**Good in Every Experience**

## In the day of prosperity be joyful,

## and in the day of adversity consider;

## God has made the one as well as the other.

## *(Ecclesiastes 7:14)*

## In everything give thanks. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

**And we know that all things work together for good**

**to them that love God.**

***(Romans 8:28)***

## The greatest thing the Democrats have ever done for me was to defeat me for the governorship of Tennessee. *(Roy Acuff, great country singing star)*

## While it is natural to give thanks when all is going well, giving thanks in adversity is more challenging. “Why should I give thanks when I am in pain?” you might ask. The answer lies in a universal law that tells us that all things work together for our highest good. Or, as M. Scott Peck put it, “Everything that happens to us in life does so to make us more holy.” (Douglas Bloch, in New Thought magazine) Woody Allen, the world-renowned writer, actor and director, remains aware of the unlikeliness of it all: I think back on the awful days in that little school I attended, and coming home to sit at an oilcloth-covered table. It’s an amazing thing that I have actually been in a movie with Charles Boyer or taken Maureen O’Sullivan to dinner because she’s the grandmother of my kids. It’s an unimaginable to me, and I guess I still get the full appreciation of all that’s happened. Sometimes when I look in the mirror I’ll see myself back there and say, “You’re Alan Konigsberg, born in the Bronx and raised in Brooklyn. Shouldn’t you be eating in the basement?” (Eric Lax, in Woody Allen: A Biography)

**At the 1952 Helsinki Olympics, Roger Bannister was Britain's outstanding distance runner and was expected to win a gold medal for his team. He failed to do so. Bannister's Olympic loss, however, became the motivator causing him to consider another challenge, that of running a mile in less than four minutes. It was a goal considered unattainable. Nevertheless, on a windy, rainy day two years after the Olympics, Roger Bannister broke the four-minute barrier by six-tenths of a second. As a result, he set off a wave of celebration and enthusiasm felt around the world. Recalling that historic achievement thirty years later, Bannister said that if he had won the Olympic gold medal, he would have retired and pursued medical studies. “My failure made me look for one more challenge.” (Victor Parachin, in Unity magazine)**

**It is only by being in trouble that people understand how far from easy it is to be the master of one’s feelings and thoughts. (Anton Chekhov)**

**Police in Dubai say last week’s BlackBerry outage made the emirate’s roads safer. Traffic accidents in Dubai fell 20 percent on days when BlackBerry service was disrupted; in Abu Dhabi, accidents fell 40 percent. Police say the declines occurred because people were unable to use their smartphones while driving. (The Abu Dhabi National, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 28, 2011)**

**Actor Humphrey Bogart was famous for his expressionless face and rasping lisp. Both of these characteristics were the result of a war wound. While he was serving in the military during World War I, his troopship was shelled by the Germans. Although he recovered from his wounds, he was left with a permanent partial paralysis of his upper lip. (Paul Stirling Hagerman, in It's a Weird World, p. 36)**

**A fresh-faced young singer forgot all his shoes except for a pair of white bucks when he auditioned for Ted Mack and Arthur Godfrey. But those shoes became a fad and the trademark of who else but Pat Boone. (Ripley's Believe It or Not!: Book of Chance, p. 25)**

[**A bulldog puppy who bit his owner's big toe "to the bone" may have saved the man from having his leg amputated. David Lindsay, a retired builder in England, was napping on the sofa when pup Harley started chewing on his big toe, which he noticed only when his wife's screams woke him. Doctors who treated him at the hospital said his foot had gone numb and blue due to blocked arteries that could have forced an amputation if it had gone untreated. "You've got to laugh about it," said Lindsay. "He's done me a favor." *(The Week magazine, May 5, 2023)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Bump on head sends missing spouse home: A man declared legally dead after he suffered amnesia and vanished 15 years ago hits his head, recovers his memory, returns home and embraces his faithful wife on Christmas Day. *(Associated Press)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Clorox sales hit an all-time high of $1.33 billion last quarter, thanks to a nasty flu season that saw demand for the company’s disinfecting wipes leap. *(MSN.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, February 15, 2013)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Just as steel is tempered by plunging it red hot into cold water, once we emerge from a dark night of the soul experience, we are immeasurably strengthened. Or as Nietsche put it, “What doesn’t kill me makes me stronger.” *(Douglas Bloch, in New Thought magazine)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Walt Disney got his idea for Mickey Mouse because he was forced to work in a garage. Disney couldn't afford an art studio when he started, so he set up shop in an old garage. He was watching mice play there one night, and got the inspiration for Mickey Mouse. *(Charles Reichblum, in Knowledge in a Nutshell, p. 45)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Good week for: Mexican fishermen, who had their best day in years after scooping up bucketfuls of sardines, striped bass, and mackerel that suddenly appeared in dense schools off the country’s west coast. The fishermen theorized that the fish had been stampeded in their direction by Japan’s undersea earthquake. *(The Week magazine, March 25, 2011)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Seventy-five years ago next month, Thomas Edison’s factory in West Orange, NJ was virtually destroyed by fire. Although the damage exceeded two million dollars, the buildings were only insured for $238,000 because they were made of concrete and were thought to be fireproof. Much of Edison’s life’s work went up in smoke and flames that December night. At the height of the fire, Edison’s 24-year-old son, Charles, searched frantically for his father. He finally found him, calmly watching the fire, his face glowing in the reflection, his white hair blowing in the wind. “My heart ached for him,” said Charles. “He was 67 – no longer a young man – and everything was going up in flames. When he saw me, he shouted, ‘Charles, where’s your mother? When I told him I didn’t know, he said, ‘Find her. Bring her here. She will never see anything like this as long as she lives.’” The next morning, Edison looked at the ruins and said, “There is great value in disaster. All our mistakes are burned up. Thank God we can start anew.” Three weeks after the fire, Edison managed to deliver the first phonograph. *(Bits & Pieces, November, 1989)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**A Texas A&M professor says an answer to suicide is “egocide.” “Egocide is psychological death and rebirth, a process that promotes the destruction of negative and suicidal aspects of a patient’s psyche,” says professor David Rosen. “Partial deaths” such as loss, failure, rejection or depression lead to the opportunity for a life-saving “rebirth,” says Rosen, who came to his conclusions after interviewing survivors of suicide attempts. After destroying the negative aspects of the ego – symbolically in therapy – patients become more hopeful, form new relationships and begin channeling destructive energy into creativity, says Rosen. *(Matt Soergel,*  in *Rocky Mountain News, October 2, 1989)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**D-Day: The invasion's supreme commander, General Dwight David Eisenhower, actually was second choice for Operation Overlord, as the invasion was code-named. Until late 1943, it was an open secret that the liberation of Western Europe would be directed by General George C. Marshall, the U.S. Army's chief of staff. But President Franklin Roosevelt decided he couldn't sleep at night in the White House if the brilliant Marshall wasn't across the Potomac River in the Pentagon directing strategy. So Ike --commander of the North African, Sicily and Italian campaigns -- got the top Western Europe assignment by default. *(Rocky Mountain News)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

## [The famed actor who owed much of his success to adversity, W. C. Fields, who was a vagrant at the age of 11, got his swollen red nose from alley fights, and his hoarse voice from childhood colds. *(Ripley's Believe It or Not!: Book of Chance, p. 317)*](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**I have learned silence from the talkative, toleration from the intolerant, and kindness from the unkind. *(Kahlil Gibran)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Mel Gibson, movie actor, born in America, won his leading role in the 1979 Australian film “Mad Max” because the part demanded someone who looked weary, beaten-up and scarred, and Gibson had been attacked by three drunks just the night before his scheduled screen test. *(Ripley's Believe It or Not!: Strange Coincidences)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**After a leisurely soak in a friend’s hot tub, I found that a chemical reaction had turned my long, bleached hair bright green from the middle of my head down. Unable to do anything about it that afternoon, I twisted my green locks into a chignon and went off to work. To my surprise, I made triple my usual tips waiting on tables. I had forgotten that it was March 17 – St. Patrick’s Day. *(Patricia R. Stonsby, in Reader’s Digest)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**I compose choral music, and am often asked to guest-conduct choruses. During a recent stint I worked with 180 enthusiastic high-school singers. After the concert, as students and parents were filing out of the auditorium, one mother stopped me and said, “I want to thank you for providing my son with a wonderful musical experience – and especially for leaving him hoarse for the rest of the weekend. *(Carl J. Nygard, Jr., in Reader’s Digest)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Such was the experience of Langdon Gilkey, a civilian reporter imprisoned during World War II in the China's Shantung Compound. Shortly after his release, Gilkey, reflected back on his stay and wrote: “One of the strangest lessons of our unstable life passage is that the unwanted is creative rather than destructive. No one wished to go to the Weihsien camp. Yet such an experience, resisted and abhorred, had within it the seeds of new insight and thus of a new life for many of us. This is a common mystery of life--an aspect, if you will--of common grace; out of apparent evil new creativity can arise if the meanings and possibilities latent within the new situation are grasped with courage and with faith." *(Douglas Bloch, in New Thought magazine)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Somerset Maugham, the English writer, once wrote a story about a janitor at St. Peter's Church in London. One day a young vicar discovered that the janitor was illiterate and fired him. Jobless, the man invested his meager savings in a tiny tobacco shop, where he prospered, bought another, expanded, and ended up with a chain of tobacco stores worth several hundred thousand dollars. One day the man's banker said, “You've done well for an illiterate, but where would you be if you could read and write?” “Well,” replied the man, “I'd be janitor of St. Peter's Church in Neville Square.” *(Bits & Pieces)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**The marvelous richness of human experience would lose something of rewarding joy if there were no limitations to overcome. The hilltop hour would not be so wonderful if there were no dark valleys to traverse*. (Helen Keller)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**The city of St. Pierre, on the Caribbean island of Martinique, was completely destroyed within three minutes when Mt. Pelee erupted on May 8, 1902. Of the city's 30,000 inhabitants, only one man was found alive --he'd been locked up in a deep underground jail cell. *(Timothy T. Fullerton, in Triviata)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

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[New Yorkers should be glad they “lost” the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, said Michael Ozanian in Forbes.con. Questions of pride and vanity notwithstanding, history suggests that the financial burden of hosting the Olympics often trumps any glory or short-term surge in tourism. “A look at other publicity financed Olympics shows what a debacle they usually are for taxpayers.” Greece spent $14 billion on its 2004 Summer Games; now it’s struggling with huge budget deficits and a lot of unused facilities. In Barcelona, which hosted the 1992 Summer Games, studies indicate that paying off the debt used to finance the Games has pushed up inflation and hurt the poor and middle class. Taxpayers in Montreal are still paying for the gaping budget deficit that is the legacy of its 1976 Games. When the Olympics comes to town, in fact, the only winners are the businesses that profit during the Games, along with the politicians who “curry favor” from them. “New York’s politicians squandered a whole lot of time and effort campaigning for the Games. Now, thankfully, they won’t be able to waste anything more.” *(The Week magazine, July 22, 2005)*](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**A set of lost luggage saved a famous writer's life. Novelist Jerzy Kosinski was flying to Los Angeles from Paris when he lost his luggage in New York. He had to get off the plane to retrieve it and missed a party with actress Sharon Tate and her friends on the Coast. That was the same night that Charles Manson and his followers paid their murderous visit to the Tate house. *(Ripley's Believe It or Not!: Book of Chance, p. 32)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

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[**In Philadelphia in 1929, Charles Darrow lost his job as an engineer. He found himself with plenty of spare time, so he spent hours inventing a board game on his kitchen table to keep himself busy. For the game, he used street names from Atlantic City, New Jersey, where he used to visit. The name of the game was**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/) **“Monopoly,” which became one of America’s most popular games, and Charles Darrow became rich -- all because he had lost his job. *(Charles Reichblum, in Knowledge in a Nutshell, p. 123)***

**Nightmares Train Your Brain: In two related studies, researchers at the University of Geneva in Switzerland used brain scans to show that the same brain regions are activated when we experience fear in dreams and in real life. What’s more, people who have scary dreams more often are less afraid of frightening images when they are awake. This suggests that nightmares help us rehearse dangerous scenarios in a safe environment, which helps us know how to handle threats better when they actually occur. *(Reader’s Digest, October, 2019, page 46)***

[**Hagar says to Helga as the rain keeps coming down and the house is gradually getting drowned with water: “Try to look on the bright side, Helga. Fortunately, I never got around to planting that big vegetable garden you wanted!” *(Chris Browne, in Hagar the Horrible comic strip)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Megastar Arnold Schwarzenegger was born in Graz, Austria, in the rubble of the Third Reich’s defeat. His father was a policeman and his mother a housekeeper, and they lived in a house that had no toilet or refrigerator until he was 14. Could it have been such difficult circumstances that gave Schwarzenegger an edge? He thinks so. “Today in America,” Schwarzernegger says, “I see kids getting everything they want. I realize that stability will never create the hunger it takes to go beyond the limits. For that, something has to happen in your childhood and you say, ‘I’m going to make up for this.’ You don’t even know what it is. Maybe it made me try to prove something to my father. It doesn’t really matter. Something was there that made me hungry.” *(Richard Corliss, in Time magazine)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**I remember the story of the couple who had a retarded ten-year-old boy. They had spent large sums of money on medicine and therapy, but the boy seemed to be making little progress. To add to their woes, the husband’s mother died, leaving an aged father who was unable to maintain himself independent of family support. So the couple added to their burden by taking the little boy’s grandfather into their home. The retarded boy and the grandfather became fast friends, sharing activities and spending many hours together. The boy began to make significant progress in his performance of skills that had previously been regarded as unattainable. His doctors were absolutely amazed at the change in the boy and could offer no standard medical explanation for it. They did, however, admire the therapy that had taken place as the result of an inseparable companionship between a retarded boy and his aged grandfather. *(Dr. Charles Dickson, in New Realities magazine)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**It is only, perhaps, after you have loved and lost that you can comprehend what it means to another person to love you. Those who have never suffered unrequited love are commonly those who are most insensitive toward the hurt they may inflict on others, and the least appreciative of the gift of love. *(Sydney J. Harris, Field Newspaper Syndicate)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**The country's richest family, the Walton's (21.7 billion), built up Wal-Mart after losing the lease on a local dime store in 1950. *(Paul Craig Roberts, in Reader's Digest)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

[**Sometimes, bad luck is really good luck. Take the case of the Washington Monument in Washington, D.C. Originally the Washington Monument was to be surrounded by a 100-foot-high round building. But organizers had trouble raising money, and cursing their bad luck, scrapped plans for the round building at the base of the monument. However, the Washington Monument turned out to be much more beautiful in its necessary simplicity than if it had a distracting building at the bottom. *(Charles Reichblum, in Knowledge in a Nutshell, p. 160)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

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