

# THE SOURCE OF JOY



Fill you with a profound and intense happiness

## “THE BEAUTIFUL GAME”

A tribute to World Cup 2010

## What Makes a Dad Great

10 thoughts to live by

## Changing Mindsets

The first step to a better you

## PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Few events capture the world's attention like the World Cup does every four years. The 2006 final attracted an estimated television audience of 715 million, and the entire process, including qualifying and elimination rounds, a total of over 26 billion—the equivalent of nearly four views for every person in the world. Even those who normally pay little or no attention to sports are drawn in when Cup results are front-page news.

For us spectators, depending on how closely we follow football (soccer) and how well our team does, the buildup may last a year, the final match a couple of hours, and the celebration a few days. Then we return to our normal lives. But for players, coaches, and others involved at the highest level, the World Cup is a defining moment, the culmination of years of dreaming, planning, sacrificing, and hard work.

It's a defining moment, but it's not the be-all and end-all of their lives, as it must have seemed when they were entirely focused on making it to the World Cup and doing well there. It's really just a milestone, a new beginning. The real tests start now. How will the losers take defeat? Will they give up, or press on and possibly win next time? What opportunities will open for the winners, and how will they handle success? Will they use it to further their football fortunes, or to secure other careers after football, or to promote causes that are important to them? In the months and years to come we'll find out who those big names really are.

And it's much the same for us. We may not be athletes in the world spotlight, but every day is another chance to examine who we really are and decide what we want to be known and remembered for. Every day can be a defining moment, if we make it so. How about you?

# “THE BEAUTIFUL GAME”

BY RONAN KEANE

JUNE 11, 2010: KICKOFF OF THE 19TH FOOTBALL (SOCCER) WORLD CUP IN SOUTH AFRICA. Generally considered one of the world’s premier sporting events, along with the Olympics, this is the first World Cup final ever held on the African continent. Hundreds of thousands of lucky fans will be able to watch the games live in the stadiums that were built or revamped for the event,

and billions more around the world are expected to follow their team’s progress through the month-long competition via TV, radio, and the Internet. It is the global celebration of what Brazilian three-time Cup winner Pelé called “the beautiful game.”

Many of us enjoy kicking a ball around with friends, but there’s a world of difference between that and playing professional

football. What did it take for those men to reach the World Cup in South Africa? Extraordinary athletic ability, certainly, but that alone did not guarantee their spot on the roster. No player is chosen to represent his country in the World Cup final stage without having first put in a lot of hard work. Each player has endured years of rigorous, seemingly endless practice, suffered injury and pain,

and had to rise above other obstacles in order to have a shot at the ultimate prize—being on the winning team at the World Cup. Those who make it to the final stage have risen to the top of a wildly popular and fiercely contested sport. Win or lose, coming this far is a tremendous achievement.

Most of the rest of us aren't world-class athletes, but we can apply these players' secret to success, as many of today's self-help gurus and guidebooks advocate. And they aren't the first. Even the apostle Paul referred to it. Comparing the Christian life to athletic achievement, he wrote, "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection."<sup>1</sup> Paul practiced what he preached, so as his life drew to a close he was able to say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness."<sup>2</sup>

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1. 1 Corinthians 9:24–27

2. 2 Timothy 4:7–8

Perhaps no one exemplifies the blend of talent and tenacity that mark world-class athletes better than Pelé himself. Growing up in poverty in Três Corações, Minas Gerais, Brazil, he earned extra money for his family by shining shoes and honed his gift using a ball made from a sock stuffed with newspaper. Considered the best footballer of all time, he dominated the game for two decades and was named the top athlete of the 20th century by the International Olympic Committee, even though he never took part in the Olympics.



And one final thought before I go and check the latest scores: It's natural to support our home team, but we should recognize the efforts of all the players, no matter where they're from. With this type of competition, of course there are many more losers than winners. After the first stage of the World Cup, half of the 32 teams are sent home, as are half of the remaining teams at the end of each subsequent round until a winner is eventually crowned. Obviously the players who don't make it to the end are disappointed, but they can take pride in how far they went and what they accomplished.

And we each have a chance to do the same in the game of life. Jesus doesn't say the faithful will be rewarded in heaven with the words, "That's great—you beat the competition!"

but with, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"<sup>1</sup> He commends us for doing our part; for playing with character and commitment, for doing our best with whatever gifts and tasks He has given us, and for loving those who He has put in our path. That, I think, is the most beautiful game of all. ✨

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1. Matthew 25:21



## PELÉ ON FOOTBALL GREATNESS

"I don't believe there is such a thing as a 'born' soccer player."

"Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do."

"I've come to accept that the life of a frontrunner is a hard one, that he will suffer more injuries than most men and that many of these injuries will not be accidental."

"Everything is practice."

"Enthusiasm is everything. It must be taut and vibrating like a guitar string."

# Sense OF Values

BY VIRGINIA BRANDT BERG

I WAS RELAXING IN A LITTLE COFFEE SHOP OVERLOOKING THE OCEAN, WATCHING THE BOATS FAR OUT TO SEA, WHEN I BECAME CONSCIOUS OF A CONVERSATION AT THE NEXT TABLE, LOUD ENOUGH FOR NEARLY EVERYONE IN THE RESTAURANT TO HEAR.

“Why did you dismiss Henry from your office?” one man asked.

“He had no sense of values,” the other man replied. “Whenever I wanted him, he was taking a coffee break. It seemed to me he valued a cup of coffee more than his job. I warned him a number of times, but in the end he had to go.”

The conversation moved on to other topics, but that thought kept running through my mind. The fired man had valued a cup of coffee more than his job.

A light wind had the sailboats skimming over the water—like how some people just skim the surface of life, I thought, never developing any true sense of values. Like the man in that conversation, they place their focus on the inconsequential things in life and let them crowd out the things that are truly worthwhile.

I had an acquaintance who spent years working very hard and scraping to build and decorate a little cottage where she could be comfortable when she retired,



but just a few months after it was finished, she became very ill and was told she did not have long to live. I was visiting her one day, and as I sat at her bedside she said, "Time is closing in on me. I spent the little I had on things that won't have a bit of value where I'm going." She had gained a sense of values, but too late.

I sometimes wish we could see all the events of life framed in the ultimate results they lead to. What a change that would bring to our lives! We wouldn't look for excuses for the time we waste on things of little value and consequence, and we wouldn't give ourselves to trivialities when eternal things are calling. ✨

*God sees things differently than we do.*

1 Samuel 16:7

Isaiah 55:8–9

Psalm 92:5

Romans 11:34

*We should try to see things from His perspective.*

John 7:24

Psalm 19:9–10

Philippians 2:5

Colossians 3:2

*God can reveal His thoughts to us.*

Matthew 11:25

Psalm 139:17

1 Corinthians 2:16

Jeremiah 33:3



If you haven't yet received Jesus' gift of eternal life and begun a personal relationship with Him, you can right now by praying the following:

*Thank You, Jesus, for giving Your life for me. I ask You now to come into my heart, fill me with Your joy, and give me Your gift of eternal life. Amen. ✨*



# REFUGE OF MEDITATION

BY CURTIS PETER VAN GORDER

I ONCE VISITED A MONASTERY THAT WAS BUILT ON THE RUINS OF AN ANCIENT ROMAN FORTRESS, SET HIGH ATOP A ROCKY CRAG IN A SYRIAN DESERT. So steep was a series of 300 steps near the summit that supplies had to be hoisted the rest of the way using a cable system. Three stone archways at the top announced to my fellow pilgrims and me that we were nearing a sanctuary.

Finally we had to squeeze through a small opening, no larger than two feet square, cut in the rock. It reminded me of something Jesus said: “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich

man to enter the kingdom of God.”<sup>1</sup> One traditional interpretation of that passage is that Jesus was referring to a very small gate in the wall of Jerusalem called the Needle’s Eye. For a camel to pass through that gate, it had to be stripped of all baggage and then pushed, pulled, and cajoled. To squeeze through this one, I had to take off my backpack and still it wasn’t easy.

Just then a jet passed so high overhead that it was recognizable only by the vapor trail it left in the azure sky—a silent, fitting reminder of how far we were removed from the rush and noise of the world we had left behind.

This was not a monastery

for recluses, however, but a retreat for those wanting to get away from the world for a time to refresh their spirit and renew their focus in order to have more to contribute when they return. One resident friar had just returned from a World Economic Forum, where he had been invited as a spiritual leader.

The monastery welcomes anyone seeking spiritual solace. My party of about 30 represented several faiths and perhaps a dozen nationalities. There is no charge for meals or lodging, only a request that visitors lend a hand with the chores and respect others’ times of meditation.

Inside we were welcomed with a glass of tea and



invited to sit and chat and enjoy the view. As we got to know one another, a sense of brotherhood instantly developed, despite our diverse backgrounds.

Sitting at a table, I talked with one of the monastery's volunteers who was French. He was in his early twenties, and I was curious to find out what motivated him to stay at this remote outpost so far from civilization.

"I have been here for two years now," he said in his charming accent. "I was a successful chief accountant for a prominent firm in France, with all the perks of a high-salaried job."

"So what was it that made you give all that up?" I asked.

"I felt unfulfilled. One

day as I was sitting in a chapel, I had a vision that caused me to realize I had my priorities wrong. I needed to live in service for others. That's why I'm here."

A German traveler joined our conversation, and soon we were discussing the world's woes as we had experienced them, as well as ideas about how they might be rectified. Hours went by.

That evening we were invited to celebrate Mass together underneath the painted fragments of a scene of heaven and hell, saints and sinners, followed by a simple meal and a time of solitary meditation.

The next day as I made my way back down to the valley, I gazed at the surrounding hills, stretching into the distance. The scenery spoke to me more than it had on the way up, when my mind was still full of going, doing, achieving.

I imagined water flowing through the dry riverbeds and cascading over

precipices in thunderous glory. If rain came, it would truly be a wonder. It hadn't rained in four years.

The terrain appeared devoid of life, but upon closer examination all kinds of life could be seen on those steep slopes—lichen, exquisite minute wildflowers, and the occasional desert dweller, all struggling to survive. Even when our lives seem as dry and barren as those hills, with not much happening on the surface, God is busy at work.

As I reached the bottom of the hill, I determined to take a few minutes each day to make a temple of my heart. The art of meditation, I had learned, is not dependent on any place. It is the peace of heart and mind that are found by connecting with our Creator, regardless of the surroundings. ❧

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1. Mark 10:25



# changing mindsets

By PETER AMSTERDAM

WE SOMETIMES LIMIT GOD'S POWER TO WORK IN OUR LIVES BECAUSE WE LACK FAITH. We look at things too much from our own perspectives instead of trying to see them as He does. Our outlook is trapped on an earthly plane. When we find ourselves in that situation, it's time to change our mindset about some things.

The definition of mindset is: a set of beliefs or a way of thinking that determines somebody's behavior and outlook. What this means is that the way we look at things, our attitudes, the things we think and believe, determine our behavior.

A major factor in making progress is shedding any mindset that holds you back and taking on a new

mindset that will have a positive effect on your behavior and outlook. We all have some wrong attitudes, so we need to find out what those are and fight to change them into positive ones.

Consider the story about two shoe salesmen who were sent by their company to Africa. The first salesman wrote the home office saying, "Nobody wears shoes here," and turned in his resignation. The second salesman was thrilled with the potential and wrote, "Everybody here needs shoes!"

The first fellow's mindset, his negative attitude, caused him to resign. He had the wrong mindset about the situation, and this mindset determined his behavior,

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."

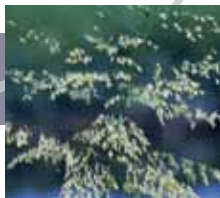
—Isaiah 55:8–9



which in this case was to give up in despair. Now contrast that to the other fellow who had a positive mindset. “Everyone needs shoes!” What a difference!

The positive mindset brought faith. Where one man saw an impossible situation, the other saw endless possibilities. Clearly, our mindset affects our outlook and, most importantly, our behavior.

It’s important that we shed any negative mindset that holds us back, and instead embrace a new, positive mindset that will change our behavior and performance for the better. To get the most from life and give the most in return, we should focus on the unlimited power of God, which He has put at our disposal. When we do that, we see the potential instead of the problems. That positive mindset will help us to act in a positive, full-of-faith manner—and with faith, anything is possible.<sup>1</sup> ✨



## *We’re Here to Love*

Whatever we become here in mortality is meaningless unless it is done for the benefit of others.

Our gifts and talents are given to us to help us serve. And in serving others we grow spiritually.

We are here to help each other, to care for each other, to understand, forgive, and serve one another. We are here to have love for every person on earth.

—*Betty J. Eadie, Embraced by the Light*

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1. Matthew 17:20

# things

BY MARTIN MCTEG

I HAVE THIS THING ABOUT THINGS. You see, I think some people have way too many of them—like those people who can't put another thing in their garage or their closets, so they rent a storage place for their extra things.

When I moved houses recently, I had to decide what to do with many of the things I'd accumulated since my last move. Boy, oh boy! That's when I realized I had indeed become one of "those people"—a thing collector!

I think a lot of the problem is due to the culture of materialism that is so prevalent these days. Whenever we watch TV or listen to the radio or read magazines, we are bombarded with advertisements about all the latest and greatest things we need to buy, and those ads are effective. Take electronic

equipment, for example. As soon as a thinner TV or laptop or cell phone comes out, everybody wants it, and a lot of perfectly good fatter ones end up in the garage or closet with everything else.

There are other downsides to this "thing" mentality too. For one, you can lose appreciation for the value of the things you have if you have too many of them.

Jesus put "things" in perspective when He said, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."<sup>1</sup>

Another thing about things is that just as some people have way too many, there are others who lack even the basic things of life. Sad!

If you happen to recognize the symptoms of this too-many-things

malady in your life, as I did, don't worry. There is a cure, at least on a personal level. You can take a serious look at all the things you have, decide which you use and really need, and give the rest to charity or a needy neighbor or friend. As Jesus told one rich young man, "Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven."<sup>2</sup>

You'll be happy with the results. Your home will suddenly seem bigger and more organized, and your life will seem less cluttered.

And remember what Jesus said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."<sup>3</sup> As we give away our extra things in a spirit of generosity, we accumulate God's blessings, both in this life and for eternity. ✂

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1. Luke 12:15

2. Luke 18:22

3. Acts 20:35

# Treasures in Heaven

BY ABI F. MAY

ZAC GAZED OUT OF HIS WINDOW TOWARD THE WEST.

The waves of the sea danced gently, reflecting amber from the glowing orb that was slowly descending toward the blue water. It was sunset, his life was drawing to a close, and it was time to take stock. It had been a full, rich life, and Zac smiled as he reminisced. Seeing joy on a child's face; watching hope replace despair, faith replace doubt; celebrating the love of God for His people—these were the memories that Zac cherished. But it had not always been so. . .

“Collaborator!”

“Greedy thief!”

“Crook!”

Zac was used to people calling him names behind his back and sometimes to his face. Even the beggars were reluctant to take his money. It was incongruous,

considering that he was a wealthy man, but the religious leaders forbade the poor from accepting alms from him. The low status that his livelihood earned him amongst his own people hadn't stopped him from working for the Roman conquerors or working his way up until he had become a chief tax collector—a man of power and plenty but not popularity.

Whatever had driven him to put so much effort into amassing wealth, it had worked. Yet his was an empty, loveless life. “Vanity, vanity! What's it all for?” he often asked himself, echoing the words of Solomon, who seemed to have been describing Zac's life when he wrote, “All his days are sorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest.”<sup>1</sup>



Curiosity had gotten the better of him that day. Like other Jericho residents, he had heard stories about the visiting rabbi—even tales of miraculous healings. Most of the people trudging the same path were probably hoping to see a miracle, Zac surmised. As new arrivals continued to pour into the crowd, the chances of him being able to see anything at all got slimmer and slimmer. As short as he was, there was no way he would be able to see above this throng unless he could find a vantage point.

It was then he noticed the wide sycamore fig tree growing by the side of the road. It wasn't hard to climb, and soon Zac was situated where he could see a crowd proceeding slowly along the road. The center of everyone's attention was a man of medium build with an air of kindly authority.

When the crowd reached the tree, the man called up to Zac, "Zacchaeus! Come down. I want to meet you. Take me to your house."

So many years had passed since that day when the unexpected guest arrived for dinner. At the time, Zac hadn't known how significant those few hours would be, but looking back now he realized that they had changed not only him, but his relationship with everyone he had encountered from that moment on.

The words of the Teacher had penetrated Zac's heart. He had already known how vain his life was, but now he realized for the first time that he could do something about it. Before the night was over he had pledged to give away half of his possessions. This was no small sum, nor was it an empty promise. True to his word, Zac also paid back the people whom he had taxed unfairly. In fact, he compensated for his previous dishonesty by paying them back four times the amount he had cheated them out of.

"Don't put aside treasures on earth," the Teacher had



told him. “Lay up treasures in heaven, for where your treasure is, that’s where your heart will be too.”<sup>2</sup> Don’t work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you.”<sup>3</sup> With advice like that, collecting taxes in order to amass wealth soon lost its appeal.

It had taken awhile, but in time Zac was able to follow in his Teacher’s footsteps. The greatest commandments, he learned, were to love God and to love others.<sup>4</sup> It was this path of unselfishness that he followed for the rest of his days.

The sunset was drawing to a finish. Zac closed his eyes one last time. Ever so quietly he passed from this world to the next, greeted

by a golden sunrise in the presence of the Savior he had loved since they first met on that dusty road long ago.



According to tradition and the writings of Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–215), Zacchaeus became a companion of the apostle Peter and in time was appointed bishop of Caesarea. ✠

“TREASURES IN HEAVEN” IS  
BASED ON LUKE 19:1–10.

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1. Ecclesiastes 2:23

2. Matthew 6:19–21

3. John 6:27

4. Matthew 22:37–40

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

—*Philippians 4:6–7 NIV*

“Today salvation has come to this house, for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” —*Jesus, Luke 19:9–10*

# Getting a better perspective



**Q:** *I KNOW PROBLEMS ARE PART OF LIFE, BUT I CAN'T SEEM TO GET ON TOP OF MINE LONG ENOUGH TO CATCH MY BREATH. HOW CAN I OVERCOME MY PROBLEMS, BEFORE THEY OVERCOME ME?*

**A:** Your lament sounds rather like what King David expressed: “Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest.”<sup>1</sup> This wish to be able to put aside all your problems and worries and to feel free is a longing everyone experiences at one time or another. Unfortunately, there is no easy, magical formula to make problems simply disappear. What we can do is learn to control the effect that our problems, both real and imaginary, have on us.

One sure-fire way to strengthen your spirit is to adopt an attitude of praise and thanks to God, even through the rough times. No matter how badly things are

going or how seemingly hopeless the situation, it is always possible to find something to be thankful for if you look hard enough—not the least of which is that God stands ready to prove Himself a “very present help in time of trouble.”<sup>2</sup>

That positive, praiseful attitude will lighten your burdens and help you bear them. It brings on inspiration and renewed strength. It gives you wings to rise above your problems and the doubt, fear, and worry that accompany them. It lifts your spirit above the earthly plane and into the heavenlies. Even though it doesn't necessarily remove the problems you're facing, it gives you a much better outlook and perspective on them—a heavenly perspective, infused with faith in the positive outcome God has promised to those who love Him.<sup>3</sup>✠

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1. Psalm 55:6

2. Psalm 46:1

3. See Romans 8:28

# temple time

A SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

IN HIS ARTICLE “TEMPLE TIME,” D.B.BERG DESCRIBES A VISION HE HAD OF A GROUP OF PEOPLE IN A SPACIOUS GLASS-DOMED ROOM, LIKE THE CENTRAL ROTUNDA OF A LARGE PUBLIC BUILDING.

The people were standing quietly and looking up through the dome at the star-studded sky, taking deep breaths of heavenly air that descended through a hole at the top of the dome, and hearing heavenly music. Meanwhile, other people were rushing around in the wings, wearing themselves out, seemingly oblivious to what was happening in the rotunda.

In that scene, Berg explained, the people were being refreshed and renewed as they partook of God’s Spirit in prayer. He wrote:

“We wouldn’t worry and fret so if we spent more time with the Lord, looking up through that starry dome, breathing that heavenly air, and hearing that beautiful music. We’d find peace and rest for our soul. It would totally renew us and give us fresh inspiration, new strength, peace, and joy.

“Jesus can wipe away all your fears and tears with just one little restful moment in that perfect peace He gives when your mind is [focused] on Him.<sup>1</sup> He can solve all your problems in one little glimpse. He can refresh your whole spirit with one deep breath. He can clarify all your thoughts with just one sweet strain of heavenly music.

“Are you too busy? Is your work too important to stop for a few minutes of inspiration and refreshing from on high? Those other things may be necessary, but you’ll never have the strength or the inspiration you need to do that work unless

you come into the rotunda in spirit to get your batteries recharged.

“All you have to do is get alone with the Lord, any time of day, wherever you are and whatever you’re doing. Just take a few quiet moments with the Lord. Look up! Make a temple of your heart.”



Find a quiet spot, put your work and other concerns aside for a few minutes, close your eyes, and imagine yourself in the temple, under that dome. Take long, deep breaths. Feel the pressure and stress melt away. ✨

This exercise is based on “Temple Time,” by D.B.Berg in the book *God Online*.

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1. Isaiah 26:3

# Dad's Advice

BY EVELYN SICHROVSKY

THERE IS ONE DAY I WILL NEVER FORGET. IT HAPPENED SEVEN YEARS AGO, A WEEK OR SO BEFORE I TURNED 12, ON WHAT STARTED OUT TO BE JUST ANOTHER DAY.

The prospect of turning 12 seemed challenging, even scary. For the past several weeks, lurking large in my mind were questions and apprehensions that I was facing for the first time. Would being 12 mean that I could no longer do certain things I had enjoyed as a child? Was I supposed to act differently—suddenly “grown up” and “mature”? I wasn't even sure I knew what those terms meant. I was confused and clueless.

That afternoon Dad and I took a walk, and I finally plucked up the courage to ask those big questions. Dad's answers, simple but wise, did more than wipe away my birthday fears; they also helped shape my life since.

Dad assured me that turning 12 didn't mean that I would be expected to grow up overnight or that I could no longer enjoy the simple pleasures of childhood. Rather, he explained, enjoying and appreciating the little things in life is a quality of childhood that we should never outgrow, no matter how old we live to be. And to my surprise, I found out from him that maturity has nothing at all to do with trying to act older or impress others. True maturity, he said, is learning to think more about others than myself; it is looking at the world through unselfish eyes, trying to see how I can build up others and make a positive difference for them, putting myself in their place and showing understanding and compassion. In short, it's being loving, being “you first” instead of “me first.” ❀



EVELYN WITH  
HER DAD ON HER  
17TH BIRTHDAY.

*true joy*

This is the true joy in life: Being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one, being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it what I can. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.—George Bernard Shaw

## WHAT MAKES A DAD GREAT

REMEMBER HOW THE FATHER [IN THE PARABLE JESUS TOLD OF THE PRODIGAL SON] ACTED WHEN THE BOY RETURNED HOME?<sup>1</sup> Did he run up and sniff his breath to see if he had been drinking? Did he comment on how poorly he had cared for his clothes? Did he criticize his straggly hair and dirty fingernails? Did he inquire about the balance left in his checking account? Of course not. He hugged the boy—the hug of loving acceptance.

This story of a father's love is immortalized in the Bible primarily, I believe, to tell something of how God accepts us. Should we not consciously use His example in dealing with our children? Can we afford to neglect giving them hugs of loving acceptance each day?

This love is the warm blanket each parent can weave for his or her children—a blanket of love that accepts each child for what he is. Such love is never content to stop assisting the youngster to climb higher and higher toward the plan God has for every life. —*Dr. Bob Pedrick*

One father is more than a hundred schoolmasters. —*George Herbert*

When I was a kid, my



father told me every day, “You’re the most wonderful boy in the world, and you can do anything you want to.” —*Jan Hutchins*

Every dad, if he takes time out of his busy life to reflect upon his fatherhood, can learn ways to become an even better dad. —*Jack Baker*

My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person: he believed in me. —*Jim Valvano*

[My father] didn’t tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it. —*Clarence Budington Kelland*

A man’s children and his garden both reflect the amount of weeding done during the growing season. —*Author unknown*

Small boys become big men through the influence of big men who care about small boys. —*Author unknown*

There’s something like a line of gold thread running through a man’s words when he talks to his daughter, and gradually over the years it gets to be long enough for you to pick up in your hands and weave into a cloth that feels like love itself. —*John Gregory Brown*

A dad is respected because he gives his children leadership.

A dad is appreciated because he gives his children care.

A dad is valued because he gives his children time.

A dad is loved because he gives his children the one thing they treasure most—himself. —*Author unknown* ❧

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1. Luke 15:11–24

# The source of joy

When you first accept Me into your life and come to know Me, I fill you with a profound and intense happiness. The apostle Peter described this as “joy unspeakable and full of glory.”<sup>1</sup>

When I died on the cross, I paid the price for the sins of the world—including every wrongful deed you have ever committed. And because I did that, whoever believes in and receives Me will live forever—and that includes you too. When you understand what that means, when you realize that all is forgiven, that I love you unconditionally, that I will be there for you through thick and thin, that I will never give up on you, and that no matter what turns this life may take, you can look forward to eternal happiness in a truly perfect world—now *that* is something to get happy and excited about!

Happiness is knowing that the nagging problems and imperfections of this present world will soon pass away, and then everything will be made perfect in love. You come to that realization by focusing on Me and My power and My promises.

And if you’ve experienced that joy in the past but somehow lost it, you can regain it the same way. Just think about Me, all I have done for you, and all I have promised you. I told My first disciples, “These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full,”<sup>2</sup> and that same joy can be yours.

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1. 1 Peter 1:8 KJV

2. John 15:11

