

***Poems***  
***from***  
***The Sermon***  
***on the Mount***

## A Personal Note

The “*Sermon on the Mount*:” is recorded in three chapters of the first Gospel account: Matthew 5, 6 and 7. Like any modern-day sermon it can be read in about 20 minutes. But it is so profound that almost innumerable books, articles and sermons have been written concerning it.

My own faith and understanding were immeasurably strengthened as I read and meditated on these scriptures. In 1989 I wrote some of my thoughts in a booklet entitled “*Lessons From the Sermon on the Mount*”. A few years later, our daughter, Linda McGinness, asked me to write the lyrics for a concert entitled “*The Sermon on the Mount In Song*”. I am deeply indebted to her for the opportunity to think through Jesus’ words in a new and fresh way. The following pages are the result. They feel only partially whole, without her beautiful voice and music, but as I draw into my closing years it seems time to place them in this booklet form.

Although, I have tried to stay reasonably close to the text of the verses, this is not an attempt to give a precise interpretation of the Sermon. Rather, the real purpose of these writings has been to give additional flavor through rhythm and rhyme and to help those who hear or read them draw closer to God.

I pray these verses will be uplifting for you, and you will be encouraged to read, meditate and discuss with others the age-less truths found in this monumental Sermon spoken 2000 years ago by Jesus.

*From Grandpa With Love*

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## **SOME THOUGHTS**

Who is Jesus? If anyone reading this account does not know Jesus, the Sermon on the Mount probably will not make sense. But as we accept Him as divine and as Lord and Savior, this Sermon, together with all other scriptures, will begin to come alive.

### **Matthew 5:1-2**

*“Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down.*

*His disciples came to him,  
and he began to teach them...”*

## ***“Who Is This Man?”***

***Who is this man who climbs the hill?  
Why does the crowd  
Grow strangely still?  
Where does he come from,  
Where will he go?  
Before I'll follow, I want to know.***

***Many years before He came,  
Prophets spoke and called His name.  
They said He would be God's great plan  
To humble Himself and become a man.  
To show His love for you and me  
And save us for eternity.***

***But is He who He claims to be?  
The King of a Kingdom we cannot see?  
What has He done—who has believed?  
If I follow Him, will I be deceived?***

***Who is this Man? Yes,  
Who is this man?  
I want to know—Who is this man?***

***The blind can see, the lame can walk,  
The sick are healed, the dumb can talk.  
Though what He says seems a mystery  
He's surely Who He claims to be!***

***Yes, this is the Man!  
Christ the King,  
This is the Man!***

## **SOME THOUGHTS**

Jesus' first words in the Sermon on the Mount have been called the Beatitudes-- and they are beautiful and welcome to our ears! Some have said these should "*Be the Attitudes*" of Christians. They seemed to me similar to a stairway we climb in our journey. While we are saved by the grace of God, we still need to walk with Him the remainder of our time here on earth. The analogy of a stairway up to Heaven is simply a tool that helps me see where I am going.

### **Matthew 5:3-12**

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit...  
those who mourn...  
the meek...those who hunger and thirst  
for righteousness...the merciful...  
the pure in heart...the peacemakers...  
those who are persecuted...”*

## ***“A Stairway Up To Heaven”***

***There's a stairway up to Heaven  
It's the stairway of the cross.***

***At first the steps are hard  
And sometimes you feel lost.***

***But as you climb on higher  
Your strength begins to grow.***

***A new life starts to show.***

***First, we surrender and are humble  
In the presence of the Lord.***

***Next we mourn because we're sinners  
But get comfort He has stored.***

***We acknowledge we're the meek ones  
Yet inherit all the earth.***

***We're filled with things of worth.***

***He adds mercy to our mercy  
To deal with sorrow sin will bring.***

***But as hearts are purified  
We can see our mighty king.***

***When we spread His peace around us  
We are children of our Lord.***

***We give thanks for persecution  
Knowing it will bring reward.***

***If you want the joys of Heaven  
You must start your climb on earth.***

***Make an effort to be like Him  
When He gives you second birth.***

***As you climb the steps to Heaven  
Take up your cross each day,***

***And follow in His way.***

## **SOME THOUGHTS**

The world is sick and dark, but does not realize why. Those who follow Christ are the salt and light God is using to season and preserve the world and to attract others to Him. Our salt is to be scattered and our light is to be beamed into the darkness. Like seeds, we must fall into the ground and die to self if new spiritual life is to spring up around us.

### **Matthew 5:13-16**

*“You are the salt of the earth....*

*“You are the light of the world.”*

## ***“Salt and Light”***

***Salt shakers and bulbs of light,  
Working for the Lord  
From morning ‘til night.  
Salt shakers and bulbs of light,  
In the house of the Lord—  
you’re all right.***

***Shake it, spread it, sprinkle it around,  
You must be salty  
Or be poured on the ground.  
If you’re hard and crusty,  
Stuck in the shaker,  
Let loose for use  
By your Lord and Maker.***

***Shine your light, as bright as day,  
So the works you do will point the way.  
Let folks see the good you do,  
But praise the Lord, instead of you.***

***Salt shakers and bulbs of light,  
Seasoning the day  
and brightening the night.  
Salt shakers and bulbs of light,  
In the house of the Lord—  
You’re all right!***

## **SOME THOUGHTS**

The Old Testament law is not to be nullified and neither is it to be expanded. Rather, it is to be obeyed; an obedience of substance, through the Spirit, and not merely an obedience of form through the letter of the law. We can be confident that He knows where we are going-- even when we do not!

### **Matthew 5:17-20.**

*“Do not think that I have come  
to abolish the Law  
or the Prophets;  
I have not come to abolish them  
but to fulfill them.”*

***“God Knows  
Where We’re Going”***

***Jesus didn’t come to abolish  
The Prophets or the Law.  
He didn’t come to abolish,  
But to fulfill them all.***

***Not even the smallest letter,  
Nor the least stroke of the pen,  
Will disappear from the Law  
‘Til Jesus comes again.***

***God is making history,  
It’s in His mighty plan.  
And all of His Story  
Hinges upon one Man.***

***Every word that’s in His Book,  
Both the Old and then the New,  
Says Jesus is the bridge  
That God built to reach to you.***

***For God knows where we’re going,  
And God knows where we’ve been.  
God has made eternal plans for us  
That will never end.***

***History’s on a count-down,  
It isn’t just a whim.  
For God knows where we’re going,  
And God knows where we’ve been!***

## **SOME THOUGHTS**

The purpose of the Old Testament law was to control our actions and to prohibit wrong acts such as murder, adultery and false testimony. Jesus explains it is not enough that we do not commit murder; we must control our anger and our angry verbal outbursts. It is not enough that we avoid adultery; we must control our wandering eyes and hands by eliminating sinful lust. And it is not enough that we swear to tell the truth in a judicial proceeding; we must humble ourselves and speak the truth simply and straightforwardly at all times so that God may be glorified.

### **Matthew 5:21-37**

*“You have heard that it was said  
to the people long ago,  
‘Do not murder...’  
‘Do not commit adultery...’  
‘Do not break your oath...’”*

## ***“The Spirit Of The Law”***

***The Court is tense and quiet,  
The Clerk walks to his seat.  
The Defendant stands defiant,  
The Judge begins to speak.***

***“You’re charged with breaking Commandments  
Numbers 6 and 7 and 9,  
‘Murder’, ‘Adultery’, ‘False Witness’,  
Time after time after time.  
These laws are necessary,  
To keep the order that we need;  
Now that you’ve heard the charge,  
How do you wish to plead?”***

***“Not guilty! Not guilty! Not guilty!  
I killed in self-defense.  
Divorced, so no ‘adultery’;  
No oath, so lying made sense.”***

***“But what about your anger—  
Calling your brother a fool;  
Refusing to make your peace with him,  
And being harsh and cruel?  
Lusting after others,  
With eyes and hands that sin.  
Isn’t it better to lose them both  
Than die eternally within?”***

***“Guilty! Guilty! Guilty!”  
He whispered and sank to his knees.  
“I tried to keep the law outside,  
But inside still do as I pleased.”***

***We need the law for order,  
But that’s only where to begin;  
It’s the Spirit that comes from Jesus  
That cleanses us within.***

***How do you plead today?  
As God asks you,  
Will you say,***

***“I’m guilty in my spirit within,”  
Then accept His pardon,  
Be free from sin?***

***Pardon—Oh! Pardon, guilt washed away.  
Plead guilty and be cleansed today!***

## **SOME THOUGHTS**

The Law provides protection and order. Jesus doesn't dispute this fact, but asks us not to make use of these legal limitations, and instead to turn the other cheek, to give the extra cloak, and to walk the extra mile.

The Old Testament law was to love our neighbors as ourselves. Jesus asks us not to limit our love to the duty owed to others under the law and not to pervert the law by excluding our adversaries or enemies from our definition of neighbor. Instead, we should love them all and seek to be perfect like our Heavenly Father.

### **,Matthew 5:38-48**

*“You have heard that it was said,  
‘Eye for eye,  
and tooth for tooth....’”*

*“You have heard that it was said,  
‘Love your neighbor  
and hate your enemy.’”*

***“There’s No Limit  
To My Love For You”***

***There are limits to the law over me:  
So only strike one cheek  
If I have injured yours,  
And only take one coat  
If I have borrowed yours,  
And only force me a mile  
If I’m a servant of yours,  
Since there are limits  
To the law over me.***

***But let there be no limit  
To my love for you:  
So let me turn my other cheek  
When you strike at me,  
Let me give my other coat  
When you borrow from me,  
And let me go the extra mile  
So that you will see,  
I don’t want a limit to my love for you.***

***I know that there are limits  
To my love as a friend:  
I want to love my neighbor,  
Not my enemy,  
And only love back those  
Who first love me,  
And only welcome those  
Who look and act like me,  
For that’s the limit  
To my love as a friend.***

***But there’s no limit  
To God’s love for you:  
For God has sent the sun  
To shine on all,  
And God allows the rain on all to fall,  
And God lets both good and bad  
Hear His call,  
For there’s no limit to His love for you.***

***So there’s no limit to my love,  
When it comes from God above.  
There’s no limit to my love for you!***

## **SOME THOUGHTS**

The next verses concern some of the “religious” side of life: giving, praying, and fasting. But even here Satan tempts us with our great enemy—Pride. We are not to give or pray or fast to become praised by men, nor even to praise ourselves. Instead, we are to do each of these to bring glory to God and help to others, with the knowledge that ultimately we will receive from Him the reward that He has planned at a time when we will not be injured but rather helped and built up by its receipt.

### **Matthew 6:1-8; 16-18**

*“Be careful not to do your  
‘acts of righteousness’  
before men, to be seen by them.  
If you do, you will have  
no reward from your Father in heaven.”*

## ***“God Loves Good Secrets”***

***There are two sisters inside of me,  
Miss Proud's up front where all can see.  
Miss Secret's seldom seen or heard,  
She quietly helps without a word.  
Miss Proud does deeds for all to see,  
She makes folks all speak well of me.  
But Miss Secret finds it's really fun,  
When left hands don't know  
What the right has done.***

***Miss Proud loves to stand  
And pray out loud,  
She loves the tribute of the crowd.  
She likes to hear her words and voice,  
What she says makes her rejoice.  
But Miss Secret kneels alone to pray,  
Only God will hear what she will say.  
She talks to Him,  
And the tears that flow,  
Are just for God and not for show.***

***Miss Proud gives so much up for Lent.  
Of course, it's all the things not meant  
For her to use at any time.  
She gives them up, so she will shine.  
Miss Secret fasts—but privately,  
Alone where only God can see.  
She puts a smile upon her face,  
And feeds that day  
On God's sweet grace.***

***Why do you do the good that you do?  
Is it for God or is it for you?  
Who's winning the battle inside of you?  
Is it Sister One or Sister Two?***

***Secrets! Secrets!  
God loves good secrets!  
Can you keep a secret,  
Just God and you,  
Aware of what you say and do?***

## **SOME THOUGHTS**

Jesus warns us not to make long “*babbling*” prayers like pagans. Rather, we are to pray simply as a child to our Father. First, we acknowledge He is supreme and in control. Next, we look forward to the day His Heavenly Kingdom and His Will are manifested here on earth. Then we conclude with our request for “*daily bread*” for our bodies; “*forgiveness*” for our souls; and guidance and protection from the “*evil one*” who is always seeking to capture us for his dark kingdom.

### **Matthew 6:9-15**

*“This, then, is how you should pray...”*

***“The Lord’s Prayer”***

***“Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be your name,  
Your kingdom come,  
Your will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven.***

***Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our debts,  
As we also have forgiven our debtors.***

***And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from the evil one.”***

## **SOME THOUGHTS**

Jesus now makes it clear we need to acknowledge God is the owner of all we possess and produce. We are simply stewards of His treasure, which we are to save, invest, spend, and give as He directs. As we are obedient to God and live in dependence upon Him, all our needs will be met; we do not need to worry.

### **Matthew 6:19-34**

*“Do not store up for yourselves  
treasures on earth...  
But store up for yourselves  
treasure in heaven....”*

## ***“Wealth and Worry”***

***If you’ve got it, don’t hoard it;  
Don’t bury it in the ground.  
If you’ve got it, then share it;  
Begin to spread it around.***

***If your eyes light up,  
When your bank account grows,  
It’s dark inside of you,  
Everybody knows.  
So serve your King,  
From your head to your toes,  
Then your treasure in heaven will grow.***

***So don’t worry ‘bout your living,  
What you’ll eat, drink or wear.  
Don’t worry ‘bout your body,  
Don’t you know God cares?***

***If He cares for all the flowers,  
And the little birds, too;  
Surely you can believe Him,  
That He cares about you!***

***So don’t worry ‘bout tomorrow,  
Afraid of what it will bring;  
Just seek your Lord, His righteousness,  
He’ll make your heart sing!***

***Let your eyes light up,  
From your deeds not your dough;  
Let His light inside of you,  
Start to show.***

***As you serve your king,  
You’ll begin to glow.  
You’ll be rich in Heaven, I know!  
You’ll be rich in Heaven, I know!***

### **SOME THOUGHTS**

Authorities have the right and responsibility to judge. Such authorities will be held accountable for the way in which they judge. Individuals do not have the responsibility to judge, except as they are acting within their position of authority. But we do have the responsibility to discern, act properly ourselves, and then reprove in love, gently, in an effort to help others succeed.

#### **Matthew 7:1-6**

*“Do not judge, or you too will be judged.”*

***“Is There Something  
In Your Eye, My Friend?”***

***Criticism! Criticism!  
Judging those who fail.  
Criticism! Criticism!  
Binds me in a jail.***

***Leave the judging to the Judge,  
My friend,  
It's not for us to do.  
Remember—the standards that we set,  
Say others should have met,  
Will be used for judging me and you.***

***Don't look for specks of dust,  
My friend,  
In the eyes of those who pass you by.  
Remember—you'll be in a fog,  
Because you've got a log,  
Sitting right in the middle of your eye.***

***But, don't give holy things to dogs,  
My friend,  
Don't throw pearls in front of swine.  
Remember—they won't understand  
Your joy,  
They'll attack you and destroy.  
So discern before you speak,  
Then you'll do fine.***

***Is there something in your eye,  
My friend?  
Is there something in your eye?  
Please don't tell a lie.  
Is there something in your eye?***

### **SOME THOUGHTS**

God gives us various avenues to obtain answers and responses to our requests. We are to ask. We are to seek. We are to knock. When we are faithful to lay our needs before Him, He is faithful to supply them. We should be careful to seek only our needs and only that which will bring life, rather than giving in to our selfish cravings which may bring us death.

#### **Matthew 7:7-12**

*“Ask and it will be given to you;  
seek and you will find;  
knock and the door will be open to you.”*

## **“A.S.K.”**

***Everyone who asks receives.  
He who seeks will always find.  
Knock and the door will open,  
At the proper time.***

***Which of you, if your children,  
Asked for life and food,  
Would you give them evil?  
No, you'd give them good.***

***How much more likely,  
Will your Heavenly Father be,  
To give good things of life,  
When asked by you and me!***

***When you receive His goodness,  
Here's what you must do,  
Begin to do for others,  
What you ask God to do for you.***

***Good things are for sharing,  
That's the mark of love,  
So pass along to others,  
What you ask from God above.***

***Ask today;  
Seek the way;  
Knock I say;  
That's the way to pray.***

***Ask, Seek and Knock,  
Then let God have His way!***

**Matthew 7:13-29**

*“...small is the gate and narrow  
the road that leads  
to life, and only a few find it...*

*“...every good tree bears good fruit,  
but a bad tree bears bad fruit...*

*“Therefore, everyone who hears  
these words of mine and puts them  
into practice is like a wise man  
who built his house on the rock...*

*But everyone who hears these words  
of mine and does not put them into  
practice is like a foolish man  
who built his house on sand.”*

***“Two Roads, Two Trees  
and Two Houses!”***

***What gate have you opened?  
What road are you on?  
What seeds have you planted,  
To grow when you're gone?***

***Are you building your house,  
On the rock or the sand?  
Oh, come now to Jesus,  
Take hold of His hand!***

## ***THE CHOICE***

Life is a series of choices. First, we must choose whether to enter the narrow gate and walk with Jesus along the hard road that leads to life or take the wide gate and the easy road that most are taking down towards death.

We must choose carefully those whom we allow to teach us. Because we may ultimately become like our teachers, we should look carefully at the fruit of their lives, rather than choosing them merely by their appearance and words.

We must then choose to apply what God gives to us, as foundations for our lives. In essence, we are choosing between life and death. God, in His Sovereignty, calls us, but allows us to follow Him and receive life—or to reject Him and choose death.

***My earnest plea  
is that all who read this  
will  
“Choose Life—Now and Forever!”***