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CHILDREN'S PAGE STORIES -- 1959-60

By Mrs. Paul E. King

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, October, 1959

Story 1
A CHANGED KATHY

Slosh, slosh! Slosh, slosh! went Kathy's red boots as she walked home in the falling rain. The day was dark and dismal just like Kathy's spirit. Her countenance was one of utter dejection. Why hadn't Miss Cutler given her the leading part in the singing? She could do every bit as good as Cindy Brooks, she was sure; and yes, a whole lot better than Cindy. Her own mother and daddy sang in the choir in the "big church," as it was called, in Centerville, while Cindy went to a little white frame church at the edge of town. Then too, Cindy didn't have the nice new frilly dresses that she, Kathy, was always getting! Why had Miss Cutler chosen Cindy when She knew all these things why? why? She was so busy wondering that she scarcely knew when she came up to the big gate of her home and Sarge, the chauffeur let her in.

"Good afternoon, Miss Kathy," he said. But she didn't even hear him. "Why, why, why"? had been going through her little mind so loudly until that's all she heard.

She entered the front door of the big house and didn't even see Fuzzy, the cat, come purring toward her for a stroke on the back or a pat on her head. Kathy walked straight through the house to the kitchen, with Fuzzy following at her heels, and threw her books down on the kitchen table so hard that Maudie, the maid, jumped. "Why Kathy child," she exclaimed, "whatever has gotten into you? You cross or something? Remember what I told you about the Lord Jesus wanting to take all that old crossness and meanness out of your heart! You better listen to old Maudie and get saved. "Why, honey child, you look as sour as Aunt Bess' sour pickles. What's the matter?" and suddenly she folded the weeping Kathy in her big strong arms and was cooing softly in her ear. "Now stop your crying and tell old Maudie all about it. What happened to make my little black headed girl weep so! Out with it! Maudie must know before she can help you." Between sobs and tears Kathy told her everything and just how she felt toward Cindy, and then added, "Maudie, oh, Maudie, why didn't Miss Cutler choose me? I did so badly want to sing the leading part in those hymns! Why did Cindy have to get it? She doesn't have pretty things like I have. Why--why, only last week she pulled another tooth, and she'll look funny up there singing in her old cotton dress. Mama has such pretty dresses for me, and I even have my new black patent leather slippers that I could wear. Oh, Maudie, why did she ever choose Cindy?" And a fresh shower of tears ensued.

"Now Kathy Wiltshire, you sit up big and straight and listen to me! Old Maudie has a lot to tell you, and you must look right at me," and old Maudie's voice was trembling with tears. "Ever since you've been a tiny baby Maudie rocked, nursed and fondled you. You're now twelve years old and Maudie's been watching how proud and vain you've been the last few years. Maudie's shed a lot of tears over you honey child. You're putting premiums on the wrong things. How often have I told you God looks on the heart! He doesn't notice Cindy's "old cotton" dresses, as you put it. But He sees a loving, clean, and pure heart! He doesn't see Cindy's toothless smile but He does hear her singing "My Jesus I Love Thee" and "Rock of Ages," for Him, and for His glory. Why Kathy, He doesn't even notice your beautiful frilly taffeta dresses, your new shoes, nor your pretty white teeth. But I'll tell you what He does see, Kathy Wiltshire. He sees your ugly, sour, hateful disposition, and it grieves Him greatly because He's wanted to take it all out of you and give you a new and loving heart--a heart that makes you love everybody. And you've turned Him away and said, "No Jesus, some other time." Listen to me Kathy, your old Maudie loves you, but unless you repent of your sins and let Jesus save you, you'll grow up to be a wicked sinner and lose your soul and go to Hell where you'll burn forever and ever."

"Stop it! Stop it!" cried Kathy. "Oh, Maudie, I've been so wicked and mean, and so hateful; and I don't want to be like this--I don't, I don't not ever again. Maudie, please pray for me. I don't want to go to Hell. I want Jesus to make me a child of His Own, and take all this nastiness out of my heart," and Kathy was on her knees sobbing bitterly and repenting of her sins. Together Maudie and Kathy prayed in the kitchen until Kathy prayed clear through and was clapping her hands for pure joy. "Oh, Maudie, Maudie" she laughed, "I've never been this happy in all my life! I love you, I love you, dear old Maudie--so much; and oh, Maudie, I'm so glad Miss Cutler picked Cindy instead of me. Jesus just gave me a big love for Cindy, and I'm going to let Cindy wear my best dress and new slippers when she sings and Jesus will see that I have a new heart,--a changed

heart." Old Maudie patted the dark curly head of the smiling girl, and wiping the tears from her own eyes, went back to preparing the supper. -- By Mrs. Paul E. King

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, November, 1959

Story 2

DANNY'S THANKSGIVING

"Wake up, dear, wake up!" Mother called from the stairway to Danny, "it's snowing hard and you must leave a little earlier this morning."

Danny hurried down the steps dressed in his woolen socks and heavy woolen clothes. While mother fried the bacon and eggs he lazily and sleepily put his shoes on, then pulled the kitchen chair a little closer to the stove. "Sure seems cold this morning, doesn't it mother? I wish I didn't need to go look after those traps I set; probably won't be much in them anyway on a morning like this; but then I promised Bro. Johnson I'd give at least ten dollars in the Missionary offering, and I believe the Lord will help me to catch enough animals to meet that need. I'm so glad I was born in America and not in some heathen land where they don't know about Jesus, and how He can save from all sin, and mother, I'm so glad you and daddy are my very own."

"We're glad you belong to us too, dear, but hurry now, and eat your breakfast", said mother, "it will take you a good hour or more to look after those traps, and then it's school time. So hurry"!

Danny ate his breakfast and drank a cup of hot peppermint tea mother made from some she had dried that summer, then together they read the Bible and prayed. The Lord was really there as they prayed. Mother entrusted Danny into God's loving care and fondly kissed him as he slipped his heavy coat and boots on then went out into the storm.

For a long time after he had gone, mother stood looking out the window watching the rapidly falling snow as it kept piling higher and higher. She noticed that a strong, sharp wind was beginning to blow, and again and again she looked heavenward while tears flowed carelessly down her soft cheeks, and prayed. How she wished Daddy was home! But then, she too must share! Wasn't Daddy needed in that revival meeting! Her lot as mother was not to go, but to stay and pray. This she accepted cheerfully. Then too, Thanksgiving was only three days away and Daddy would be home by then.

She went busily about the house -- cleaning floors, making beds and getting everything in readiness for Thanksgiving. If the Lord saw fit to spare her life till tomorrow, there were pies, cakes and bread to be baked for the big dinner. Suddenly she heard the clock on the mantle chime out ten chimes. She rushed to the window and looked out; all that met her gaze was snow, snow and more snow, with great drifts piling all around the farm. What had happened to Danny -- was he lost, or perhaps even frozen in this dreadful blizzard? All these thoughts kept racing through her mind as she hurriedly buttoned on her heavy woolen coat, put on her galoshes, and a thick heavy head scarf and mittens, then tucking her tiny New Testament into her coat pocket, she stepped out

into the blizzard, praying every step of the way and asking the Lord to guide her to her boy. He said he had set some traps over in the wooded lot, and some along the creek, also, others were down by the beaver dam he had discovered that fall. But where should she go first? Every moment counted. Three hours had passed by since he left! "Dear Lord, lead me to him. Help me to find him before it's too late," she prayed again and again. She increased her pace though the wind lashed angrily at her skirts, and tried to make her retreat. Her face was stinging from the bitter cold and driving snow; she thought she was heading toward the woods, but could not be certain, as the blinding snow cut off all visibility except directly in front of her. She plodded on and on--every muscle aching and every nerve tense and alert. Once she thought she heard a voice calling, but when she stopped to listen all she could hear was the soft, silent dropping of the snow. Her body was growing exceedingly tired and a sleepy sensation came over her. Why not sit down and rest awhile--not long--just a few minutes! But 'No', her conscience told her, not only would she freeze to death, but somewhere in this vast wilderness of snow and freezing cold was her boy. She must go on! She just must! Clutching the New Testament more tightly and praying fervently, she walked wearily on. Suddenly, she stumbled, falling face down into the high piled snow. Getting to her feet she noticed a hump in the snow, and where she had stumbled she unearthed a trap--one of Danny's traps! She picked up the trap and in so doing, noticed it was clutched tightly in a boyish hand. Quickly she brushed the snow off the hump--"Danny! Danny! she cried. There was no response. Feverishly she rubbed his face, legs and arms. No longer did she notice the fatigue and weariness of her own body, nor did she feel the fierceness of the blizzard beating angrily upon her; her Danny must be saved and spared. As she rubbed on and on she felt warmth coming back into the face and those fat boyish hands. Though he was too nearly frozen to talk, he made feeble attempts to smile. Mother continued to rub until the warm blood was again flowing into all parts of his body and Danny was able to stand upon his feet. Tightly he held on to his traps and the beaver he had caught that morning, also some lesser furs. "We must try to get home now," said mother, "and as fast as we can possibly make it. Thank God you're alive! Not much longer and you'd have been frozen to death."

"I know," replied Danny, "I was making good time until I sprained my ankle; then I slowed down terribly. At times I had such pain I couldn't walk, then I'd sit down and rest a little while. I knew I couldn't sit long or I'd freeze to death. When you found me that's what was happening to me. I was nearly frozen. My ankle hurt so badly that I just had to get off it for awhile and I must have sat too long. The Lord answered my prayer when I prayed for help--He sent you; mother dear, and look at these pelts He sent me! Now I can pay all my missionary pledge and have some left to get you and Dad a few things you've been needing. Jesus is so good, mother!"

"Yes, my son," answered mother with tears rolling down her cheeks like diamonds. "Now we must be hurrying home. You lean heavily on my arm. I'll carry these furs and some of the traps. It's a good thing you thought to bring them home. The winter season is too cold for you to do any more trapping. You must show me which direction is home, for in this blizzard I haven't the faintest idea how to get home. You have a good sense of direction like Daddy. I thought I was going toward the woods when I came hunting you, but look where I wound up--down by the beaver dam! The Lord's hand was in it all and I want to praise Him for it."

Danny turned mother completely around, then pointing east said; "somewhere over there is home. Let's go."

Leaning heavily upon mother's strong arm, Danny limped on and on. Though the pain was almost Unbearable at times, he never once murmured nor complained. Big tears coursed their way down his cheeks when they finally saw the house with its cozy warmth and snowy white curtains bidding them inside.

Not until Danny was put to bed with a warm cup of milk, and his badly swollen ankle tightly bandaged, did mother rest. Then she sat in the big old rocking chair in the kitchen and raised her voice and her heart to God for the mighty deliverance He had wrought. This would indeed be the best Thanksgiving they'd ever shared--Daddy would be home and Danny was alive and safe! Though he'd have to spend a week or more in bed, Danny was alive and that was all that mattered! In the midst of these pleasant thoughts, a warm drowsiness overtook mother; a sweet smile played across her face as she slept. In the bedroom, with that good, warm feeling all about him, Danny, too, slept. Outside, the blizzard raged on.

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, December, 1959

Story 3

THE BEST CHRISTMAS

"Bonnie! Bonnie!" shouted Sue as she pounded loudly on the breezeway door, "do let me in, and don't be so long at it, I'm about to freeze to death, and I have lots and lots to tell you."

"Be there in a minute," laughed Bonnie as she let her friend inside. "Dear me, Sue, you'd think the woods was on fire the way you bang and holler. Do be more quiet. Ted's taking his nap and you know how cross he can be when he's not through sleeping."

The two girls tiptoed quietly into the living room and stood for a moment watching the boys across the street making a snow man. "They need my red scarf around his neck," exclaimed Sue, "and your plaid cap with the pompoms, Bonnie, then he'll look cozy and warm." Sue found Bonnie's cap, and taking her own red scarf, she mischievously scampered out the door and across the yard to the snowman. She carefully perched the cap upon the frosty head and draped her scarf about his snowy neck, then, just as quick, she was back in the living room again. "There! That's better," she commented.

"What's all this you had to tell me?" asked Bonnie, "Anything exciting?" "Oh, yes," Sue answered. "I've found out what I'm getting for Christmas, and I just had to tell you. You remember that beautiful girl's bicycle we looked at several months ago?" Bonnie nodded and Sue continued "Mother told me they bought it for me; also a perfectly black velveteen skirt and weskit outfit with a lovely white blouse, and three or four new school dresses, and several new skirts and blouses, a new life size doll and . . . and . . . and" "Wait a minute," said Bonnie, "you're so excited I can't think straight." Suddenly Bonnie said soberly and with much pity, "Sue, don't you remember what I told you some time ago about Jesus--how God gave us the greatest gift ever when He gave His only beloved Son for us? I got saved and want you to get saved too, Sue, and to find Jesus. He is the

greatest gift you can ever obtain or receive. Why don't you ask Him to forgive you of all your sins and let Him save your soul? It's wonderful to be a Christian"! Sue turned abruptly, picked up her coat and started for the door exclaiming, "I must be going, for mother told me to set the table for supper. See you later Bonnie." "Don't forget what I said," Bonnie pleaded as Sue departed.

Since Christmas was only two days away, and mother was over caring for Mrs. Ward and her sick children, Bonnie decided upon her own Christmas. This would be her best Christmas ever! Busily, and as quietly as possible, she got flour, baking powder, sugar, salt, and shortening out of the cupboard, and eggs and milk from the refrigerator, then finding mother's recipe book she located the section she wanted. She prepared batch after batch--some she set in the refrigerator to chill, while others were baked immediately. Some were black, some white, and still others were colored a delicate pink, soft green or light yellow. When she was through with her baking, she had mother's two round cookie jars bulging, a big dishpan, and the mixing bowl all filled to running over, Some had chocolate goodies on top and some had nuts; others had coconut or bright colored sugar shining at her.

Ted awoke and came noiselessly down the stairs, then sticking an impish, round face around the corner, sweetly said "Hi." Bonnie jumped with fear. Her mind had been so completely occupied with her new plan that she hadn't heard her little ruddy faced brother get out of bed, nor make his way down the stairs. Ted laughed with boyish glee when she jumped, and she ran to him, gathered him into her arms, then went straight to the kitchen. Ted's eyes grew bigger and bigger as he saw first, pretty colored stars, brightly shining Christmas trees, soft, light angels and big fat gingerbread men, and what was that over there! Chocolate cookies! His small fat hands kept pointing to the chocolate cookies, then the stars, and over and over he kept repeating, "Cookies, Bonnie! cookies! Just two, Ted, no more," exclaimed Bonnie. "It's too near supper time and you must eat some vegetables, then you may have some more cookies," she laughed, between kissing his soft full cheeks. She put him in his chair with the two cookies, then glancing at the clock said, "I'll be right down. I must go upstairs and get something. You be good and eat your cookies and then I'll take you with me to the store." She ran up the stairs to her bedroom, then opening her dresser drawer she pulled out her small saving bank. There would be close to eight dollars in it she knew--maybe more. She'd forget all about that new coat she wanted--too many others around her really needed clothing! Besides, she had the best mother and daddy a girl could possibly have; better still, they were devout Christians. Without any hesitation she opened the bank and counted the money. Almost ten dollars!

She was so happy she forgot to put her coat on as she and Ted slipped out the door. She hadn't gone far until the cold, biting wind reminded her that all she had on was her sweater and skirt. She ran back to the house for her coat, and in no time at all they were again on their way to the store. It wasn't a great big store maybe, but it had everything she wanted and needed to complete her secret. Ted chattered constantly, and occasionally stooped to pick up the soft, light snow, then watched as the wind blew it gently out of his hand. Bonnie never heard or noticed. Her mind was full of kind deeds and happy thoughts. By the time they reached the store Ted's cheeks were as red as a rosy apple and her own cheeks were stinging from the cold..

"Good afternoon, Bonnie," said Mr. Brown, the store manager, "and what may I do for you? Want to take another look at that coat you've been wanting? Perhaps I can tell your folks how much you like it," and he laughed, "after all it is near Christmas time."

"No," Bonnie said cheerfully, "I want to see those warm sweaters you've been having on sale, and some woolen gloves and hats and such like, for small children." Mr. Brown paused for a moment then gave her an astonished look. "Something special the way it looks eh, Bonnie?" he chuckled. "Yes, very, very special," she said.

He led the way to the sweaters and in a very little while Bonnie made her selections--a cozy, soft blue for small Ann, and a deep wine red with blue plaid across the shoulders for Roddy. Her face was shining with an inward light. After she had made all the purchases and still had small change left, she bought Ted a bright red tractor which he clutched tightly in his fat hand, and some licorice strips. He reached eagerly for the candy, "not till after supper," Bonnie said kindly, "then it's all Ted's."

All the way home her heart was singing. Never had she had such a good, deep down inside feeling, except when she got saved and sanctified--but this was even a different feeling--a feeling of unselfishness and good will toward others.

It was early Christmas eve when Bonnie told mother she had something yet to do, and since the whole house had an air of secrecy about it just then, Mother never asked what. Bonnie, with two loaded shopping bags in her hands made her way down the icy road to a small frame house. She carefully and quietly set the shopping bags in front of the door, then knocked. When she heard footsteps she ran far up the road. Hiding in the shadows of a bleak, bare tree she watched as poor widow Bensley came to the door and her secret tumbled inside. She thought she saw the poor widow woman take her apron and wipe away some tears, but then, she couldn't be too sure as her own eyes were all misty and wet from tears of joy and happiness. "Thank You, Lord. Thank You I: she repeated, as a voice from the heavens kept whispering through the still night air "In-as-much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, January, 1960

Story 1

THE TWO MISSIONARIES

An Allegory

There came a day when two angels, busy on errands for the King, met at two graves in a tropical land.

"I wonder who is buried here?" inquired the first angel.

"I can tell you," said the second, "if you have time to tarry a few minutes."

"Say on," said the first angel, folding his wings and his hands, and preparing to listen.

So the second angel let down his wings, and looking away as though at a distant scene, began: "Once there were two. missionaries, a man and his wife. They left home and kindred and friends, and went out to the far-off fields where the harvest was plenteous but the laborers were few, to labor there for their Savior and Lord, and to gather in souls.

"After some months, the man said to his wife, 'Good wife, this is a very strange thing. Our support, which was faithfully promised, has dropped off; and this month there is but half enough to meet our needs. Perhaps we should not go to market for food today.'

" 'It cannot be that the Lord has failed us,' said his good wife cheerily. 'Though we gather but little, we shall have no lack; and the Father who feeds the birds shall feed us, and nestle us under His wings!'

" 'True,' said the man heartily, and they sat down and ate their meal of rice and sweet potatoes with thanksgiving. They did not go to market that day.

"On a later day, the wife said to her husband, 'This is indeed a very strange thing, as you said--this month our needs are not half met. What do you suppose the trouble can be?'

" 'Take heart, my good wife,' said the man, cheerily. 'Our Lord knew not only hunger, but thirst, as He went about His Father's business. He had not even where to lay His head: We must cheerfully sacrifice for the spread of the Gospel. In due season we shall reap, if we faint not.'

" 'True,' said his wife, and they sat down to their meal of rice, and gave thanks. Nor did they go to market that day.

"Back in the vineyard at home, in a town called Promising, there were very few who gave much thought to the missionaries. Occasionally one or the other prayed kindly, 'O God, bless these servants of Thine, and give them souls, and supply their needs--for the laborer is indeed worthy of his hire.'

"Once on a day, Mrs. Can't-Afford-to-Christian said, 'I really should keep my promise and send some money to. those missionaries; but food prices are so high that it takes all our money to feed the family comfortably, and there is nothing to spare Come, father; come, children -- dinner is ready!' And they all sat down to their 'simple' fare of tomato aspic appetizers, roast sirloin of beef with Yorkshire pudding, cauliflower, hot rolls, pickled beet relish, butterscotch layer cake, milk, and coffee.

"Miss Forgetful-Christian said, 'Oh, dear! That missionary and his lovely wife have slipped my mind, and for some months I have neglected to. send them what I promised. I must remember them with my gift very soon.' Yet somehow nothing was ever done about it; for when she did remember, to do so was not convenient at the moment, for her checkbook was not at hand.

"Miss I-Need-It-More-Christian took out her credit coin, and said, 'I know I really promised to support those missionaries, but I simply must have this new fur coat. It would be a shame to miss such a good bargain--only \$400, marked down from \$600! Of course, I cannot get much wear out of it this year--the winter is practically over--but I can save it till next winter.'

"Mr. Mean-to-Christian said, on a later day, 'I have been very lax in sending the support I promised to the missionary and his wife. I surely must do it soon.' Yet as the days went by, with the best of intentions, always meaning to, he never did.

"However, Mr. Faithful-Tither-Christian and Mrs. Widow's-Mite-Christian continued to send off their gifts regularly, together with their prayers.

"Then the missionary and his wife were taken sick with fever. 'Doubtless it is just because we have been so tired lately, dear wife,' said the man. 'Had we all our energy, we would perhaps not have succumbed.'

" 'True,' said his wife.

" 'We will be better soon,' he said.

" 'Quite better,' she answered. "Then they lay silently, and neither of them said what the other was thinking--that had they eaten sufficient food of the nourishing nature they might not now be lying on their backs but would still be laboring for the Savior. A Christian native came and ministered unto them in their illness.

"Some days later, they were both dead. All the natives, whom they had led to Christ, came and buried their bodies. They stood around the two graves and wept. 'Who will teach us of God and tell us of Jesus, now that they are gone?' they asked.

"Now when the news reached home, many dear Christians were much distressed at their going, and wondered why, including Miss Forgetful-Christian, Miss I-Need-It-More-Christian, Mrs. Can't-Afford-to-Christian, and Mr. Mean-to-Christian.

"'What a pity!' said Miss I-Need-It-More-Christian, wiping away a tear--'but I am so glad I did not send my contribution. It would have been only wasted, for they were going to die, anyway, weren't they?' "

With this, it seemed that the second angel's story was ended.

For a long time neither angel spoke. Then the first angel stirred his wings. "And they buried them?" he asked softly. "How very sad!"

The first angel's thoughts were still on the Christians in Promising Land. "So much for self -- little for souls," he said, as though he did not hear him.

"But there reward in heaven will be great, will it not?" asked the first angel. "It's too bad," he remarked, as he unfolded his wings' "that no one else knows about it." And having said this, he flew off on his errand. -- The Evangelical Christian

Children, be sure to learn the memory work and the questions and answers along with the scriptures on each one in this month's lesson.

As soon as you know it then write to Aunt Lucille King for your star each time.

* * * * *

Published in The Missionary Revivalist, February, 1960

Story 2

THE LITTLE MISSIONARY

"Let's go for a walk," David shouted to Danny as he came hurrying across the lawn. "Not before I go and ask mother if it's all right for me to go," Danny replied. "Must you always ask your mother and father about everything you do?" David retorted crossly. "I just go when I get ready and come home when I want to," and a dark scowl came across his face.

"It's not that I must, I guess, but I just want to," was Danny's reply. "I love dad and mother and don't ever want to hurt them by being unkind and stubborn, and disobedient to them. I'm saved and sanctified, and a real Christian treats everybody the way he wants to be treated himself; so that means I shall ask mother if it's all right for me to go."

"You sound just like a preacher or something like it," David grumbled. "Let's go. You don't need to always ask your mother." He continued mumbling as Danny answered firmly, "No, I'm not going until mother says it's all right, and that's settled! As for the preacher business you were talking about--every real Christian is a witness for Jesus, and I'm not a bit ashamed of standing up for Him. I'm a soldier for Jesus--a Christian soldier! You like to play soldiers, David, and you always pretend to be a big, brave soldier who's winning the battle, and chasing the bad army, and that's just what a Christian is--a real soldier--a soldier in Jesus' strong army."

"I didn't come here for a sermon," said David. "Now ask your mother if you may go."

Danny disappeared into the house and David began rolling a snowball. He watched as the small ball kept gathering more and more of the soft white snow, and kept growing bigger and bigger with each push he gave it. He noticed too, how dark and bare the earth looked from where he had rolled the big snowball. Wasn't his life just kind of like that? There was a day when his life was good and clean--sort of like the snow--only a whole lot cleaner than the snow, for he knew the snow had lots of impure things in it, but his heart had been pure and clean at one time like Danny's; and then one day he allowed one little sin to enter his heart, and soon he found he was nourishing that sin by thinking upon it, and doing it over and over again and again until it had grown as big as his snowball maybe even bigger--and all the while he was allowing that sin to remain in his heart, it was adding more sins, and still more, until his own boyish heart was inwardly as dark, and bleak

and dismal, as the ground beneath his snowball. How unhappy he was since he lost Jesus and let that first sin enter! He wasn't a brave soldier like he pretended he was--no sir! Why anymore at night he was even afraid to go to bed--afraid he might die. And he knew where he'd go if he died without Jesus! He must get saved! He just must --only this time he would pray and read his Bible so he'd have power to resist the Devil and sin.

All these thoughts were racing madly through his mind when Danny came out with some cookies and his old 'walking stick' as he called the crooked old stick he found in the woods and always took with him when he went on a hike.

"I may go." Danny said cheerfully, "and here's some cookies mother said to give you. I must be back before four o'clock as there's some work I must help to do before supper. So, be on your way brave knights, be on your way!" and away the two boys went, kicking up the snow and throwing snowballs at each other, then rubbing snow in their faces to see whose cheeks would be the redder.

They came to the edge of the town then started out across Mr. Brown's farmland. Mr. and Mrs. Brown were a kind old couple who always looked forward to the boys' visits and many times gave them good things to eat. The boys were crossing the meadow where they helped Mr. Brown make hay back in June, and where they got into a bumblebee nest. How those bees could sting! "I wonder where those old bees are now," said David. "The meadow's so nice looking with all this snow, and the bees must be asleep. Look at the apple tree, Danny," he went on. "It looks like its arms are reaching out to catch all the snow that falls, doesn't it?"

"Why yes, it does," replied Danny, "and so does the old rail fence too."

The boys climbed up on the old fence and sat down on the top most rail, brushing the snow off the fence as they talked and rested. They watched quietly as a snow shoe rabbit hopped up close to where they were perched. It was almost unbelievable how quiet they could be if they wanted to. When the big white rabbit had hopped away they jumped off the fence and again moved onward.

They came to the brook that gurgled and babbled gaily in the spring and summer months but lay still and quiet now beneath its thick blanket of ice and snow. How the boys loved to watch the minnows during the summer time as they darted here and there! Now you saw them, now you didn't! "I wonder if the minnows are sleeping too, like the earth." Danny finally said. "I don't know," replied David, "but I know one thing--I've found some tracks here along the creek bed. Let's follow them. Shall we?"

"Good!" Danny said excitedly. "Maybe they're fox, but more likely than not they're muskrat. They love it along the creek beds and in swampy places."

The boys followed the tracks down the creek's edge to a barbed wire fence. They fell on their stomachs and crawled beneath the prickly old barbs in the wire, then brushing the snow off their clothes they suddenly noticed there were no more tracks to follow. Where had they lost them? It couldn't be far back, for they followed them up to, and a short distance past, the wire fence. They

kn. their own boot tracks had wiped out any trace of the animal tracks. "I know," Danny said, "I'll cross the creek. Maybe the animal crossed over." With that he jumped to the other side. He landed with such a loud 'Plop' that some chick-a-dees which had been resting on the low bushes flew away making loud twittering sounds.

"That was a crash landing," laughed David, "and those poor little birds didn't know what was coming." They laughed and chatted as Danny continued his search for the tracks. Suddenly he cried out excitedly, "I've found them. I found them! Here they are!" David decided he too would make a 'crash landing,' so with another loud 'Plop,' and 'clomp,' he too was across, on the other side of the creek, and once again they were on the trail of their little furry friend. Be it fox, muskrat, or skunk, they would follow!

The tracks led them far down stream, then into the open fields, and finally at the edge of a wooded area they stopped. Where were they? This no longer was familiar to them! Should they follow the tracks farther or go home-which? Since it was still early and they could follow their own tracks back home, they decided to move on a little farther, so-into the woods they plunged.

They hadn't gone far when they noticed a small, black house, and the tracks were leading them awfully close to that house. David looked frightened and wanted to run, but Danny urged him on with "Maybe it's empty for all you know. Nothing can hurt us," he said. "I have Jesus for my Saviour and my Protector. Why even when I'm afraid He has His Angel right by my side to see that nothing or nobody hurts me, No, I'm going right up to the door and see what's inside. Maybe it's full of rabbits and birds living in it."

Just then a dog let out a loud shrilly bark and David turned and ran, then hiding behind the trunk of a big oak tree he watched as Danny went forward.

A squeaky old door slowly opened and a stooped, long whiskered old man hobbled forward. "What ye a'doin 'bout my land young'un? Don't ye know I can punish ye fer settin' foot on this yere place? Ye're on private prop'rty, and ye'd best beat it away from yere, fast too, or I'll sick old Fangs, my dog, on to ye, and he'll tear ya to pieces. Now beat it!" And the old man's voice roared like a mad bull.

David began to cry and pray at the same time, and would have run away, but he knew the bewhiskered old man would see him if he ran, so he stood in his hiding place. "Oh, Lord save me, save me! Please do, Jesus. Forgive me for all my sins and most of all for losing You, dear Jesus. I'm so sorry. I want to be a good, clean boy again." On and on he prayed as he heard Danny's voice--just as calm as though he were talking to his friends--"Sir," he was saying, "I'm terribly sorry I'm on your land when I'm not supposed to be on it, but I didn't know." Then a little voice deep inside him whispered, 'Maybe the Lord wants you here, will you witness for Him?' and Danny continued, "Mister, are you a Christian? Do you know Jesus the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world? He loves you. He really loves you! In fact, He loves you so much that He died on a cruel cross just for you." Then feeling the cookies in his pocket that he had forgotten to eat, and which mother had wrapped in wax paper, he drew them out and extending his gift to the long whiskered old man, said, "Sir, I have a few cookies here that my mother made, and she bakes

the best cookies in the world. Guess you haven't seen any homemade cookies since you were a little boy like I am, and when your mother made some for you, have you?"

The old man stood staring hard and long at Danny's earnest, intent face, then a tear fell, then another and another. Fangs kept up a continuous low growl and looked as though any moment he may pounce upon this intruder. Finally the old man spoke. This time he spoke kindly: "Son," he said hoarsely, "Come in. Ye must tell me more. I've been a lonely old man, very lonely. No one yere but me and Fangs and I've let bitterness creep into my soul like the bitter snake root that grows wild yere in these woods. But first, thank ye my boy, thank ye, for the cookies ye give me. Been y'ars since I had any. I was once a happy, good boy like ye, but mother she was taken, and Pa, he drank hisself ta death, and me -- I was left alone with bitter mem'ries. 'Twas then I decided ta build this yere shack and never care ta see mortal man again, never! I says to myself God was unfair to take my good, holy mother; but she tells me afore she died that some day God would catch up with me, and He has, He sure has! Now ye sit right down yere and tell me all about Jesus. Ye're a good boy, ye are," and he lovingly patted Danny's red cheeks.

Fangs lay down beside the chair of his master and cast wary glances at Danny as he talked. Danny told the old man all he had read in the Bible about God's great love, and how He was searching for men just like this old recluse, then noticing on his watch that an hour and half had passed by, he asked, "Mister, why don't you get saved right now? I'd like to pray for you," and without any further coaxing the old man was kneeling by his chair, the tears running like rivers down his cheeks as he prayed "Lord, save me I Be merciful to me a sinner! Old Ben's a'comin' home. Save me!" Danny too was weeping and praying for him, when suddenly the old man sprang to his feet, and grabbing Danny in his arms went 'round and 'round the room shouting "He's come! He's come! Right in my heart! Thank God, thank God!"

Before he left the old shack Danny pulled his own small New Testament from his pocket and gently placed it in the old man's roughened hands saying, "Be sure to read this every day. It's our light to Heaven." Then departed with the old man's voice floating after him, "Ye must hurry back son. Ye're a missionary--a little missionary I God bless ye I Come back!"

Danny's heart was as light as the powdery snow, and he felt good and happy all over. He was glad he hadn't run like David, who had long since gone home. He was a soldier in Jesus strong and mighty army.

"Those must have been Fang's tracks," he said aloud as he walked home through the clean white snow. His heart felt like the world looked -- all shining and white.

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, March, 1960

Story 3

THE EXPENSIVE LITTLE MOTH

"Get that moth; Ruthie!" said mother as the tiny little winged creature flew straight toward Ruth Ann. "Oh, mother, let it live. Please!" begged Ruth Ann; "It's just a tiny harmless moth and it wants to live, too," and she watched as the moth disappeared out of the room.

The hot summer months rolled by into Autumn, then Fall, and the frost began to lay white all over the meadow on the farm.

One chilly morning as Ruth Ann was preparing for school the tiny snow flakes began to fly outside. "Oh, mother," she said, "I do believe I must get my heavier coat; it's been so cold walking to school these mornings," and with that she raced up the stairs to the clothes closet, and came down carrying her heavy wool tweed coat. "There, that ought to keep me warm," she said as she laid the coat on the nearest chair. She ate a good hot breakfast, then after family prayer slipped into the big warm coat, and as she was pulling her mittens on she saw it: "Mother, mother! Oh, whatever has happened to my good coat? Why--why, it's all full of holes on this one side," and she began to cry.

"Now, now," mother said sweetly, "don't cry. We'll see what's happened. Here! Take it off and let me have a look." Still sobbing bitterly the little girl obeyed, and as mother examined the coat she asked again and again, "What did it, mother? What did it?"

"Ruth Ann," mother finally said, "you can't wear this coat just now: It must go to the reweaving shop and be rewoven; your coat is full of moth holes." When mother mentioned 'moth' Ruth Ann caught her breath. Surely it wouldn't have been that tiny, tiny moth mother had told her to kill this past summer! Oh, no! It was too little to do so much damage! However, her conscience nagged her all the way to school that week. Suppose it was that harmless looking little moth! But it couldn't be--it just couldn't!

Two weeks later mother and daddy went to town to pick Ruth Ann's coat up at the reweaving shop. "That will be seventeen dollars and fifty cents," said the lady with the sweet round face to mother. "Did I understand you correctly?" mother asked, "was that seven or seventeen?"

"Seventeen," was the lady's reply: "you see, your little girl's coat had seven large holes, besides many small ones, and I must get material from the inside of the pockets or the facing--some place where it's not seen, and reweave the new material into those holes. I do it all by hand under a magnifying glass, and it's quite a job," the kind old lady went on.

"I understand," said mother, "but say, that was an expensive little moth, wasn't it?"

On the way home to the farm mother wasn't as jolly as usual, her mind was thinking--that moth ! That expensive little moth ! How like something else it was!

"You're so quiet mother," daddy finally said, "is there something bothering you dear? No, not bothering me, but causing me to think plenty. Seventeen dollars and fifty cents from a tiny, little harmless looking moth ! Can't you see what I'm thinking dear?" she asked. "I believe I do,"

daddy said thoughtfully, "the expensiveness of one little harmless looking sin?" "That's it," said mother.

After supper was over and Ruth Ann was finished with the dishes mother called from the living room, "Ruthie, come here! Daddy and I have something to tell you," and the little girl came hurrying into the room. "Sit here between us," daddy said, then placing his arm around Ruth Ann's shoulder he began, "mother and I went into town and got your coat from the reweaving shop. Do you know how much it will cost us?" Ruth Ann nodded no and daddy continued, "it cost us seventeen dollars and fifty cents to have it fixed so you could wear it again." Ruth Ann gasped and started to say something but daddy went on, "That was an expensive little moth you let live this summer. Don't you think so?"

"But Daddy," she pleaded, "it looked so harmless and tiny, and I -- I pitied it." "That's just it; you should have obeyed your mother in the first place, and then too this has a great lesson in it for you. The moth looked harmless because it was so tiny and small, but you see how harmless it was! It made all those holes in your coat! That moth is like sin. No matter how small and harmless a thing might look to you Ruth Ann, in the end it's as poisonous as a snake and as destructive as the moth you let get away. Sin doesn't stop with little things--it eats on and on getting bigger and bigger all the time. Sin is just like that moth, only so much greater and worse. You see, that tiny harmless looking little moth deposits an acid on the clothes, and that acid keeps eating and eating, making the hole larger and larger all the time. The devil starts you out by getting you to do little things that you think are harmless--just like you disobeyed mother when she told you to kill that moth--you disobeyed, and the devil has put a spiritual acid on your soul. That one act of disobedience will soon lead to something bigger and far worse unless you ask Jesus to forgive you and save you. Soon your beautiful, pure, sweet life will be all full of sin and wickedness, and no good to Jesus and His cause, just like your coat was no good to you until the lady rewove it. Jesus died for you, Ruth Ann; He died that you might be free from sin and its awful effects upon your life. We had your coat rewoven for you and you can wear it again, and no one will ever be able to tell that anything happened to it except mother, and you and I, because on the inside of your coat--way down in your pockets, replacers are sewn that don't quite match the rest of your pretty coat, but nobody else will know. That too is like sin; sin always leaves scars on your life--big scars! Sometimes these scars are so big that even Jesus can't hide them. Oh, He forgives the soul, but the sin scars on the face and body will always remain on 'some people who have been real wicked sinners. Ruth Ann, if you'll ask Jesus to forgive you and save you now while your heart is still young and tender, and before sin gets a hold on your life, you'll not have these ugly scars."

"Oh, mother !" cried Ruth Ann,, "Dear, dear, mother, please forgive me for disobeying you. I don't want to give the devil my life; I want to belong to Jesus, from now and forever as long as I live," and she was sobbing bitterly.

"We'll all pray dear. Right now," mother said as she put her arms around her repentant daughter. Daddy led in prayer as mother wept and prayed, and Ruth Ann, with hands raised toward Heaven was praying, "Forgive me, dear Jesus. Forgive me, and save my soul. I'm sorry I disobeyed mother, and I want to be saved," and then in an instant He came. Ruth Ann's face shone with the light from Heaven and she shouted and clapped her hands for pure joy, saying "I'm saved, mother! Jesus saves me just now, daddy! Oh, I do love Him so! I love Him!"

Daddy and mother were both shouting and weeping as they watched their precious little girl rejoicing in her new found love of Jesus.

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, April, 1960

Story 4

KITE WEATHER

Sandy and Jerry sat on the top step of the porch watching the clouds drift lazily by across the heavens when suddenly Jerry stood to his feet and clapping his hands together said:

"Sandy, Sandy, I see a kite. It looks like a big bird. Look!" And he pointed excitedly to the sky, trying to guide Sandy's small eyes to the exact spot where the kite was sailing high with the wind.

"I see a pretty white cloud," Sandy said, "that looks just like a soft woolly lamb, but I can't see a kite."

"It's up there all right," continued Jerry, "for I see it. Let's go fly our kites too. This spring wind surely is fine for kite flying."

"Oh, no, Jerry," Sandy said. "We can't fly kites today; this is Sunday and Mother and Daddy said we could sit on the steps and watch the birds and clouds, but we mustn't be loud nor fly any kites. This is the day the Lord made for us to rest and worship Him. We never fly kites on Sunday," and her voice took on a horrified tone.

"That's what you think," Jerry said stubbornly. "I'm going to fly my kite. No one will know! Mother and Dad are resting and they won't be up for another hour so how could they know?" he asked indignantly.

"But God knows, Jerry," Sandy said, "and He'll see you!"

"I'm going to fly my kite, Sandy, and that's that," he added with great finality. "You coming or not?"

"Oh, no, Jerry! I couldn't go. I love Jesus and want to please Him. Please, Jerry," she pleaded, "don't go! You'll be sorry!"

"Why should I be sorry? I'm not going to make any noise, I'm just going out to the vacant lot to fly my kite. You're a softie -- just like a girl--a big softie!" and he laughed as he rushed into the house and got his kite.

Sandy heard her brother go out the back door and down the steps and then the impact of his words settled down upon her little heart with a bang. Jerry had called her a 'softie'--a girl 'softie,' and the devil was right there too to tell her that's exactly what she was.

A big tear rolled down her cheek, then another, and another, and she was so busy crying that she never saw her Aunt Betty and Uncle Al pull up in the big driveway until a kind voice spoke softly.

"Why, Sandy, darling, you're crying. What's the matter? Are you hurt?" and Aunt Betty gathered her into her arms.

"Oh, no, Aunt Betty, I'm not hurt. Well--I mean, not exactly. Jerry just called me a 'big softie' 'cause I won't go kite flying today, but Mother and Daddy said we could sit on the steps and watch the clouds and birds, but we mustn't make any noise nor fly kites and play ball, and Jerry's gone out to the big vacant lot. I told him the Lord saw him and was watching all we did; and then he said I was a 'softie.' That's why I'm crying--and, Aunt Betty, Mother said the Lord loves for us to be obedient, and when we disobey something usually happens. What if something should happen to Jerry? He's disobedient!" and a fresh shower of tears started flowing.

"Now, Sandy," Aunt Betty said, "you just stop worrying about Jerry. The Lord may have to punish him to make him obey, but for now you're going with Uncle Al and me."

Sandy's mouth opened wide and she started to speak but Aunt Betty was leading her toward the car as she continued:

"This was to be a nice surprise for you and Jerry; that's why your Mother and Daddy didn't make you lie down this afternoon and told you both you could sit on the porch steps and watch the clouds. We're taking you over to our place for the afternoon; there's so much to see. My white duck "Missy" just got a big family of fifteen fuzzy yellow ducklings; and Belle, the sheep, had twin lambs; and Prissy, the kitten is more playful than ever, so you can see them all today, and the flowers you planted are in full bloom. You can pick a big bouquet for church tonight -you'll be staying with us until church time."

Sandy's heart was so light and happy that she wanted to jump for joy. Then suddenly she said:

"But what about Mother? I should kiss her good-bye. She may worry! And poor Jerry, can't he go?"

"Mother won't worry," Aunt Betty reassured Sandy, "she planned it this way--a surprise, you remember? As for Jerry, he must pay for his disobedience and sin," and she lovingly placed Sandy on the front seat between Uncle Al and herself. Then the big car was off, and soon out of the town on to the country road.

Sandy's heart beat rapidly as she saw the big white farmhouse and bright red barn looming up just ahead, and she wiggled and squirmed on the seat with her nose awfully close to the front

car window--so close, in fact, that when Uncle Al hit a bump going around the big red barn, she got a sound knock on her little pug nose, but her joy was so great and intense that she hardly felt the bump.

No sooner had the car stopped than Sandy was out the door and running toward the barnyard.

"Wait a minute," Aunt Betty called after her, "you must change your dress. Come back and get into one of Linda's old dresses."

Sandy followed her Aunt obediently into the neat white farmhouse and spied Prissy, the cat, all tangled up in a ball of yarn but having the time of her life in among the tangles.

"I like your house, Aunt Betty, just bushels and bushels! You always have such a lot of room!" and her pretty blue eyes sparkled with joy and her two little dimples showed real deep and pretty as she lovingly threw her childish arms around her Aunt's neck and gave her a big kiss and smiled Aunt Betty hugged her tenderly, then patting her silken blond hair, said:

"Run along now and have a good time. You'll find Billy around the barnyard somewhere. He's been watching Belle and the lambs. He's so tickled with those twins, he hardly wants to leave them to go to school. Of course, you know Belle is his very own sheep!" And she watched as Sandy disappeared down the stairway.

Billy was sitting at the bottom of the big straw stack in the barnyard and nestled close by was Belle, the sheep, with her twin lambs. How furry and soft they were and Sandy stroked first one, then the other.

"Oh, Billy," she said, "aren't they cute? So cuddly and soft! I know Jerry will be sorry he was disobedient," and Sandy told Billy what Jerry had done and why he wasn't there.

After awhile Billy said, "Sandy, I haven't named the lambs yet. Mother and Dad thought since they were twins, it would be nice for you and Jerry to name them for me, but since Jerry was disobedient and isn't here, you and I shall name them. How about it, Sandy?"

Sandy was so excited she could scarcely think, and first one name entered her mind, then another, but somehow none of them seemed to fit those soft bundles lying on the clean straw. After a long while she said:

"Billy, I believe I know what I want mine called 'Cuddles'! How does that sound?" and she looked at Billy who was gently stroking one of the soft woolly lambs.

"That's pretty," Billy said, then added, "Would you like to name both of them?"

Sandy's blue eyes grew large and round as she said excitedly, "Oh, Billy! Do you mean it? I'd love to!"

After some time of thinking, she said, "I have it! I have it! The other lamb must be called 'Frisky' as Aunt Betty said how frisky they are. Cuddles and Frisky and Mother Belle! What pretty names!" she said affectionately.

"Which shall be which?" Billy asked. "One has a black spot on the ear and the other doesn't."

"That's easy," Sandy said, "Frisky has the black spot and Cuddles doesn't!"

"That's fine," Billy said, "and now I must tell them their names," and he whispered softly into the ear of each woolly lamb. Mother Belle looked understandingly at Billy, then lay her head down on her bosom again and went back to sleep.

Just then Sandy heard Aunt Betty call softly to her and she ran in to the big farmhouse.

"Don't you think we'd better get our bouquet of flowers ready for church?" she asked Sandy.

"Oh, yes," replied the blue-eyed girl, "and, Aunt Betty, has my pretty little hummingbird come back anymore? I surely hope so," and she smiled sweetly.

"Oh, yes, Sandy," her Aunt said, "many, many times we all watch the ruby-throated bird plunging his long bill 'way down into the flowers after the sweet goodness."

The two went down the path that led toward the beautiful flower garden and Sandy stood in wide-eyed wonder, looking at all the beautiful colors. There were pinks, blues, yellows, white, reds, and just all colors! She clasped her little hands tightly in front of her and exclaimed over and over:

"Oh, how beautiful! How very beautiful! Doesn't Jesus make pretty things!"

When the supper dishes were dried, everybody bathed and changed clothes for church.

Sandy was so tired that she almost fell to sleep riding in the back seat with Billy, and not until she saw Mother and Daddy sitting on the second pew was she aware that Jerry was missing.

She walked quietly down the aisle to Mother and threw her arms about her neck, then whispered ever so softly, "Where's Jerry?"

For a moment Mother was speechless, then Daddy said quietly, "He's with you, isn't he?"

It was then Sandy told them about Jerry and what he had done that afternoon, and how he didn't come with Uncle Al and Aunt Betty because he had gone to the vacant lot to fly his kite.

Mother's pretty face turned pale and Sandy thought she looked sick. Daddy must have noticed too, for quickly he said, "Let's go see what's happened to that boy, shall we, Mother?" And

he led Mother down the aisle with Sandy following. He paused at the doorway to explain to Rev. Myer's wife, and motioned for Sandy's Uncle to come, then telling him what had happened, he went out the door and quickly got into the car.

It didn't take them long to get home as Daddy was in a big hurry and Sandy, sensing their keen anxiety, sat real still and quiet. She saw Mother was crying and in her heart she too felt like crying. Then Mother's words kept ringing in her little ears--"You disobey, children, and something is liable to happen to you!" What had happened to poor Jerry? Poor disobedient Jerry!

Daddy opened the car door for Sandy and Mother, then headed straight for the vacant lot calling loudly, "Jerry, Jerry!"

Mother turned the porch and garage lights on and waited anxiously with Sandy on the same porch steps she and Jerry had sat that very afternoon.

They heard Daddy's call growing fainter and fainter as he followed the narrow pathway that led to the vacant lot. Then, after what seemed like a long time, Daddy was coming toward them with a bundle in his arms.

"Why--Why," and Sandy stuttered, "it's Jerry, Mother. It's Jerry! Is he hurt?" she asked quickly as Daddy came toward them. Then she saw that Jerry was crying and nestled ever so closely in Daddy's big arms.

Mother rushed forward and flung her arms around her boy and asked again and again, "Are you all right, Jerry? Are you all right?" All Jerry could do was cry.

"I think his leg is broken," Daddy broke in, "for he can't walk on it. He was lying in a hole when I found him, and he said his leg hurts him terribly. We'll take him down to the hospital and see what they say."

"He has a bad break--a very bad break, Mr. Allen," said Dr. White after he had examined Jerry, "and I fear he may have to stay in the hospital for quite some time," he added, and Jerry whimpered like a wounded puppy.

After the Doctor had set Jerry's leg and put it in a big heavy cast, the nurse wheeled him down the long aisle to his room and put him in one of the many beds in the room, then kindly she said, "My name's Miss Grantham, and Dr. White tells me you're Jerry Allen. Is that right?" And Jerry only nodded.

"Well, Jerry," and she smiled at him, "since you're going to be here for a long time, we might as well be friends! I'll be taking care of you now until you get better," and she patted his head, then disappeared out the doorway saying, "When you need me, just press that buzzer on your bed."

Then Mother and Daddy came into the room and Jerry began to sob and cry. Mother put her kind hand on his head, never saying a word, but it was Jerry who broke the silence:

"Mother, can you and Dad ever forgive me? I was so disobedient and naughty to do what I did today, and to think it was the Lord's day of rest for us! Please forgive me, will you?" and Daddy and Mother both were weeping and loving and caressing their boy. "Why, of course, we'll forgive you, Jerry! You know we will," they both said, then Daddy spoke and said:

"But what about the Lord? Have you told Him how disobedient you were and that you're sorry?"

"Oh, yes, Daddy," Jerry said. "I got saved out on the vacant lot in that old hole. I told Jesus how stubborn and disobedient I was and He came and whispered to my heart that I was all forgiven, but I mustn't ever do it again, and I promised Him I wouldn't and I mean it, Mother and Daddy. I won't! You can depend upon it; I mean to be true to Jesus. Mother, you remember what you used to tell me? 'Jerry, you disobey and somewhere or sometime you'll pay for it!' Well, Mother, I'm paying now, but I'm so sorry. I'm going to be a different boy from now on because Jesus has saved me and forgiven me all my sins. Oh, I thank Him for letting this happen to me."

Just before Mother and Daddy said "Goodnight" to Jerry, he said tenderly:

"Please tell Sandy I'm sorry. She was right--I was wrong; and, Mother, I -- I called her a 'softie' because she wouldn't go kite flying with me. Will you please ask her to forgive me? If only I would have listened to her."

"We'll tell Sandy, Jerry, she's down in the waiting room now and she'll be so happy to hear about you getting saved." Then planting a kiss on his forehead they said, "Goodnight."

Down in the waiting room a little blonde haired girl was sleeping. The day was long and tiring but pleasant, and a smile played across her sweet face as Daddy lovingly gathered her into his big arms and gently placed her in Mother's waiting arms for the ride home. The smile continued to linger as Sandy was again with Cuddles and Frisky in dreamland.

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, May, 1960

Story 5
CHARMED

It was a hot day in May, and Shaaron and Tim were playing in the sand box in the shade of the big Maple tree that grew in the corner of the big yard.

Mother stood .looking out the kitchen window at the beautiful apple orchard which was all pink and white with apple blossoms, and when the gentle south wind blew it made the beautiful petals of the flowers drop like snow to the ground beneath. She was tempted to go at once and rest beneath one of the shady trees for the day was so hot. Then another thought struck her--why not go for a walk with the children! The spring Violets, May flowers, and Trailing Arbutus were in full

bloom, she knew, and Jack-in-the-Pulpit was blooming down by the creek bed too. Wiping the last dish and putting it in the cupboard, she went to the kitchen door and called:

"Shaaron! Timmy! Where are you? Come in, Mother has a surprise for you!"

The children came running into the house with "What is it, Mother? What's the surprise?"

"We're going for a walk today, but first, you must both get into your shoes. You can't walk good in the woods with bare feet," laughed Mother as she pinched first Shaaron's fat stubby toes, then Tim's nimble feet. The children laughed with glee and scampered rapidly up the stairs in search for their shoes with Mother in hot pursuit on their trail.

It was so heart-lifting to be in God's great outdoors where all the kitchen and household tasks were forgotten and left completely behind, and Mother forgot just how much older she was getting, but in her heart she was once again a girl, taking a walk with her own mother. How light-hearted she felt! All about her and the children spread the rich black farm land which didn't look black any longer but appeared to be a great velvet carpet of richest green, for the wheat was growing rapidly under the sun's warm rays, and the air smelled like some exotic perfume from Araby. The gentle errant breezes caught at Mother's loose strands of hair and played a game of "catch" with it, while her cheeks became a pretty blushing pink color from both sun and breeze.

Down by the creek's edge they stopped to rest and watch for the minnows.

Soon the climb led directly upward at a very sharp angle and the children grew tired. It was Tim who first said anything.

"Mother," he said, "Me hot!" "So am I," echoed Shaaron. "And my feet are tired too," she continued.

"Let's rest for awhile again, shall we?" asked Mother, and the children found a soft carpet of moss beneath the drooping boughs of a hemlock tree where they sat wearily down. Tim took his shoes off and stretched out on his back muttering lightly, "Me tired!" Shaaron sat down, contentedly arranging her bouquet on the moss beside her when Mother suddenly whispered:

"Sh! Sh! Don't talk or make any noise but come here by Mother. Quick!" In an instant Tim bounced on her lap and Shaaron was cuddling up close and tight in her arms.

"What is it?" they whispered. "What is it?" "Just don't wiggle nor make any noise but be real still! Do you hear a bird making a funny noise just across the path?" asked Mother.

"Yes," answered Shaaron trembling and almost in tears, "but why is he making such a funny sound?"

Mother put her head down low to the children's ears, then whispered softly and soothingly into them:

"There's nothing for you to be afraid of. Mother's here and is protecting you, but there's a big snake all coiled up on the other side of the path, and he is charming that poor little bird, and as soon as he sees the bird is completely under his power, then he'll kill it and eat it. He's got the poor little creature now until he's almost helpless. Do you see how still--how very still--that mean old snake is? But he has an evil eye and is looking right at that poor innocent bird, and the bird's scared. Hear him making that funny noise?" And again the three listened -- they themselves were almost as "charmed" -- watching as was the helpless fluttering bird. Suddenly Mother realized the snake was about to strike the bird which was almost in its clutches, and she noiselessly got a piece of tree limb lying right beside her and whispering again to the frightened children:

"Be real still. Let's pretend we're soldiers in a big war, and we're going to kill a bad, bad giant who's trying to kill a poor little helpless girl, shall we? You stay right here--Mother's going after the bad giant--and you must be watching for me when I return from battle."

The children, feeling it was a big game, agreed to remain in their places while Mother went to battle; then cautiously making her way to the edge of the path, she took aim and let the heavy weight of the limb come down upon the poisonous viper just as it was about to strike the bird. She hit it once, then twice, then again and again until she knew it was dead; then calling to the children she said:

"Come out now. The bad giant's dead, and the bird is free."

The children came scampering through the bushes and stood behind Mother looking at the long snake she had killed, and holding tightly on to Mother's skirt.

"It's dead, dears," she said, "He'll never hurt another poor bird. Did you see how the bird flew away as soon as Mother killed the snake?" she asked. "It was so glad to be free, and I'm glad we decided to rest," she added. "And now, let's go on up the slope to where the Arbutus are blooming, shall we? Get your shoes on, Tim" she ordered, "then we'll go."

In no time at all they were ready to climb upward to the desired spot. They came to the place where two paths met and Shaaron asked, "Which way do we go now, Mother? There's two paths!"

"Yes, that's right," Mother said, "but we'll take the path to the right, this is the one we want." And she led the way.

Soon they came to the place Mother knew so well and stopping suddenly she said, "Now let's see who can find the first pink trailing Arbutus. Let's go," and down the path all three scampered.

"Oh look, Mother! Look!" said Shaaron, "I found them! I found them." Tim was saying, "Me find too!" and laughing in boyish glee as they all began picking the fragrant, delicate flowers. Mother told both children not to pull the rootlets or the plant would die, but to hold the stalk down with one hand and gather the clusters of flowers with the other.

"Oh, smell my flowers," shouted Shaaron excitedly. "Mother, they 'smell like Aunt Dot's perfume -only better," she added.

"Yes, they really are beautiful to look at and so good to smell," said Mother, "and to think, Jesus made all these things for us to enjoy!"

They picked white Trailing Arbutus and pink until Mother finally said, "I do believe: we've gathered enough of these now. I want some violets yet, then we'll go home. I want to take some to sick Mrs. Carr, and Daddy can take a bouquet to Bro. Miller who's in the hospital, so let's go and get the violets, shall we?"

The children were eager to go after violets for they knew it was damp and cool where they grew, so they started down the narrow path.

Soon they came to the place where the battle was fought; again they stopped to look at the ugly-looking snake lying on the ground and Shaaron said:

"I'm so glad you saved that little bird from the bad snake, Mother."

"Yes, I am too," Mother said, then added, "but you know something, children, sin is just like that dreadful snake! That's exactly what sin does to boys and girls. The devil comes to your heart like the snake and tries to charm you by making sin look harmless and beautiful. He starts you out by doing little things that don't look bad at first, and then he charms you, like the snake did the bird, by saying, 'All the other boys and girls are doing it! It won't hurt you!' Soon you're watching the devil like the poor little bird was the snake, and thinking, 'Oh, well, I told one lie and nobody knew I lied,' and the devil says, 'Tell another one,' when you're in a tight spot; and before you know it, sin looks harmless and even glamorous to you; all the time the devil is charming you until you don't realize how deadly are his plans. After he's charmed you to the place where he sees you're powerless and helpless, then he'll drag your soul to Hell, for the Lord's Word says, 'Sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death,' just like that mean old snake meant to kill that poor innocent bird; that's what the devil has in mind all the time; he wants to drag your never-dying soul to Hell. He's a wicked being who wants to send all to Hell that he can, and just as I killed the poisonous snake, so Jesus Christ came to earth to bleed and die for our sins, that 'Whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life.' Thank God, children, we can be free from all sin just like the bird was free after I killed the snake. Through Jesus' precious Blood, we can be free from all our sins, but we must confess all the bad things we've done, and forsake them too--that means don't ever do them again-before Jesus will save us."

"Oh, Mother," Shaaron said as they walked down to where the long-stemmed purple violets grew, "I don't ever want to live in sin. I love Jesus and want to always be good and please Him."

"That's right," replied Mother happily, "I always want my children to be loved by Jesus and go to Heaven with Daddy and Mother. You see, Jesus loves us too, when we love Him and are all His."

The children learned a never-to-be-forgotten lesson that day while gathering flowers with Mother.

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, June, 1960

Story 6

IT ALL BELONGS TO GOD

Joe had just gathered his round egg basket full of eggs from his chickens and was just sitting down to count how many he had gotten that day when Sammy called out, "Hey, Joe. What are you doing?"

Joe quickly replied, "I'm down here by my chicken house counting eggs. Come on down."

In a little while the two boys were seated together on one of the steps and as Joe counted his eggs carefully, Sammy suddenly asked:

"Why on earth are you counting your eggs? That's too much work."

"I'll tell you why I count the eggs," Joe replied. "You see, out of every ten eggs I give one in tithe to our pastor and his family. Then too, whatever I make from the eggs I sell, I always pay a dime on each dollar I make or a penny out of every dime. I believe in tithing, don't you, Sammy?"

And the other boy jerked his head backwards and laughed out loud. "Tithing? Are you kidding? I work hard for all I earn, and why should the Lord need my ten cents out of every dollar? I earn it, don't I?" and his voice sounded ugly and cross. Joe looked at him in shocked silence for a minute, then said:

"Sammy, you don't work any harder for your money than the rest of us do who are on the farm and it's only been the dear Lord who's been making your chickens lay good and helping your two little pigs to grow. I believe in giving my tithes regularly. I don't only give my tithe--you see, that already belongs to God, and I'm a robber and a thief if I keep back the Lord's part as that doesn't belong to me--but I give an offering on top of my tithe."

"You're some boy, all right," laughed Sammy shakily, "but I say you're a foolish boy," and he almost hissed the words at his neighbor pal as he continued, "my Dad doesn't tithe. Never has and he's made it all right all these years. Why just last year we were able to completely remodel the barn, and modernize it, also fix the house up real pretty and Dad even got Suzanne a new convertible. He said when I get old enough he's going to get me a brand new car all my own. That's going some now, Joe. You know it is, and Dad has never tithed. Oh, once in a while he gives an offering of ten dollars toward the church, but that's all. This tithing's all senseless.

Joe stopped counting for a while as he stared into space, then sweetly he said:

"Sammy, the tithe is the Lord's whether you or your Dad believe it or not! God's Word says it, so that settles it with me. In the last book of the Old Testament-it's called Malachi -- it says, 'Wherein have ye robbed me? saith the Lord' and the answer says 'In tithes and in offerings,' so you're a robber unless you tithe. Maybe we don't have the nicest of new things," he continued, "but Mom and Dad love each other, and Joanne, and Mary, and Tommy and I are happy. We're Christians and strict tithers."

"Oh, well," Sammy said with much unconcern, "You believe your silly little way and I'll believe like Dad. After all, I want to be rich some day; I want to make a lot of money, not just the little I get from eggs and raising a few pigs and a steer each year."

"I'm sorry to hear that," Joe said sadly, "for I feel the Lord has been so good to me! Why, last week I earned exactly twelve dollars and thirty-five cents by selling my eggs. I think this is wonderful money. Dad was telling us one night in family prayer how he only earned seven dollars a week when he was young. He told us to, be thankful for every dime we earn, and all the good home-made bread Mom feeds us, and for our good, clear water. I'm so happy I have this much." And a smile played across his young face.

"I suppose you gave one dollar and twenty-five cents to the Lord!" Sammy said reproachfully.

"Why, of course I paid my tithe," Joe said seriously. "Then besides my tithe, I gave seven dollars offering to our Orphanage, and finished paying a missionary pledge I made a few weeks ago. You see, Sammy," Joe said thoughtfully, "it all belongs to God. He gives and He takes, and all that we have has come from Him. People who don't tithe pay for it later on. I know a man in our church whose best milk cow died before he obeyed God on tithing. You pay for it sometime or somewhere," then he added happily, "but honestly, Sammy, I tithe because I love to. I'm a Christian and when you're saved, it makes you happy all over to obey the: Lord."

"Let's change the subject," Sammy finally said. "I've heard enough on a penny out of every dime, a nickel out of fifty cents and a dime out of every dollar, and he mocked Joe in a sing-song way.

After a long time of silence in which Joe continued to count out his eggs and put one out of every ten into a neat white basket on which he had printed "My Tithe Eggs," Sammy finally said, "You know why I came over today, Joe? Dad says I may drive the tractor today while they make hay. I was wondering if you'd like to come with me? We could both take turns at steering. How about it?"

Joe continued with his counting as he said, "That's wonderful, Sammy! I'd sure like to say 'Yes' but Dad told me this morning the south clover patch here is ready to be mowed and Tommy and I will be helping Dad. Thanks a lot. Maybe sometime when we're all not so busy we can do that," and he looked wistfully toward the Pennyworth farm where he could hear the hum, hum of the big tractor already at work in the field.

Sammy heard it too and with leap was off the step and starting out across the fields as he called back, "Go'bye, Joe. See you later. Don't let that senseless tithe bother you too much." And Joe heard him laugh a silly, mocking laugh.

When the last egg was counted and he had one left over, he placed it in the pastor's basket, for what was that that Mother and Dad kept saying about "Good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over!" He couldn't press eggs down, he knew, but he could put some extra ones in.

Just then the devil seemed to whisper, "You are a bit foolish, don't you think? Just look at all the fine things they have at Sammy's house, and they don't ever tither" and that's when Joe said out loud:

"Devil, you've always been nothing but a big liar. God always tells the truth. You got Adam and Eve into trouble in the beautiful garden of Eden and that's what you're trying to do to me. Well, just to let you know I believe in tithing--from my heart-I'm going to give our preacher five extra eggs along with the extra one I put in a few minutes ago; and, if you don't quiet down, I'll give them all my eggs." And he said it with such finality that some of his white Leghorn chickens stopped eating and looked straight at him.

As he and Tommy worked with Dad in the clover and alfalfa field that day, he got to thinking: He had sold nearly twelve and a half dollars worth of eggs last week, and he already had that many or more this week with three more days to go before he'd go to town and market with Dad. He knew now the devil was a liar, for God had more than blessed him for everything he had obeyed in His Word.

When they were sitting around the table at noontime and enjoying one of Mother's delicious farm meals, Mrs. Pennyworth came hurrying down the garden walk to the front kitchen door, crying as though her heart would break. Joe's mother met her at the door and gently put her arms about the shoulders of the sobbing neighbor woman. "Why, Mrs. Pennyworth," she was saying, "what's the matter? What has happened?" And she led the weeping woman to a chair in the kitchen.

Finally, between loud sobs she said, "It's Sammy! The . . . tractor's . . . run over . . . him!" And a fresh stream of tears followed.

Joe's face turned white and a dozen questions flooded his mind but he sat still. Finally Mother was able to make out from the bitterly weeping Mrs. Pennyworth that Sam was in serious condition in the hospital, and when not unconscious, he was saying, "Forgive me, Lord! Forgive me! You will get it out some way, won't you?" Just what was he talking about, she wondered! Finally, Joe spoke up and told her all the events of that morning and with a bitter wail Sammy's mother threw her hands to her face saying, "I've told Bill he'd better tithe; that it belonged to God, but he always sneers at me and calls me old-fashioned and such like, but look what's happened! Just look!" and she nearly fainted.

Mother made Mrs. Pennyworth lie down across her bed and gave her a cup of hot chicken broth to drink, and told her not to worry that she felt sure the Lord was going to spare Sammy after Mr. Pennyworth had learned his lesson.

It was about twelve o'clock that same night that Joe was awakened by what sounded to him like the lowing of cattle. He sprang from the bed he shared with Tommy and ran to the window, but saw nothing. Still hearing that sound (almost a moan now) he darted to the last window and then he saw it! The Pennyworth barn was on fire! Waking Tommy and getting dressed at the same time, he said:

"Tom, you go tell Dad. Quick! The Pennyworth barn is on fire. I'm going over now and see what I can do for those poor cows and horses. Can't you hear them? Quick, get Dad and come over as fast as you can," and in an instant he was down the stairs, then racing like a wild deer across the corn field, the meadow, then the wheat and so on, and finally was to the barn. He opened the bottom doors rushed fearlessly into the barn which was getting hotter by the moment. He led first one big horse, then another and another, until all four horses were safely fenced in the lower pasture. Then racing with time he rushed back into the fast burning structure of the barn and got one cow, then another, always praying, "Help me, Lord. Please help me!" It was then Tommy and Dad came panting up beside him.

"Do the Pennyworths know?" asked Dad.

"No," said Joe. "I haven't had time. I got the horses out and a few cows, but there's more inside. Let's work fast!" And away he raced.

"Go knock on Mr. Pennyworth's door and say 'Fire!' " Dad told Tommy who was off in a flash toward the house.

Joe and Dad worked feverishly but quietly as they led now two of the good milk cows away from the madly licking flames to safety, and as Mr. Pennyworth came hurrying out to the barn, the last cow was led to safety. He ran like a mad man toward the implement shed and would have gone in had not Daddy stopped him, but catching his arms he said, "It's about to collapse, Mr. Pennyworth. Run!" But the man stood like one petrified, and then Joe ran toward him and grabbing him almost roughly, jerked him back and out of the path of the falling, burning timbers of the barn, and just in time, too.

"My tractor! My new tractor!" sobbed the man. Then after a long pause he fell to his knees weeping bitterly and saying:

"You win! You win! Forgive me! I've been a rebellious and wicked sinner, a father who's been leading his children astray, but I'm coming home tonight, dear Lord! Forgive me! Save me! and I'll pay all my back tithes and offerings up to date." And then a glorious heavenly light settled down upon his soul. Joe, standing in the shadows, thought it must be getting morning, but he noticed the light was all on Mr. Pennyworth's face.

Then he knew! He began to sing softly,

"Though the way seemed straight and narrow,
All I claimed was swept away.
My ambitions, plans and wishes,
At my feet in ashes lay.
Yet 'I will praise Him.'"

Somewhere off in the starry heavens Mr. Pennyworth thought he heard angels sing.

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, July, 1960

Story 7

JOHNNY'S DREAM

Johnny, Mary and Jane were sitting beneath the Wisteria vine in the yard just outside the west kitchen window busy making mats and tiny baskets out of the burrs from the burdock plants that grew wild down along the old fence row of the pastor. Pete, the neighbor boy, was busy setting up the ware of the children and pretending he was the store man with lots and lots of people buying the pretty baskets, mats and hearts that were already finished.

Mother glanced up from the pot of hot, bubbly jelly she was making and out the window to the children to see what they were doing, then with a sigh of relief and satisfaction she proceeded pouring the sticky goodness into the small sterilized jelly jars on the cabinet. She was just ready to call the children in for a piece of freshly baked bread with butter and the still warm jelly when Johnny's voice floated in through the open window:

"I don't care what you say, Jane. I believe Pete and he said his Dad and Morn said people were talking about the Lord's coming fifty years ago, and He still .hasn't come!" He emphasized the "still" so loudly that Mother dropped her spoon and stood in dead silence listening. Was that her Johnny? Why surely he knew different than that! But the conversation went on with Mary's tearful pleadings:

"Johnny Brooks, you know you don't mean that!" And thirteen year old Johnny said strongly, "I do mean that! People tell you about Jesus' coming just to scare you. That's all! It's kinda' like Hell, they think you'll get scared and then hurry and join their church."

Mary and Jane drew in a breath of utter disbelief at what their brother was saying and finally Mary said with tears brimming over her pretty brown eyes:

"Johnny! Johnny Brooks! Why . . . Why... Why... you're an infidel or something! You know you must be saved and you know Jesus is coming back again! You know it, Johnny! You know it!" And she went sobbing in to Mother who still stood as one in a dream.

"Mother, oh, Mother!" cried Mary and Jane, "Johnny says Jesus isn't coming back again like you and Daddy tell us and read to us from the Bible. He said Pete said it's all just a lot of silly, scary talk, but it's all true, Mother --I mean the Bible--isn't it?"

Mother gently and tenderly placed her arms about the slender shoulders of her ever loving and tender hearted Christian little daughters and said softly, "Yes, it's true, all of it. So true!" And Johnny, who had come in after his sisters, stood staring at his feet with his face all red and ashamed.

Mother, with tears rolling down her sweet face, walked over to Johnny and put her arms in love around him and let her hot, burning tears fall on his round head and only said, "I love you, Johnny! I'm going to pray a lot more for you." It was like a big dart went through Johnny's heart and he looked up to his Mother's kind eyes and tried hard to apologize by saying:

"But, Mother, Pete said it's so, and his folks go to church too. I'm sorry, I didn't mean to hurt you, Mother, but that's what Pete said." He went on and on about what Pete said and Mother just stood there with a far-away look in her eyes, and finally she said gently, "God is truth; His Word is truth. Believe Him!"

The children went back to their play and somehow things just weren't the same. Johnny was irritable and cross with his sisters and with Pete, and his mind just refused to be happy, for he heard a low moan and groan and "Oh, God!" and then some more moaning, weeping and groaning coming from the big pantry off the kitchen and he knew those moans and groans; Mother was praying! The longer she prayed, the sicker he got until he told Pete he was going to the barn; there was some work he must do before Dad and Jack got in from the field. Pete left the girls and went with Johnny, much to Johnny's disgust.

Out at the barn Pete suddenly said, "Say, Johnny, what's the matter with you? You look like you ate sour apples! Why," and he laughed, "you're not doing that right; that chop goes into the cow feeders, not the chickens." And Johnny almost cried, his mind was as mixed up as the work he wasn't doing right. Why had he said that? He must never listen to Pete again.

"Well," after awhile came from Pete, "can't you say anything?"

"Yes," Johnny replied tartly, "go home! Will you, Pete?"

Pete stared at Johnny as though he hadn't heard right, then finally he said, "Johnny, I thought we were pals! You never were cross to me like this before."

"I'm . . . I . . . I'm," and Johnny's face got redder and redder as he stuttered and finally said, "I'm sorry, Pete, but I'd like to be alone; you see, I don't feel too. . . too... good."

"Shall I go tell your Mother?" Pete asked quickly.

"Oh, no," was Johnny's reply, "I'd just like to be alone, that's all."

Reluctantly Pete started through the barn yard and down the narrow pathway through the meadow that led to his home, muttering, "What a pal!"

That night at the supper table Johnny noticed Mother's face was all red and swollen from crying, and somehow his usually big appetite was gone. He noticed too that Mother had baked his very own favorite pecan pie, and when he refused, Daddy said, "Something wrong with you, son? Does your stomach ache?"

"Oh, no, Dad," Johnny replied, "I just can't eat it tonight, that's all."

Mary and Jane cast little glances his way but he pretended not to notice.

For family worship that night Mr. Brooks handed the Bible to Johnny saying, "Son, it's your turn tonight, I believe."

Johnny swallowed hard as opened the Bible to the Book they were reading in, and suddenly he swallowed even harder, for he noticed his chapter was on the second coming of Christ.

"Read it carefully, slowly, and prayerfully," Mr. Brooks gave his usual command for the reading of the Word and Johnny could scarcely read.

After the family worship, the entire Brooks family retired in peace for the night--all, that is, except Johnny--he had a troubled mind.

Sometime during the wee hours Mother heard the phone ringing and hurried down stairs to answer it before the children were all awakened, but Mary and Jane were down almost as soon as Mother said, "Hello," their eyes all sleepy and little-looking.

"What's happened?" asked Jane.

"Is somebody dead?" Mary questioned sleepily, and Mother was saying:

"Who? Oh, yes. That's too bad! We'll be right over! Do you hear? Now don't worry! Yes, right away," and she hung up the receiver saying:

"Mrs. Cooper's real sick and Mr. Cooper called to ask could I come over right away. So you girls better get back in bed; Daddy can take me over and he can come right back. I'll take baby Tim so if he cries, I'll be there to take care of him. Jack's asleep and so is Johnny and you'll be all right," and she started up the stairs.

"Oh, Mother," begged the two girls, "please do let us go with you. We're scared to stay here without you and Daddy. Please, may we go? We'll stay in the car as you promised," and she hurried with her dressing as Daddy went downstairs to get the car out of the garage.

Quietly, the three children and Mr. and Mrs. Brooks went out the door and drove away; and the Lord, in His goodness, had planned everything that morning at two o'clock.

Johnny in his bedroom was fast asleep and completely unaware of what had happened. Jack, too, over in his bedroom was having a most pleasant dream; Rags, the dog, was with him and had scented a fox trail; together they trailed the fox through the verdant green woods and over hills and fields.

Johnny's dream, however, was quite different. He dreamed the Lord had come and taken Mother and Dad; he ran all over the house calling, "Mother, Daddy, where are you?" When he couldn't find them, he began calling, " Mary! Janie! did you go too?" In his dream, he alone was left behind, and Mary's accusing words came back to him, "You know it's true! You know Jesus is coming back again! You know it! Know it . . . know it!"

Suddenly Johnny was wide awake. He sat up in bed then, and the horribleness of being left behind settled down upon his young heart like a midnight storm. He jumped out of bed, raced down the hallway to Mother and Daddy's room and fell over their bed crying, "Oh, Mother, Dad, pray for me! Please pray for me!" But instead of Mother's soft, reassuring words, he felt the bed was empty -- completely empty! Quickly, he turned the light on and in an instant his eyes took in the whole situation Mother and Dad were gone and so was baby Tim, just like they said it would be when Jesus came!

Tears rolled like rivers down his cheeks and he prayed, "Oh, God! Dear God! Can you ever forgive me? I've, beena...a... an infidel, just like Mary said this morning!" And at the name of Mary, Johnny took new courage and raced over to his sister's room, only to find it empty! Now there was no doubt in his mind, Jesus had come; sometime while he was asleep He had come and Mother and Daddy and all the family had heard the sound of the trumpet and gone on up to meet the Lord, and he, Johnny Brooks, was left alone in the world There was nothing more to live for, he thought! Why, oh, why, had he ever believed Pete in the first place! Just wait until tomorrow, he would tell Pete, he surely would, for he knew Pete and his folks wouldn't be gone -- they didn't live according to the Bible but did as they pleased!

Again Johnny prayed -- really prayed! There was no doubting of God's Word in anyway or place. It was all true; God was truth just like Mother had said, and if he ever wanted to see Mother again, he knew he must repent! Oh, how dearly he realized he loved both Daddy and Mother just then, and he continued praying and crying and calling upon God for mercy on his "infidel" soul as Mary had said. "Forgive me, please forgive me, dear Jesus, and have mercy on me a bad sinner boy!" Johnny prayed and his prayers were well seasoned with salty tears of true repentance.

It was ten minutes until three o'clock and suddenly Johnny felt all of Heaven turned loose in his soul! He was saved! Saved! Saved! And best of all, he knew it! All the bitterness he had felt toward Pete for telling him something that wasn't true was gone, and in the place of hatred, God filled his heart with a big, yearning love for Pete and his soul. In the morning he would go over and tell Pete how he was an orphan and that Jesus had come, but at ten minutes to three the Lord had saved him and he wanted Pete to get saved too.

For a long time, Johnny knelt by his bedside with tears of joy flooding his soul in his new-found peace, when suddenly the emptiness and loneliness of the house settled down upon his little heart.

Tearfully, he made his way downstairs and turned the lights on in the living room when he heard a key turning in the front door, and the door opened: There stood Mother, Daddy, Mary, Janie, and Baby Tim! Johnny, almost hysterical with fright, rushed into Mother's arms crying, "Mother, dear, dear Mother, I thought Jesus had come! Forgive me, Mother, forgive me, Janie and Mary for saying what I did today. God is truth, His Word is truth! I was wrong, so wrong; but, Mother, Daddy, I know I'm saved; at ten minutes to three the Lord Jesus came into my heart and I know He's mine now! Then Johnny told of his dream and how he ran to the bedroom and couldn't find anybody.

"Jack's in his room," Daddy said tenderly and Mother only said, "Thank you, Lord! Thank you!"

Johnny lovingly cuddled up real close to her and kissed her cheeks. He knew why she had said, "Thank you, Lord"; that was in answer to her groans in the pantry yesterday.

Upstairs, Jack and Rags were still leading the fox a merry chase through dreamland as Mother again tucked her two little girls carefully back in bed after putting baby Tim in his crib; then she lay down beside Johnny and for a long time they talked and rejoiced in Johnny's new-found peace and joy in Jesus. Then Mother noticed the steady, heavy breathing of her young son, and placing a kiss upon his forehead, she tip-toed down the hallway to her bedroom, her heart light and thankful!

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, August, 1960

Story 8

THE MONSTER

Marilyn came rushing into the sunny kitchen all out of breath. "Mother! Mother!" she said excitedly, "Frank's in Billy Holly's house watching television."

"Are you sure?" Mother asked. "It's dreadfully wicked to accuse some one of something we're not sure of, dear," she added.

"But I am sure!" exclaimed the auburn haired Marilyn. "I saw him sitting in their big soft chair with his eyes glued on television, and I ran home as fast as I could to tell you. Maybe we should go get him," she suggested, "before it defiles his mind as you and Daddy say it does."

"It does all that and more," Mother said sadly. "But honey," she added, "don't say a word to Frank that you saw him. Do you hear?"

"Why, Mother," Marilyn said with crestfallen countenance, "aren't you going to punish him? He's doing wickedly, you know."

"Yes, dear, he is," Mother quickly replied, "but Daddy and I shall take care of him -- good too!" she added, "but for tonight, promise you'll not say a word."

"All right, Mother," said the sweet, innocent looking little girl, "I won't."

"Now promise me one more thing," said Mother.

"Yes, Mother, what is it?" said Marilyn.

"I want you to go into your bedroom and pray for Frank, and as soon as I turn the chicken and put it on a low flame, I'll be in too, and we'll pray together for Frank." And Mother added, "You see, Marilyn, we've already spoken to Frank once before about sneaking into Don Brand's house on two different occasions to watch it, and he still insists upon doing it, so now we must pray and seek God's great assistance."

"Oh, yes, Mother," said Marilyn, "I'll gladly help you and Daddy pray. I love Frank and don't want him to be lost." And she slipped into her bedroom where Mother heard soft weeping and praying, and joined her daughter within a few minutes for her own heart was crushed and broken at her boy's disobedience and pull toward ungodly things.

Supper was a pleasant occasion with the exception that Frank seemed sullen and moody, Every now and then he'd cast a sheepish glance at his Mother's swollen and red eyes and he knew she'd been praying, maybe for him! and the thought smote his heart like a dagger. What if Mother knew? But she couldn't possibly know for he'd sneaked in Billy's back yard and back door, and he knew there wasn't a soul around watching for he made sure of that before he went in! And then another thought struck him. What if God had let Mother see where he was! No matter what he did, it seemed to Frank his Mother generally always he knew even before he'd tell her! It had to be God who told a good Mother all these secrets that a boy didn't want for her to know! It just had to! He knew!

"Frank," spoke Father, "your Mother's asked you something three times. Are you asleep?"

"No," and Frank began to stutter, "I'm sorry, Mother. I was just thinking -- that's all."

"Good thoughts, I hope, Frank," Mother said sweetly, then asked, "I was just wondering how school was today. Was your history test hard? I noticed you were nearly a half hour late coming in from school tonight. No overtime work, I hope!" she said.

"Oh, no," said Frank, "just a little late, that's all. Try to do better tomorrow night!" And again he settled into one of those moods.

"You will do better by tomorrow night, dear!" said Mother with much finality in her voice.

Frank looked up from his plate in time to see big tears running down his Mother's sweet face. Now he knew she knew! For a moment he felt he must confess, then the devil jumped on his shoulder and whispered in his ear, "You little fool! You need some kind of a change from just prayer meetings and church! Don't you do it!" and a hard, set look came into Frank's eyes.

For family worship, Daddy read from the Psalms and Frank was much relieved, until suddenly like a clap of thunder bursting in his ears and his heart, he heard Daddy saying from David's Psalm, "I will set no evil thing before mine eyes." Surely, God had been allowing Father and Mother both to see his wickedness and his shrewd schemings. He prayed little during family prayer but mumbled mainly and said words, then kissing Mother and Daddy goodnight, he went to his bedroom and into bed, only to toss, tumble and roll; roll, tumble, toss and turn! His heart had an awful double nature within that kept his soul and mind in a constant turmoil. "Dear, sweet Mother and kind, generous Father!" he thought. How could he --their own son -- do this to them! He must confess and repent! He just must! Then about the same time the Devil popped up on his shoulder whispering, "You fool, you!"

Finally Frank fell into troubled sleep. He was in Billy's big living room with his eyes fixed upon the television screen when suddenly a huge monster appeared upon the screen. "I'm your idol!" said the hideous looking monster that kept getting bigger and bigger and was rapidly coming toward him -- Frank Boggs! -- trying to get him. "You will soon be my slave," continued this dreadful looking monster, "I shall soon have you drinking, smoking, and telling rotten jokes like my other workers on the screen," and then he placed long, icy claw-like hands around Frank's heart as he continued. "Soon, oh! soon now, you will succumb to my powers and you too will be my slave! Then you can unclasp your body and feel no remorse of conscience or guilt and shame whatsoever," and he laughed a crazy, bloodcurdling laugh.

"Go to Billy," Frank begged. "Only leave me alone! Please," he continued, "take your cold, icy hands away from my heart. Already I feel a numbness in both my heart and mind." "Good! Good! Very Good, continued the monster with blue white eyes. "Soon your heart will be like all my followers -- then there will be no harm in anything -- no harm!" he laughed; then, Go to Billy, you say? He already is my slave! I'm Billy's god," he boasted, then throwing his long neck back, he again laughed a shrill piercing laugh as he added, "Soon now, you shall break your Mother's heart once and forever, and you will feel no sorrow for it! Soon now, you shall lay a grief-stricken Father in a cold grave and no conscience will nag and bother you. Soon now, you will be forever lost to God and the cause of true Holiness! I am the Monster! The television Monster! I rob people of all their time, much of their money, and of all of their prayer hours; I make bad girls out of good, pure girls, and turn kind, loving boys into rough, wayward sons. I am your god! Do you hear? You must worship me! I demand all your spare time and all your thinking

You must think my way! Come now, go back with me to Monster Land--you are my slave! My slave!" he shrieked.

"No! No!" screamed Frank, "I won't go! You can't have me. I want God! I want Mother! I want Daddy! Oh, God! Dear God, please help me!" he screamed as Mother entered the room.

"It's all right, dear," said Mother, laying a gentle hand upon the forehead of her boy who was dripping with perspiration.

"Mother!" began Frank, "forgive me! I was over to Billy's house watching television tonight. I must be saved now or I'll die and go to Hell. The Lord just let me see where I was heading for," and Frank was on his knees weeping bitterly and praying loudly for deliverance.

"I knew He'd show you, dear," said Mother whose eyes were more swollen and red than ever. Then Frank spoke again:

"Oh, Mother, I'm truly sorry this time. You've been praying all night for me, haven't you?"

"Yes, dear, and now Jesus wants to hear you really confess and give Him all your heart," Mother said, leading the way in prayer.

Soft footsteps came padding down the hallway to Frank's room and just as Father and Marilyn reached the door, it seemed as though God threw millions of bright scintillating stars into the room! It lighted up with light from Heaven as Jesus came into Frank's heart and saved his soul from every sin.

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, September, 1960

Story 9

WILLIE, THE TURTLE

"Come see what Uncle Will brought me from the lease," said Danny. "It's a turtle! A little baby turtle! He found it while he was out looking about the oil wells, and it's for me to keep!" he said to Mike who stood looking down at the tiny creature that kept going around and around in the pen he was in.

"He's really cute, Danny," said Mike. "May I pick him up and hold him?" he asked.

"Sure," said Danny, "but he's kind of scared yet. We must tame him, Mike. You can help me to tame him. Every day we'll hold him awhile and talk to him, and then he'll soon be used to us."

"I wonder if he doesn't miss his mother," said Mike. "I know I'd miss mine if I was taken away from her."

"Me too," came Danny's quick reply, "but I guess maybe they don't have brains to think like you and I have, so maybe he's forgotten he has a mother."

"Let's hope so," Mike said pitifully, "but, Danny, what are you going to call him? If we're going to make him tame, he must have a name that we can say over and over to him to help him get used to."

"That's right, Mike!" said Danny, "but, dear me, what could you name such a small thing."

"Maybe Termite," suggested Mike, "or Twerp or Peanut," and both boys laughed and laughed.

"I don't think any of them fit him," said Danny as he gently stroked the hard back of the turtle.

"Well, what about Nebuchadnezzar, or Socrates," suggested Mike again, "or maybe even Aristotle."

"What funny names for a tiny turtle!" laughed Danny, and for a long time the boys only laughed as first one name was suggested, then another. Finally Danny said excitedly:

"Mike! I've got it! He's going to be called Willie. Uncle Will gave him to me, so his name is Willie."

"That does sound better," said Mike, "Now let's start taming him." Whereupon both boys took turns at holding the frightened little creature and whispering over and over in his face, "Here, Willie! Come, Willie!" and the poor little fellow stuck his head as far beneath his shell as he possibly could.

"Enough taming for now," said Danny, "Let's play ball."

"Good!" said Mike and both boys ran for the vacant lot next to the house with ball, bat, and mitt in hand.

"I'll beat you over," said Mike who already was running rapidly toward home plate.

"All right," said Danny, "let's see!" and the race was on. Both boys made it at the same time and fell into the soft, green grass exhausted and laughing merrily.

The starlings that had been quietly taking their stand at the crow fish holes all over the lot, watching and waiting for the first sign of a claw or pincher to come up through the hole for their supper, flew away in a dither of excitement and disillusionment, then perching on top of the pine and elm trees, let out a loud scolding to the two carefree boys.

Day after day the two pals met and took turns talking to Willie and helping him get more acquainted with his new surroundings. All the children in the block knew about Willie the turtle, and many times the boys and girls came to Danny's house to see the little turtle, who seemed to love the children by now and loved to stretch his funny little neck out and look around with his two little beady eyes.

What fun they had with Willie! He even went to school one day with Mike and Danny, for Mrs. Flowers, the teacher, had wanted to use him in a nature study lesson.

She put Willie on a piece of yellow construction paper on her desk, then put it in a shallow box where all the children could watch and see the turtle. It seemed Willie knew he was on exhibition that day for he did the cutest stunts, just like a little show off boy. How the children laughed when he stretched his funny neck 'way out and high, then looked all around the big class room.

"Oh, look," said one of the girls, "he sees me. He's looking at me!" And they laughed with glee. But then, all the children thought he was looking right at them; you would have too if you had seen him. Soon Mrs. Flowers asked questions.

"Who can tell me something about turtles?" she questioned, and almost immediately six hands were raised.

"Johnny," she said to a timid little boy whose hand was partially raised, "you tell the class something about turtles."

Surprising all the boys and girls, Johnny went into a long discussion about turtles, and how they like the water and love to sun and sleep on a log or rotten piece of wood nearby. Then Mrs. Flowers asked:

"What do you feed your turtle, Danny? Does he eat much?"

"I feed my turtle a special food we buy at the dime store or pet shop," said Danny. "It's dried ant eggs, dried flies, and dried ants. My turtle doesn't eat much yet for he's still small, but as he grows older, I'm sure he'll want more just as we do."

"That's right," said the teacher, then quickly she asked:

"How many of you would like to hear a story? A true story about a little turtle?"

Again the hands were raised and some of the girls whispered, "Oh, goody! I like stories."

"Let's settle down and be very quiet and I'll tell you the story," said Mrs. Flowers.

"One day there was a little turtle named 'Porky,' He belonged to a very pretty little blue-eyed girl who loved him very much. Her father bought her the turtle whose back was painted a bright yellow. Just like Danny, she loved to play with Porky.

"One day she took the turtle the yard while she was playing with her dolls, and when she went to his box to take him inside, he was gone. She looked all over the yard for Porky but couldn't find him. How sad her heart was! Porky was lost and she knew it! "A whole year went by and one day some boys hit a ball that went into a neighbor's rose bed and while they were looking for the ball, guess what they found!"

"Porky!" The children said excitedly.

"Yes," said Mrs. Flowers. "They found Porky! and he still had his bright yellow back. But the boy who found him said, 'Good! He's mine now! I found him!'

"His friend, who was a Christian boy, said, 'Oh no, Ken! That would be stealing. That's Susie's turtle -- we all know that; she lost him a year ago.'

"That's all right," said the boy who found the turtle, 'losers weepers, finders keepers,' and he laughed as he said, 'He's mine! I'm keeping him!'

"Now," continued Mrs. Flowers, "whose turtle do you think he was? Susie's or the boy who found him?"

Some of the boys spoke up and said, "I think he should have belonged to the boy." "Oh no?" said the girls, "he should have been given to Susie; after all, he was her turtle."

Then Mike's and Danny's hands went up.

"What do you think, Mike?" the teacher asked.

"Well," said Mike, "I go to Sunday School and church and I'm a Christian; I feel the turtle should have been given to Susie; it belonged to her."

"What do you have to say, Danny?" asked Mrs. Flowers.

"I feel like Mike. I'm saved too and if you find anything that doesn't belong to you and you know to whom it did belong, I believe that's like stealing. Now if you don't know to whom it belongs, then you may keep it with a clear conscience. Just like I found a dollar one day that I didn't know who owned it, but if I had known, I would have given it to the person it belonged to. But to keep something that belongs to someone else -- when we know it's theirs -- is stealing and Lord said, 'Thou shalt not steal. Susie should have had her turtle back.'"

"That's exactly right," Mrs. Flowers said, "and that's what happened. You see, the Christian boy persuaded Ken to give it back to Susie, and how happy she was to see her little Porky again."

The children all sighed a sigh of happy relief and looked kindly at Willie who was poking his neck up high to see around.

"Aunt Mozelle told me they found a little turtle beneath their rose bush too," said Danny, and Mrs. Flowers smiled for the boys had found Porky under her very rose bush.

"It always pays to be honest in all things," said Mrs. Flowers as the class was dismissed.

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Story 10
GREENLEGS

He was born into the big family with a fuzzy head of yellow, soft down, and his mother was just as proud of him as she was of the eleven others in her brood. He was cuddly and, oh, so soft, and old Mother Red Hen loved to feel him wiggle his way out beneath her big wings and climb up onto her broad back. However, one thing bothered her sore this lively young cock of hers was no ordinary one; no sir! he was always using his sharp bill to peck on his sisters' or brothers' heads, and how he could peck! Time after time he had pecked their small fuzzy heads so hard until the blood came; that's when Mother Red Hen would give him a sound pecking back. For days afterward the smart little rooster boy did well and seemed to behave nicely, but within himself he was still the cocky, naughty one of the family and always watched for a way (or a time), to be bad and disagreeable. This was especially true when Mother was busy scratching for worms for her family, or had gone to the stream for a drink of water. His poor Mother kept disciplining him and hoped he would grow up to be a fine, respectable young rooster, but what she didn't know was that he had a very bad nature within him.

One fine sunny day as Brenda was out playing with Amarantha, her rag doll, Mother Red Hen paraded by the yard fence with all her brood of twelve and Brenda called excitedly to Mother:

"Oh, Mother, come see! Red Hen has a lovely family and one of her children has green legs."

Mother came hurrying out to Brenda, and, sure enough, there was one of her brood with greenish-yellow legs. Mother and Brenda laughed, and that night at the supper table Brenda told George, Ruth, Bob, and Bill all about the young chicken with green legs, and she laughed gaily as Ruth said:

"I know what, let's call him Greenlegs! Shall we?" and Brenda said:

"Why, Ruth, that's a wonderful name! It just fits him! He'll be Greenlegs then!" And Father and Mother and everybody laughed and said, "Greenlegs! What a funny name!"

It was funny, but sort of pitiful too; for you see, boys and girls, poor Greenlegs not only had green legs, but he had something else green within him; it was green-eyed jealousy. If Mother Red Hen ever gave poor little underweight Fuzzy Button, his sister, a few more worms than he got, old jealous Greenlegs was sure to peck her head that night until it would bleed. Therefore, Fuzzy Button would always try to stay real close to Mother Red Hen for fear of another sound pecking. All of this only made Greenlegs more jealous than ever. He didn't realize that he too could have stayed just as close to Mother Red Hen as Fuzzy Button did and she would have loved him just as much as a Red Hen can love her little boy and girl chicks, but instead he was watching poor little Fuzzy Button -- afraid she was getting more attention than he.

Some few months later on when Mother Red Hen was busy hatching out another brood of chicks and all her family of twelve had joined the big barnyard group, Greenlegs perched his fine body of beautiful red feathers on the barnyard fence and raising his head in a proud manner while the big plume on his tail blew gently in the breeze, he let out a big, long "Cock-a-doodle-doo-ooo!" as if to say, "Just you wait! I'll show everybody who I am!"

The next day while Bob was working down near the pig stable and busy as could be, Greenlegs saw his opportunity; and, as soon as Bob had turned his head another direction, old Greenlegs charged; he ran up to Bob and flogged him soundly with his wings and scratched him with his sharp claws. Quickly, Bob turned around and with a small piece of wood he had just picked up, had hit Greenlegs who raced over to the fence, flew up on it and let out another proud "Cock-a-doodle-do," as though to say this time, "See what I did! I did it once and I can do it again!"

That night at the supper table Mother told Daddy they had better do something about Greenlegs, adding:

"He's hurting the children. He flogged Bob a good one today and when Ruth went to the henhouse to gather the eggs this afternoon he really gave her a sound flogging. She was bleeding from where he clawed her!"

"Just ignore him," Daddy said, "and he'll not bother you!"

"But, Dad," said Bob, "I hadn't even seen him when he flogged me."

"He seems to come out of nowhere," said Ruth tearfully, "and . . . and . . . I'm scared of him."

"Just ignore him," again Daddy said, and the conversation was dropped.

One day as Mother went to the garden to get some lettuce and radishes for dinner, it happened She got inside the garden fence and carefully closed the gate behind her and sighed a sigh of relief when she saw no sign of Greenlegs for he was becoming more and more of a terror to the whole family -- all that is but Daddy who still calmly maintained, "Just ignore him!"

Mother had stooped over to cut the tender stalks of lettuce off from the roots when like a cyclone, he struck. He flogged her legs, her feet, her ankles, and the blood was running freely down her shins; grabbing a stick she had stuck in for the beans to climb on, the chase began. She chased him all over and around the garden -- occasionally managing to hit him with the stick -when suddenly, like magic, he flew on the fence, let out a big, proud "Cock-a-doodle-doo" and was gone.

At dinner, Mother said seriously, "Daddy, something just must be done with Greenlegs! He seems to appear out of nowhere and disappear as quickly."

Daddy laughed and said calmly, "Just ignore him," and again the subject was dropped.

One fine Saturday afternoon Daddy decided to work on his car. He had been busily engaged in the work and was lying on his back beneath the car. He changed positions and his partly bald head stuck just a short way out from beneath the car when Greenlegs just couldn't resist. Again the urge was on his bad heart, and in a flash he was on Daddy's partially bald head, scratching and flogging, flogging and scratching. Daddy wiggled like a worm on a hot ash and, as he tried to get out from beneath the car, Greenlegs flogged his back, ripping his shirt with his claws. When finally Daddy was up on his feet, he wiped the blood from his bald spot and searched the area for Greenlegs but as Mother said, he had disappeared. Then quite suddenly he heard the conqueror's "Cock-a-doodle-doo" up on the barn yard fence, and Daddy must have really decided Greenlegs wanted attention and for no more ignorings. "If attention is what you want, attention is what you'll get," he said out loud, then finding Greenlegs, he chased him into the henhouse and finally caught him.

"Mother," he said triumphantly as he came into the kitchen, "we've ignored poor Greenlegs too long. It's time he got some attention. Let's give him lots of it tonight at the supper table!"

From then on the whole Smith household had peace and rest but not until Greenlegs was killed good and dead. too!

Just two days after poor Greenlegs was dead and eaten, Bob and George had gone to the corn field to hoe corn. How they hated the job! It was a hot day; the sun was blazing down upon the boys in all of its fury; as a result the boys were both very much irritated and cross and each seemed to only aggravate the other more by any conversation. So for a long time there was complete silence except for the happy song bird who realized the Heavenly Father cared tenderly for it and therefore it must issue a song of praise to God. Bob heard it as it warbled on and on in the top of the shady apple tree that stood in the center of the cornfield and seemed, like an oasis in a desert to the two boys. Quite suddenly Bob said:

"George, why can't you be happy like that little bird up in the tree? You stay so cross and stubborn!"

"I'm not any more cross or sour than you are," was George's tart reply.

"Oh yes you are," continued Bob, "and you . . . you . . . profess to be a Christian. I don't! But let me tell you one thing, when I get saved I want what Mother and Dad have -- not your kind," he added.

Something within George's heart awakened and arose at the same time and before he realized what he had done he saw his younger brother in a heap in the corn field. Then he realized! He really wasn't a Christian! He had struck his brother with the hoe handle and maybe even killed him! Big salty tears rolled like rivers down his ruddy, sun burned cheeks as he knelt over his brother's lifeless form and prayed:

"Please, dear Lord, spare Bob! Please do! Don't let him die! And, oh God, forgive me for professing to be saved when I'm not; but I want you to save me; please do it, Lord, and bring Bob back to life so he can get saved too."

On and on he prayed and cried. When he opened his eyes he saw Bob on his knees with big tears streaming down his cheeks. Quickly he threw his arms around his brother and tearfully begged his forgiveness for hitting him.

"That's all right," said Bob, "but I just see how close to death I could have been, and I'm not ready to die, but I'm going to get ready right now while you do too." And the brothers forgot all their old crossness and meanness toward each other as they wept and prayed for God to save and forgive them. They prayed on and on beneath the sun's hot rays but neither noticed the heat, their hearts were so intent on finding God and then Jesus came. Oh, the rejoicing! The peace and happiness!

When it was time for dinner the boys went to the humble farm kitchen where Mother stood waiting for them -- her cheeks all pink and flushed prettily from the warmth of the day.

George rushed up to her and said, "Oh, Mother, I got saved just a little while ago in the cornfield." "So did I," said Bob.

"I thought I was saved," continued George, "but I wasn't. Now I know I am!" and the tears fell fast again as he said, "I almost killed Bob out in the corn field." "Now, now!" said Bob.

"You only knocked me out for a little time."

"Why...." and Mother's mouth opened wide as she started to say something but George continued:

"I have in my heart just what poor Greenlegs had in his; and, Mother, I--I--I--pity him! He couldn't help himself just as I couldn't when I hit Bob. Something within me arose and, before I knew what I was doing, I hit poor Bob. Now I'm saved -- I know I am -- the dear Saviour saved and forgave my sins, but that bent to sinning must all be taken out. I want the Holy Ghost to give me a personal Pentecost that will take out all the carnality -- that Greenlegs nature, Mother -- and I want Him to do it right now."

"Me, too," said Bob, "George is changed this time."

Mother, Father, and all the family gathered around the two boys and prayed for God, the Holy Spirit, to cleanse their hearts and make them clean through the refining fire of the Holy Ghost, and while they were kneeling, waiting, and praying, George said "He's come! The Holy Spirit has come and taken out carnality! I'm dean, oh, so clean, and pure in my heart!"

"He's in my heart too," said Bob joyfully. "He just now filled me with His Spirit."

Then George said almost in a whisper as he thanked the Lord, "Thank you, dear Lord, for Greenlegs! You used him -- poor, dead Greenlegs -- to show me what was in my heart, and how I must die out to sin and self before there'd ever be complete rest in my heart. Thank you again for Greenlegs."

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, November, 1960

Story 11

TERRIE'S THANKSGIVING

"Oh, Mother!" Terrie said excitedly as she came hurrying into the kitchen. "Could we have a new kind of Thanksgiving this year? A brand new and different kind!" she exclaimed with a dreamy faraway look in her dark brown eyes.

"What kind of Thanksgiving would that be?" asked Mother smiling. "You know Grandmother and Grandfather want us over to Snow Valley for Thanksgiving with them. Uncle Ed and Aunt Mary, and all your Aunts and Uncles will be there, and all your little cousins, and you know what a grand time you always have sledding down the big hill on the farm!" continued Mother.

"I know that, Mother, and I do love it; but.., well I was just wondering if we couldn't make someone else happy this Thanksgiving instead of me always being made so happy?" answered Terrie seriously.

"You do make others very happy," said Mother, "just by being at Grandmother's and Grandfather's house on Thanksgiving. They love you and love to have you come to their house, dear. But what was your plan, Terrie, and we'll see what we can do about it?"

Terrie sat up real straight and as her dark eyes sparkled and twinkled with anticipation she said, "Oh! Mother! You're so good! You remember Miss Fawn, my Sunday School teacher said we should try to make someone else happy and try to give the poor people who can't have a good Thanksgiving at least some food? Well, I was thinking how I could give food when the thought came to me, "Why not have a Thanksgiving dinner at our house! A truly Thanksgiving dinner, Mother! We could have a big turkey with just lots and lots of dressing and cranberry sauce, and . . . and... just everything good to eat, like your pumpkin and apple pies and coconut cake, and I'd invite poor Widow Snow with her seven hungry looking children, and that smelly old Mr. Ralt, and poor Mr. and Mrs. Tremble with all their ten children. He's really poor and can't work at all since he's had to have his back in that horrid harness."

"That's a brace, dear, not a harness," corrected Mother, "and he'll have to wear it all his life unless the Lord heals him," Mother said sadly.

"Heals him!" said Terrie, "Why, he never goes to church, and that's what else I was thinking," she continued sweetly. "Maybe---just maybe they'd be thankful enough to go with us to hear Rev. Brown preach that night and get saved."

Mother was silent for a long time, then finally she said, "We'll do it, Terrie! You may invite all of them and I'll fix a dinner fit for a king, and meantime we'll do a lot of praying for them. You run along now while I write Grandmother and explain everything to her. It will be a great disappointment to them, but this is more important."

In the weeks that followed, Terrie was so excited she could hardly think or set her mind down to studying, and when Thanksgiving Day finally came she was up bright and early helping Mother set the big table in the dining room. Her soft, fair cheeks were pink and rosy like Mother's as she carried the steaming food to the table and her heart felt light and happy.

At the stroke of twelve o'clock the front door bell chimed and the clean-aproned, sunny Terrie hurried to the door to admit her special guests. They were all there and, when old Mr. Ralt saw the snow-white tablecloth with all the food upon it and the clean, crisp napkins, he said, "I'm sorry, Missus, that I didn't bother to put me best clothes on."

"That's quite all right," Mother said sweetly; and as the meal progressed the old man seemed to become more and more uncomfortable. Finally he said:

"Missus," (for he always called Mother 'Missus,' and Daddy 'Mister') "I feel most dirty 'round about you good, clean people." The tears began flowing carelessly down his cheeks to his long chin whiskers as he brokenly continued :

"'Twas the day I was a good man, but sin . . . it dragged . . . me down -- way, way down! When my good Mother . . . she . . . passed on . . . I . . . went clear down. Missus, my Mother was a clean, holy woman such as you." Here he paused, then almost reverently he said, "You remind me of Mother. She had the same kind, calm look on her face as you have," and he sobbed bitterly.

Just then Daddy slipped over by the chair of Mr. Ralt and kindly he said:

"Wouldn't you like to find your Mother's God again?"

"Yes! Yes! Sure would! I've never seen such love and kindness of God for deliverance from his sins, and suddenly Jesus came and forgave him of all his sins. He ran about the dining room shouting, "Thank you, Lord! Thank you! Oh, I love You!" Then suddenly he was over by the chair of the crippled Mr. Tremble saying lovingly, "My Christ can heal you, Mister! He can heal you for He just saved my soul, and I know He can heal you."

"Heal me?" said the weeping, frail cripple. "I'm not worthy of His healing. I need to be saved! I'm in this condition because I disobeyed God and I want Him to heal my poor lost, crippled, never-dying soul. Please pray, everybody!" and he was begging God for mercy upon his soul. He told the Lord how sorry he was for being disobedient to Him by taking the job the Lord had warned him not to take and after he had confessed all his sins to the Lord and told Him to:

please save his soul the blessed Saviour came and, before he realized what had happened, he was up and out of his chair hugging the bewhiskered old smelly man whose face was aglow with the light of Heaven. Together they ran about the room shouting and praising the Lord when suddenly Mr. Tremble stopped and looked around him, wondering if he was still on this earth below; then reverently he said as he looked from one to the other seated about the table, "He's saved my soul, bless His Name! And he just now healed my deformed back too; I felt the bones going into their proper place, and see," he said as he unfastened the metal brace that he wore out over his shirt and about his neck, "I can walk again by God's grace and healing power! Oh, thank the Lord!" Then seeing the tears in his wife's eyes, he walked over to her and placed his hands on her thin shoulders, saying, "I thank God for you, Ellen. Your prayers and the children's prayers have been answered and I'm a new creature in Jesus."

Then turning to Terrie's parents he added, "When you prayed that wonderful prayer before we ate, God began dealing with my heart and I knew then I'd have to do something, and I'm so happy that Jesus has saved my SOUL."

"We have special services at church tonight," Terrie began. "Mother and Daddy and I are going and we'd like you all to come with us and be our special guests in church too. You should testify tonight now and be thankful by going to church. Will you, please?"

Mrs. Snow and all her children said they'd love to go and Mr. Tremble said, "We certainly will go! I can hardly wait until services begin to tell those people what the Lord has done for me," and again the Lord blessed his soul.

"You can count on me, too," said Mr. Ralt. "I'm going home first and clean up this body of mine; now that Jesus my Saviour abides in my heart, I want the outside of me clean too. I'll be there, but not the same old, dirty, smelly man. Tonight you'll see a new me." Then turning to Mother he said, "A great dinner, Missus! And thank you. I must do some housecleaning at home too so I'd best be runnin' along. See you in church tonight the Lord willing."

As the old man left, the telephone jangled loudly and when Terrie heard the voice on the telephone she called out excitedly, "Grandma! Dear, dear Grandma! We've had the most wonderful Thanksgiving ever!" Grandma said they had saved their Thanksgiving Day for Friday, the next day, and that way Terrie and Mother and Daddy could all be there with all the other cousins, Aunts and Uncles.

"Oh, Mother," Terrie beamed happily, "it's wonderful to be unselfish and try to make others happy! The dear Lord Jesus always seems to give us back so many more blessings than we ever dreamed possible. I feel happy all over this Thanksgiving with a new kind of happiness." And her sweet face seemed to reflect the light of another world.

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Published in The Missionary Revivalist, December, 1960

Story 12

THE CHRISTMAS THAT CHANGED A FAMILY

"Oh, Mother," cried Mary in desperation as she hurried out of her bedroom and ran sobbing into Mother's waiting arms, "somebody's stolen all my Missionary money that I was saving for the special offering Bro. White was going to take up on Sunday before Christmas."

"Are you sure, dear?" asked Mother as she gently stroked the silken blonde curls of the weeping girl. "Let's look again, shall we?" and she led the way to the bedroom that Mary and Faye Evelyn shared.

"Maybe Faye Evelyn will know more about it when she comes home from school," said Mother, then added "Your sister may know what happened to it. How much did you have dear? Do you know?"

Between sobs, the soft blue eyes looked pleadingly up to Mother's face as she said, "No, I know it was stolen." Then a fresh burst of tears followed as she said, "Look at the window, Mother! Somebody's pried it open. I...I...I must have had close to eight or ten dollars, for I put all the money Grandpa gave me for my birthday into that little box, and, Mother," she said as she wept loudly, "every time you and Daddy gave me a nickel or a dime for candy, I put them in every one of them. I wanted to give some 'sacrifice money' as Bro. White preached a few months ago."

"That's a wonderful girl!" Mother said tenderly as she gathered the soft form into her arms, "and the Lord will somehow make it up to you, dear. Just wait and see !" Then placing a kiss on the soft, silken head said, "Run to the bathroom and wash those big tears away. Faye Evelyn will soon be home from school. Remember, dear, what Romans 8:28 says!"

"Yes, Mother--about everything working together for good to them that love the Lord." Then excitedly she said, "Maybe the Lord wants to teach me some lesson, Mother."

"Could be," Mother called from the kitchen stove where she was already busy frying chicken, and taking care not to burn the biscuits.

Just then the front door opened and a dark haired, tender blue-eyed Faye Evelyn called out, "Where is everyone? Oh, Hi, Mom! Sure good to be home again. But what do I smell? Yummy! It smells delicious!" Then hurrying to the kitchen she placed a loving kiss on Mother's pink round cheeks, then, "Oh, Mom, you're the dearest Mother ever!"

"Thank you, honey," said Mother lovingly, "but I have the best children ever." Together they laughed as Faye Evelyn hastily reached for her apron and began to set the table, then suddenly she asked, "Where's our little goldilocks, Mother? Oh, I miss her!" and she hastily ran to the hallway, then the bedroom where Mary was standing with her face close to the window and looking out into space, completely unaware of her sister's presence, when Faye Evelyn swooped her off her feet and into her arms.

"My little doll!" she teased as she kissed her small sister. "You're the sweetest Sister a girl ever had. But why are you so sober? Something happen today?"

"Oh, Faye Evelyn," Mary began, "somebody stole all my Missionary money from my box on top of the dresser. Mama and I went to the grocery store this afternoon and I saw my box open when I came back, but Mommie says the Lord makes all things work together for good, and I was just trying to help God make it that way. I may even sell Liza Jane to get some money for that offering for those missionaries."

"Oh, you darling," said Faye Evelyn, "already you have a heart as generous as our wonderful Mother. Honey, maybe I can do some extra baby sitting and help you on your offering."

"No," said the blonde, "I must give something that will be a sacrifice, like Bro. White preached. I saved all Grandpa's birthday money after it was tithed, and all my candy and ice cream money; now it's all gone and I believe Liza Jane must go."

"Oh, Mary," Faye Evelyn pleaded, "Liza Jane's your very favorite doll; but if you feel this is what the Lord wants, do it, honey!"

In the days that followed Mary's "sacrifice box" grew fatter and rounder, as Grandpa came by and told her he felt he should give her a very special Christmas present before Christmas, then handed her ten dollars all in change. "Thanks, Grandpa, thanks!" she exclaimed happily, then running into her bedroom she softly closed the door but the coins could be heard falling into her box. She seemed to be getting more candy and ice cream money than usual, and outside of her tithe pennies, the rest was all dropped into the "sacrifice box," until she could scarcely get any more in.

The night before the offering was to be taken, Faye Evelyn bundled her small sister up good and warm, and with a big box full of groceries, clothing, and toys, she said, "We're going to the Tanner home honey. Daddy's driving us there. Mr. Tanner left poor Mrs. Tanner and those four children. We must help make them happy. O. K.?"

"Oh, goody," said Mary joyfully; then rushing into the bedroom she came back carrying--of all things, Liza Jane all bundled up in a soft pink blanket.

"I want to make Sara real happy, Faye Evelyn. She loves Liza Jane as much as I do, and doesn't even have one dolly, and I have three pretty ones!"

Faye Evelyn started to say something, but added instead, "That's right, honey, you didn't need to sell Liza Jane; maybe the Lord will get more glory out of her this way!"

"Everybody ready?" called Daddy from the kitchen doorway. "I have the big box in the car; just bring yourselves," and he laughed as he held the door open for his pretty wife and two lovely girls; Then with a look of pride at each one, he locked the door and joined them in the car.

When they got to the Tanner home a dim light flickered feebly through a small window and the light seemed to reflect the very atmosphere that pervaded the inside of the home.

Faye Evelyn squeezed Mother's hand lightly as they stepped upon the porch, being ever so careful not to step through a broken board. Softly she whispered, "How I thank God for you and Mom and Mary, Dad. Ours is a happy home!"

The soft knock on the door was answered with a gruff, "Who's there?" and opened almost at the same time by a course looking woman whose arm was cuddling a sick child, her hair disheveled and uncombed with three smaller children clinging frantically to her skirt for protection. In a dark corner sitting on an orange crate was Sara.

"A blessed Christmas through Christ to you all," Mr. and Mrs. Wayne called sweetly.

"Come in! Come in!" said the poor woman. "Taint much I can offer you to set on, but you're most welcome to come in."

"Be glad to," said Mr. Wayne, then quickly setting the big box down on the floor, he said:

"Mrs. Wayne will be glad to help you with the sick child." Already Mother had the little dirty ragged child in her arms and asking for a pan of hot water, she bathed the child who responded beautifully to the clean feeling, and a drowsiness suddenly seized him and he fell asleep in Mrs. Wayne's arms after she had given him a small piece of aspirin for the fever.

"We've brought you some food and clothing for the children and yourself, also a few toys for the children," Mrs. Wayne said, then added, "Open the box. The names are on the boxes!"

Quietly stepping over to the frightened looking Sara, Mary said, "Here, Sara. I want you to have Liza Jane for all your own. She loves you too." Then giving the doll a last big squeeze and hug, she insisted, "Take her, Sara. She's your very own."

For a moment it looked like the frightened child had seen an apparition, then suddenly she burst into tears and was saying:

"No, no, take Liza Jane! I don't want her. Already I've got too much that belongs to you, Mary. Take her! Take her away!" and she went sobbing into the small kitchen, where Mary followed pleadingly: "She's yours, Sara. Jesus seemed to tell me to give her to you, and you must have her!"

"What's ailing you?" came Mrs. Tanner's coarse, gruff voice to her daughter. "Come back here and thank these here people for their presents."

Faye Evelyn stepped forward then, and placing a gentle hand on Sara's trembling shoulders said clearly:

"Sara has something to tell you, Mrs. Tanner. Don't you, dear?" she asked.

"How.. how.. did you know?" Sara asked, her face as pale as death, then quickly burst out between sobs:

"Oh, Mary, can you ever forgive me? I stole all your money. I knew where you kept it and when you and Mrs. Wayne went grocery shopping, I pried your window open and took all your money. I did so badly want to buy Mother a present, and that's why I took it, but I haven't been able to sleep one single night since I took it. I have Mother's present, but you take it and get your money back. I can't rest. Forgive me! Forgive me! Please!" she pleaded.

Tenderly Mrs. Wayne, Faye Evelyn, and Mary threw their arms around the frail Sara, then Faye Evelyn said:

"Honey, I knew it from the day Mary's money was taken. You see, something you told one of your friends told a sister of my best girl friend, but I prayed for you. Now, you must never do it again. It's so wrong and sinful. We freely forgive you, but what about Jesus; have you told Him? You helped put those cruel nails through Jesus' Hands by this sin of stealing. Wouldn't you like to tell Him and repent of this wicked thing you did?"

"Oh, yes," sobbed Sara, "please pray for me. I want to be good and sweet like you and Mary are. I want Jesus in my heart."

"Please pray for me too," suddenly Mrs. Tanner cried out. "I've been a wicked woman and I want a new heart too."

The orange crate was set in the middle of the room for a mourner's bench and Mrs. Tanner and Sara prayed and prayed until the Lord Jesus stepped down into the room and came right into their hearts. How they all rejoiced together and praised God for the Christ of Christmas.

Before Faye Evelyn went to sleep that night, she lovingly hugged her blonde haired sister and said:

"The Lord made Liza Jane and the money work together for His glory and your good, didn't He, honey?"

"He really did," said Mary sleepily, "and I believe I have two times as much sacrifice money as I did in the first box."

"Thank God!" said Faye Evelyn, "the Lord always does more than we ever expect."

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