

## **GOLDEN SLUMBERS / CARRY THAT WEIGHT / THE END**

Inspired by The Beatles' Medley

Week #2 of a 5-Week "Songs of Life" Series

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So how many people have really ever really struggled with something, and you went through a lot of inner turmoil about it? Anybody have? And how many people ever felt so beat up, so worn down, or left alone, you really want someone to hug you and just reassure you that everything was going to be all right? Anybody have a period -- a really long period -- of difficult stuff where you felt like you kind of lost your joy and you hadn't smiled or laughed in a long time? Anybody have that?

Well, just coincidentally I happen to have a great joke to make you smile. [Congregants laugh] And just maybe it might make you laugh! Let's see.

So there's a 70-year-old wealthy guy named Bill. And he walks into his country club, and he's got on his arm his beautiful, brand-new, 25-year-old bride. Everybody's staring and looking at them. And when he gets a little time later on to talk with his buddies, one of his buddies said, "*How on earth did you get such a young, beautiful woman to marry you?*" And Bill smiled and said, "*I lied about my age.*" And the guy said, "*What? Did you say you were 50?*" He said, "*No. I said I was 90.*" [Congregants laugh]

That was an "old" joke. And uh ... [Congregants laugh]

And so today, this is Week #2 of our five-week annual series, "The Songs of Life," where I take a famous song and extract a powerful spiritual message from it. I love doing this, because I love music. I think we all love music! Music touches us and takes us to deep and wonderful places that just the spoken word cannot. And I think that there is something so meaningful and profound. I think music just makes us happy. We all have songs that have helped us through tough times or helped uplift us when we feel down.

You know, whether it's The Beatles or Beyonce or Stevie Wonder or Stevie Nicks ... I mean, there are a lot of great artists out there that bring us songs that touch us. Last week, we kicked it off with Taylor Swift's song, "Shake It Off." And that's relevant to all of us, because we've all been judged in some ways in some negative ways, and we've got to shake those things off and not let them have a negative impact on us. That song was from 2014.

So we're going to go back 55 years to The Beatles. And this is really a medley of three songs. I kind of think about it as three-in-one. And it ends and leads to the ending of the *Abbey Road* album. And so the three songs are, of course, "Golden Slumbers," "Carry That Weight" and "The End." And the thing I love about this song -- several things I love about this song! -- is I think it helps give us a greater awareness of life and how life works. You know, how to handle some of the challenges and struggles, and how to live more effectively, more consciously and more spiritually.

And I love this song, because it goes from soft and reflective and quiet to just rocking it out. I love the entire range of emotions and experience. And through all of it, it's got wonderful truths and spiritual insights help us liberalize in a greater way.

I saw Paul McCartney many years ago, and he ended with these three songs. And then, of course, there were encores, but that's how the concert ended. And I was just so moved. I mean, this is one of my favorite Beatles songs. It's not one of the most famous; they've had so many. But this is an incredible and wonderful song.

So today, we're going to look at all three of the songs and see what spiritual insight they can give us for living our lives more effectively.

And the first one is a song, "Golden Slumbers." And so how many people have ever had a really bad night's sleep or not slept at all and tossed all night? Anybody? And the next day, of course, we never feel as good, because sleep is absolutely vital to our survival, our health and our well-being. You know, babies sleep for 12 to 16 hours a day because it is in sleep, you know, that we grow; you know, that we heal; that we repair. You know, sleep is powerful to have mental sharpness, to have greater centeredness and groundedness in our emotions and making better decisions. Our bodies and minds function better when we have the right and appropriate amount of sleep.

And I love how it says "golden slumbers." Like sleeping and slumbering are important anyway; I like adding the word golden there to really elevate how precious, how valuable and important sleep is for us on many, many levels.

Now these words aren't exactly all Paul's. He borrowed them from a British poet who wrote a poem called "Cradle Song" in 1603. And here are the words; tell me if it sounds kind of familiar:

***"Golden slumbers kiss your eyes  
Smiles await you when you rise  
Sleep pretty wanton, do not cry  
And I will sing a lullaby."***

And I love how it goes from sleep, which is valuable and important. and creates this experience of tenderness and caring and nurturing and comforting and reassuring. Almost, you know, when these words come out, it feels like someone saying, "It's okay. Everything's going to be okay; I'm right here with you, and you're going to wake up in the morning and everything's going to be better." It just creates that wonderful, wonderful, powerful feeling.

Now from a ... Sleep is valuable and important to refresh and renew us on the physical and mental level, but I would say golden slumbers also represents that spiritual renewal -- that spiritual rest, that spiritual quietness -- that revitalizes us when we are invited into that process. When we allow ourselves to go into greater meditation and prayer.

You know, Jesus said, "Come apart and rest awhile." He was talking about that "golden slumber" of renewing ourselves and refreshing ourselves. You know, he also said, "Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-burdened, and I will give you rest." So you can see the powerful and important message of resting in God -- of quieting our minds; of being still -- to reconnect at a soul level that renews and revitalizes us.

You know, like sleep, we have to turn away from the outer world for a while to renew and recharge ourselves. That's why Jesus said, "When you pray, go into thy inner chamber and close the door and pray to your Father who is in secret." You know, he is saying: withdraw from the world so you could renew yourself at a spiritual level by going within.

To me, "golden slumbers" is about our willingness to step away and set the things of the world aside; to detach from them so we could renew by immersing our hearts and minds in the living Spirit of God.

You know, if someone were to say, "What is the greatest thing we could do to help our lives, to help ourselves to overcome problems?" Without a doubt, I would say **more time spent in the silence and in the quiet and centering ourselves in God.** I would say there is nothing that is close to that. We don't always do it, but it is the most valuable and important way -- more important than sleep, although sleep is right up there! It is the spiritual version of sleep, of renewing and recharging ourselves.

Remember the Parable of the Pearl of Great Price? You know, someone found this pearl hidden in a field, and it was so valuable that they hid it, went and sold everything they had, and then purchased the land so they could have this pearl of great price. And the pearl of great price is our relationship with God. It is our quiet time of connecting and replenishing and revitalizing ourselves spiritually. And then when you find that, you hide it; you keep it to yourself. And then you sell -- which means releasing all the things that are distracting you -- and purchasing it. You know what a purchase means? To get a good purchase, to get a good hold of it. And to make it a valuable and important part of your life.

In the same way we need to sleep every night -- regular, consistent sleep -- we need regular and consistent quiet time and prayer and meditation to refill and renew ourselves spiritually. And I'm not saying eight hours a day, like we need for sleep, but at least 20 or 30 or 40 minutes a day to quiet the mind and immerse the mind and center ourselves spiritually.

Jesus prayed consistently. He prayed regularly. He prayed daily; every single day. It was a regular part of his life, just as eating and sleeping are a part of our regular lives.

How many people have heard of the Silva method of mind control? Anybody heard of that? What is the absolute foundation for that to succeed? By the way, José Silva created that back in 1960. It was a mental process program for us to tap into greater levels of creativity and insight and inspiration, and even get a level of clairvoyance and to be able to see even beyond the current situations. The absolute fundamental for that to succeed was a mind that was quiet and relaxed: a clear mind that was non-resistant with fear, anxiety, or doubt. That that was the most important thing. The clearer you make your mind -- the more you can quiet and rest and relax and open your mind -- the greater your chance for creativity and insight and inspiration and divine guidance coming in and through you.

And when we deprive ourselves of sleep, we don't think as clearly; we don't feel as good. But I would say, when we deprive ourselves of spiritual practice -- of spiritual slumber -- we undermine and sabotage our own peace on our own levels of happiness.

This song is saying that sleep is golden slumber that's important, but prayer is golden. Meditation and quiet time and devoting that time with God is absolutely golden.

The second song we're going to look at is "Carry That Weight." Yeah, I bet every single one of us has had a time in our lives where we felt like the weight of the world was on our shoulders. Anybody ever have that experience? Okay, about three of us. [Congregants laugh]

What if I told you that you are 100% responsible for your life? One hundred percent responsible!

*"I'm 100% responsible for my life."*

Let's say that together: [with congregation] *"I am 100% responsible for my life."*

Take a deep breath. Now let's say it half voice: [with congregation] *"I am 100% responsible for my life."*

Take a deep breath. Half voice again: *"I am 100% responsible for my life."*

So when you said that, what kind of feelings did you have? Did you get feelings that were excited, you know, and enthusiastic and overjoyed? Or did you feel like, "Wow, that's heavy" or, "I don't like that" or, "That's scary." Did you see it and feel like a gift and a blessing, or did you feel like it was a curse and a burden?

And so the thing is about being fully responsible for our lives -- meaning our relationships, our work, our finances, I mean, everything in our life. Being fully responsible can feel like we're carrying a weight, especially when life is not going well. Now, when life is going well, we love to be responsible and get the credit for it! But when things are not going well, clearly there is someone else at fault. [Congregants

laugh] It's easy to want to blame. You know, we want to blame the boss. You know, we blame the president. We blame the economy. You know, we blame the weather. And of course, those damn Canadians. We got to blame them a little bit. [Laughs with congregants]

So, you know, we like to blame. We love to blame! But you know what happens with blaming, as fun as it might be for three or four seconds? Is that we give our power away to someone else. We say that my peace and happiness is affected by them. They control my peace and happiness.

And when we fully accept responsibility, it means that we take control of our lives. It means that we are empowered to make new choices, new decisions; look at things in a different way; shift our attitude and perspective; and think of a new game plan. That when we are fully responsible, it means that we have the power to change and respond to whatever situation in a way that will improve and transform it.

And I would say accepting full responsibility also means that we are willing to accept that some things just are. Being fully responsible also means to just realize, *"I need to just make peace with this"* or, *"I need to make peace with what's going on right now."* To carry that weight means that you are fully responsible for your life, but it doesn't have to be a burden.

One of my favorite spiritual writers is Ralph Marston. Here's what he says. He said, *"The more responsibility you take for your own life, the better your life will be. The more responsibility you take for your own circumstances, those circumstances will be more to your liking. Even though your current situation may largely be someone else's fault, it is still your responsibility, because the way to be in control of your life is to take full responsibility for it. Certainly there are those who hold you back and, of course, there are many things that are beyond your control. But taking responsibility is the best thing to do anyway. Accept the responsibility and act on it, because it's the best option you have for moving your life forward. Every time you blame others, you give up control over your life. And that's certainly not what you want; and it certainly will bring you nothing of value. Step up and take responsibility, no matter what, as often as you can, and do it enthusiastically. For when you take responsibility, what you get is control and the power to be your best."*

So I want you to think of a situation in your life that may not be going as well as you'd like, and my question is: Are you accepting full responsibility for that? Meaning: Are you feeling empowered? And are you feeling positive? And are you feeling hopeful about how you can help transform that into a greater situation? Or are you feeling negative or frustrated, overwhelmed, annoyed or hopeless?

We are 100% responsible for our lives, and it's not a burden and it's not a punishment. It is a gift and it is an empowerment that every single one of us has. We not only are fully responsible for our lives, but I believe we bear responsibility for some of the people in our lives as well. Martin Root says, *"You have to do it for yourself and you can't do it alone."*

We are responsible for ourselves, and we are responsible for caring and helping and supporting others in the way that we can. You know, it says in the Bible so many times to help others and help ourselves; to love others and love ourselves; care for others and care for ourselves. It even says carry your own burdens, but carry the burdens of others, as well. We have a responsibility to ourselves, and we have a responsibility to those people in our lives and to help in a way that we can help.

We all need help in some way! I love AA and Helping Parents Heal: organizations that have people help people. You know, we all need help and we all need to help to make this a better and fuller life. To only look after ourselves is not healthy. And to only look to help others is not healthy. To find that balance of responsibility for our own health and well-being and to support others I think is valuable and important.

And it's important to help but not enable. Sometimes we can cross the line of helping people in a healthy way, which enables and actually weakens them. And we know it's not healthy when we begin to

feel so depleted. So sometimes we need to look at that and say: Is this the best thing? And is this the best strategy?

Let me give you a Biblical example. So Peter ... Jesus is washing the disciples' feet and Peter says, "Oh, you don't have to wash my feet, Jesus." And Jesus said, "No, I need to wash your feet because you'll be a part of me." And then Peter says, "Well, what the heck? Since you're washing my feet, can you wash my hands and my face, as well?" And Jesus says, "Heck, no! That's inappropriate. You got to wash your own face. You've got to wash your own hands."

And so what he's saying there is that helping and being responsible and caring for each other is good. But don't cross the line when it begins to enable, because it will weaken them and it will frustrate you. And we don't get to each live our lives to the fullest. Does that make sense everyone?

To be fully responsible for our lives is you have the power to act; you have the power to choose; you have the power to make new decisions. You have the power to change your attitude and your mindset. That's how powerful you are! You know, this whole idea that we "have to carry that weight a long time" means that you get the responsibility for your life all the time. And that's a good thing; it's not a bad thing. It is an empowering and wonderful thing, not a burden and not a curse. It's a gift.

*"I am 100% responsible for my life."*

Together: [with congregation] *"I am 100% responsible for my life."*

And the final song is called "The End." And the words are:

***"And in the end  
The love you take  
is equal to the love you make"***

Two things that's talking about. Number one: how valuable and important love is. There is nothing we desire more in life than to be loved. Than to feel cared for; to feel cherished; to be valued and supported. To need and to be needed. Nothing more important that we care about!

It doesn't matter what our job is that we do ... and, yes, the job is important and it makes a difference. But love is the thing! There's no knowledge or degree or thing that can ever replace our need and desire for love.

And you ever notice when you feel love, you feel joyful? You feel hopeful? You know, you feel fulfilled? You feel positive? You feel supported? You feel nurtured? You feel compassionate? You feel generous? Like, I believe when you feel love, everything else flows from love. All the other dimensions and wonderful qualities of life all flow from when we feel filled with love.

You know, Scripture says faith, hope, and love; and the greatest of these is love. And I love the ... You know, as a minister, we do a lot of funerals. And I did a preparation meeting this week. And in every single funeral, when they talk about someone, you know, "and they did this or that," what they remember most is the love that they shared. The love that still remains. Love never dies! Even after these physical bodies die, love remains. Love endures. Love is the thing that will continue on.

So, "in the end, the love you take is equal to the love you make" is talking about how important love is. In the end, that is the final and most important thing.

And then the second is that what you put out is what comes back to you. The love you make is the love you take. It's talking about the law of sowing and reaping. You know, what we sow, we reap. What we put out, you know, comes back to us.

So my question for you is What are you sowing? And what do you put ... what kind of energies are you putting out in your life? And what are things are you reaping? What are the things that are coming back? And what are the things you would like to reap? Because if you want to reap it, and it's the law of sowing and reaping, it means we get to start sowing some new things.

You know, if you want more joy, let's sow more joy. If you want more kindness, let's sow more kindness. You know, if we want more appreciation, let's sow more appreciation. Or sow more positivity. Sow more passion. Sow more friendship. Sow more generosity and possibilities. It's all there! What we put out into the Universe, it'll come back to us. A level of fulfillment of our lives is what we put out into the Universe.

And there's so many ways we can put good out! You know, there was once a Scottish farmer -- a really poor farmer -- named Fleming. And he was working on his farm and he was just struggling to get by for his family. And he heard way out in the distance, somebody's kind of screaming and yelling. He went, and this young boy was in mud up to his waist and kind of sinking. And, you know, if he had been left that way, he probably would have had a horrible death. And so the farmer Fleming saved him.

The next day, a carriage pulled up and there was this nobleman. And he stepped out and he said, "Are you the man that saved my son?"

He said, "Yes."

He said, "I want to repay you."

He said, "No; I don't need anything."

And this nobleman said, "Well, what I'd really like to do is for your son." He saw that he had a son. He said, "Could I pay for his education?" And the guy was so poor, he wanted to help his son. So he agreed, and the nobleman paid for the son's education.

And the son went on to be a doctor. And he became Sir Alexander Fleming, who discovered penicillin. And years later, the nobleman's son was stricken with pneumonia, and the thing that saved his life was penicillin. And the nobleman's name was Lord Randolph Churchill. And his son that was saved by the penicillin was Sir Winston Churchill.

I always kind of liked that story, and it's really kind of cool. But the point is: it's the energy we put out into the Universe. All the time! It's all the little things that we say; all the little things that we do. All the thoughts that we think; all the ways that we treat others. All the ways that we process, you know, when we get judged and all the different things. All the things we put out into the Universe will always come back. Life is energy, and the vibrations that we put out will be the vibrations that we attract, and that come through to us

And we just, like; we've got to be like a farmer. We've got to plant those seeds – sow those seeds, sow those seeds -- because that's what we'll be reaping. That's what'll be harvesting in our lives. To me, to sow and reap: to sow means that how we choose to live our life and put our energy out there.

Here's a little poem that I love that Kind of shares about how to live life ... what life is and how to live it.:

*Life is an adventure. Dare it.*

*Life is beauty. Praise it.*

*Life is a challenge. Meet it.*

*Life is a duty. Perform it.*

*Life is a love. Enjoy it.*

*Life is a tragedy. Face it.*

*Life is a struggle. Fight it.*

*Life is a promise. Fulfill it.*  
*Life is a game. Play it.*  
*Life is a gift. Accept it.*  
*Life is a journey. Complete it.*  
*Life is a mystery. Unfold it.*  
*Life is a goal. Achieve it.*  
*Life is an opportunity. Take it.*  
*Life is a puzzle. Solve it.*  
*Life is a song. Sing it.*  
*Life is a sorrow. Overcome it.*  
*Life is a spirit. Release it.*  
*Life is a wonder. Cherish it.*

You know, these three songs: I think they're about realizing God is your Source. And the best thing you could do is to have spiritual slumber and quiet time to refill and replenish yourself spiritually. It is the most powerful thing to do: to take time to quiet, to connect with the Source of all good and the Source of all life.

Secondly is: you carry the weight of responsibility for your life every single day. And it isn't a burden; it's a gift and a blessing that says you are so powerful and empowered, you can transform anything in your life. And you have the responsibility to help others to make their lives better, as well.

And finally: in the end, love is the greatest thing. And to be careful about what you put out, because what we put out is what comes back to us.

And that is the message from the three songs, "Golden Slumbers," "Carry That Weight" and "The End." The end. [Congregants laugh and applaud]

### **"Golden Slumbers Medley" Song Lyrics**

*Once there was a way  
To get back homeward  
Once there was a way  
To get back home  
Sleep, little darling, do not cry  
I will sing a lullaby*

*Golden slumbers fill your eyes  
Smiles await you when you rise  
Sleep, little darling, do not cry  
And I will sing a lullaby*

*Once there was a way  
To get back homeward  
Once there was a way  
To get back home  
Sleep, little darling, do not cry  
And I will sing a lullaby*

*Boy, you're gonna carry that weight  
Carry that weight a long time*

*Boy, you're gonna carry that weight  
Carry that weight a long time*

*Oh yeah, I never give you my pillow  
I only send you my invitations  
And in the middle of a celebration, I lay down*

*Boy, you're gonna carry that weight  
Carry that weight a long time  
Boy, you're gonna carry that weight  
Carry that weight a long time*

*Oh yeah, all right  
Well, you're gonna be in my dreams tonight*

*Love you, love you  
Love you, love you  
Love you, love you  
Love you, love you*

*And in the end  
The love you take  
Is equal to the love  
You make*

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