"You'll get to college on pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters," he said. "But you'll get there. I'll see to that."

The years passed, and I finished college and took a job in another town.

Once, while visiting my parents, I used the phone in their bedroom, and noticed that the pickle jar was gone. It had served its purpose and had been removed. A lump rose in my throat as I stared at the spot beside the dresser where the jar had always stood. My dad was a man of few words, and never lectured me on the values of determination, perseverance, and faith.

The pickle jar had taught me all these virtues far more eloquently than the most flowery of words could have done.

When I married, I told my wife Susan about the significant part the lowly pickle jar had played in my life as a boy. In my mind, it defined, more than anything else, how much my dad had loved me. No matter how rough things got at home, Dad continued to doggedly drop his coins into the jar.

Even the summer when Dad got laid off from the mill, and Mama had to serve dried beans several times a week, not a single dime was taken from the jar.

To the contrary, as Dad looked across the table at me, pouring catsup over my beans to make them more palatable, he became more determined than ever to make away out for me. "When you finish college, Son," he told me, his eyes glistening, "You'll never have to eat beans again...unless you want to."



The first Christmas after our daughter Jessica was born, we spent the holiday with my parents. After dinner, Mom and Dad sat next to each other on the sofa, taking turns cuddling their first grandchild. Jessica began to whimper softly, and Susan took her from Dad's arms. "She probably needs to be changed," she said, carrying the baby into my parents' bedroom to diaper her.

When Susan came back into the living room, there was a strange mist in her eyes. She handed Jessica back to Dad before taking my hand and leading me into the room. "Look," she said softly, her eyes directing me to a spot on the floor beside the dresser. To my amazement, there, as if it had never been removed, stood the old pickle jar, the bottom already covered with coins. I walked over to the pickle jar, dug down into my pocket, and pulled out a fistful of coins.

With a gamut of emotions choking me, I dropped the coins into the jar. I looked up and saw that Dad, carrying Jessica, had slipped quietly into the room.

Our eyes locked, and I knew he was feeling the same emotions I felt. Neither one of us could speak.

This truly touched my heart....I know it has yours as well. Sometimes we are so busy adding up our troubles that we forget to count our blessings.

Sorrow looks back. Worry looks around. Faith looks UP!

~ Author Unknown ~

**Some traditions are worth keeping, and passing on.**

### The Positive side of LIFE!

Living on Earth is expensive,  
but it does include a free trip  
around the sun every year.

How long a minute is  
depends on what side of the  
bathroom door you're on.

Birthdays are good for you;  
the more you have,  
the longer you live.

Happiness comes through doors you  
didn't even know you left open.

Ever notice that the people who are late  
are often much jollier  
than the people who have to wait for them?

Most of us go to our grave  
with our music still inside of us.



If Walmart is lowering prices every day,  
how come nothing is free yet?

You may be only one person in the world,  
but you may also be the world to one person.

Some mistakes are too much fun  
to only make once.

Don't cry because it's over;  
smile because it happened.

We could learn a lot from crayons:  
some are sharp, some are pretty,  
some are dull, some have weird names,  
and all are different colors....but  
they all exist very nicely in the same box.

A truly happy person is one who  
can enjoy the scenery on a detour.

Have an awesome day, and  
know that someone  
who thinks you're great  
has thought about you today!  
"And that person was me." .....

### The positive side of the WTC/Pentagon/PA attacks

#### Survival Rates

Many are asking about the numbers showing up in association with the September 11th massacre.

They want to know "why?" if the numbers are good why was so much destruction associated with it.

The good news illustrates how the Angels were working overtime to assist. Imagine being an Angel and knowing this event was going to take place. They must have been fluttering their wings overtime to shift the original intended results.

Mainstream media has not reported the SURVIVAL rates and all the positive news about the attacks. So those of us on the net are holding the banner of Good News up high.

Here is a fresh look at the numbers coming out of New York, Washington and



**Pennsylvania.**

**\* The World Trade Center \***

The twin towers of the World Trade Center were places of employment for 50,000 people.

With the current missing list of 6,500 people, that means 87% of them survived the massacre. 87% is a miraculous amount!

**\*\*\* The Pentagon \*\*\***

**\*23,000 people were the target of a third plane aimed at the Pentagon.**

The latest count shows 123 lost their lives. That is an amazing 99.5% survival rate.

In addition, the plane seems to have come in too low, too early to affect a large portion of the building. On top of that, the section that was hit was the first of five sections to undergo renovations to help protect the Pentagon from terrorist attacks. It had recently completed straightening and blast proofing, saving untold lives.

**\*\*\* The Planes \*\*\***

**\* American Airlines Flight 77 This Boeing 757 flown into the Pentagon could have carried up to 289 people, yet only 64 were aboard. Luckily 78% of the seats were empty.**

**\* American Airlines Flight 11 This Boeing 767 could have had up to 351 people aboard, but only carried 92. Thankfully 74% of the seats were empty.**

**\* United Airlines Flight 175 Another Boeing 767 that could have sat 351 people only had 65 people on board. Fortunately it was 81% empty.**

**\* United Airlines Flight 93 This Boeing 757 was one of the most uplifting stories yet. The smallest flight to be hijacked with only 45 people aboard out of a possible 289 had 84% of its capacity unused. Yet these people stood up to the attackers and thwarted a fourth attempted destruction of a national landmark, saving untold numbers of lives in the process. This was a Heroic Flight!**

**\*\*\* In Summary \*\*\***

Out of potentially 74,280 Americans directly targeted 93% survived or avoided the attacks. That's a higher survival rate than heart attacks, breast cancer, kidney transplants and liver transplants all common, survivable illnesses.

The Hijacked planes were mostly empty, the Pentagon was hit at its strongest point, the overwhelming majority of people in the World Trade Center buildings escaped, and a handful of passengers gave the ultimate sacrifice to save even more lives.

Religions of different faiths are holding services together. People are pray-



ing and speaking of world peace in proportions never seen before. We are asking to learn and understand about our neighbors in the world.

Many people were delayed from reaching their flights and work the day of the attack. Listen to your intuition. God works in quiet and mysterious ways.

I hope, though it was about a negative event, that the result left you with a positive viewpoint as we close this volume.