

Copyright 2001 By Lucille King
All Rights Reserved and Duplication
Of This Publication Is Forbidden,
Except For Personal Use

* * * * *

Digital Edition 08/16/2001
By Holiness Data Ministry

* * * * *

It Happened To Barbara

By Mrs. Paul E. King

From the June 3, 1973 Sunday School Beacon

Barbara passed through the doors of Central High with mixed emotions. She liked Central. Loved it, really. Hadn't she spent two wonderful years of learning, laughing, and yes, weeping, within its stout old walls! The first phase was purely academic. But there had been more than the academic side. Ah, yes. Take her freshman year, for instance: she remembered with what fear and trembling she had entered those big, strange doors and walked haltingly, falteringly down the long corridor that led to she didn't know where. Doors, doors and more doors . . . leading to whose room and where she just didn't know.



"If only I knew where I'm to go, she said.

"Hi," a friendly voice had called. She turned and came face to face with a young fellow she had seen at a church sometime or other.

"Hello!" she called back, smiling with pure relief. "I had hoped I'd see you here!" the boy exclaimed. "I'm Leon Ramer, by the way."

"Glad to meet you, Leon. I'm Barbara Stone."

"Scared?" Leon asked.

"Very. If only I knew where I'm to go and what I'm to do..."

Leon's voice rang out in clear musical laughter tones. "Relax," he advised. "The teachers are human. I'll show you where to go. I know how you feel. I felt the same way

when I entered Central last year. It's quite a big school; but you'll love it. I promise you will."

"Thanks. That's consoling," Barbara answered, her shyness melting and fading away under Leon's genuine concern.

"Here's your room," he said, opening a door far down the hallway and ushering her inside. Leading her to the desk, he introduced her to the home room teacher.

"Thanks, Leon," she said softly when the introductions were all over.

On impulse, Leon said, "Look, Barbara, I know how you feel and I know you're scared. I was too my freshman year. I'll meet you here at noon. We'll go to the cafeteria together and I'll introduce you to some fine girls."

Barbara sighed with relief. "Thank you, Leon. That will help tremendously."

She remembered that day. In her book of memories it would always stand out as one of the nicest days of her entire life. Leon had made it that way. He had introduced her to his many boy and girl friends and each one had seen to it that she received a warm welcome.

Some few days later, Leon invited her to a meeting. "It's a pre-school prayer meeting, Barbara," he informed her. "A group of us meet each morning for prayer before school begins. The group would be delighted to have you join us."

"Me?" she asked, hardly believing what she heard. "Me? Go to a prayer meeting? You . . . must be kidding..."

"Indeed I'm not kidding, Barbara. I was never more serious in all my life. We'd be so happy to have you come. We ... we've been praying for you," he said softly with misty eyes.

Before she could answer, tears were spilling down her cheeks. Trying desperately to control herself she said hastily, "Thanks for your concern, Leon, but don't waste any more time on me." With that she fled down the hallway.

She had troubled thoughts that year -- troubled thoughts and many sleepless nights. Why should anyone care about her? Did the students know of her home life? Had they heard that both her father and mother were alcoholics and did they feel sorry for her . . . is that what was behind the concern of her newly-acquired friends? Day after day the questions strove for answers.

She suddenly became introverted and shy. She wanted friends. She did! But she couldn't possibly allow her friends to come to her home and see her father and mother as

they staggered drunkenly through the house.., which was kept clean only as she herself was able to do it.

"Why was I ever born? she wailed helplessly into her pillow one dark night. "Why?"

During her sophomore year she steeled herself. "I won't go to the prayer meeting . . . or any meeting!" she asserted aloud one night as she finished the supper dishes and plunged into cleaning the house. "What good would it do?" she asked herself, working feverishly, trying to suppress the rising surge of anger and agitation she felt over her parents' deplorable and shameful condition.

"I'll never live like you and Daddy are living!" she flung the angry words at her mother one evening as she passed her.., lying on the floor where she had staggered and fallen. "It's no fit place for any child to live..."

"Aw, Barbie," her mother chided, thick-tongued. "We're not sa bad, are we?"

In shame and disgust, Barbara looked at her mother.., her once beautiful mother.., then sobbing brokenly she fled upstairs. She threw herself across the bed and wept until more tears refused to come. Turning, she spied a religious paper Leon had once given her. "Read this, Barbara," he had said. "There's a lot of good reading in it. I think you'll enjoy it."

Brushing a hand across her swollen eyes now, she opened the paper. "Heart's Conflict," stood out in bold, black lettering. Immediately she commenced reading. "Why," she exclaimed half out loud when she finished the story, "why that sounds just like my plight! Like our home problem!"

Turning the pages, she began at the very beginning and again read the story. "Judy," it said, "not knowing where to go for help nor to whom, fell to her knees and sought help from the Lord." Barbara read the sentence over again and again. Thoughtfully she dropped the open paper into her lap. "Maybe..." she began aloud, "maybe God would care and . . . hear me!"

Walking across the room, she closed the door gently and quietly. Going back by the bed, she dropped to her knees. "God," she began, not knowing what to say nor how, "God, do You care? You see the mess mother and dad have made of their lives and I... I'm getting bitter and resentful. I don't want to be this way, God. Can You do for me what You did for Judy in the story? Would You come into my heart? O, God, I'd be so thankful if You would. You see, I want You! Please!"

In the midst of her cry of despair and anguish of soul, Barbara prayed like she never had dreamed she could pray. It was a cry for help. For mercy. Suddenly, beyond anything she could begin to describe, peace and joy, completely indescribable and

wonderful, took possession of her soul. She was happy. Truly happy. And she found herself shouting when she came to herself. God answered her just as He had answered Judy in the story!

She picked the paper up again and read the other pages in it. Coming across a "Dear Anna" column, a bright idea struck her.

Getting pen and paper, Barbara wrote "Anna" a letter of testimony. In a few days she received a thrilling reply to her letter. "Anna" said she understood her problem and knew, too, about the wonderful peace and joy Barbara was experiencing!

That was a wonderful summer. Barbara kept up a steady correspondence with "Anna" who led her into the experience of sanctification, or heart Holiness and purity. Then, too, it was through "Anna's" wise counsel and encouragement that Barbara began a program of personal evangelization at home and was able to lead her mother and father to the Lord. Everything was wondrously changed now. It was almost like heaven on earth.

Now as she entered the doors of Central High . . . a junior, she wondered if her peace and joy would remain. Could she live like this every day of the school year and every single day of her life?

"Hi, Barbara." It was Cynthia. "Care to join us in the prayer room?"

Grasping her friend's hand eagerly she said softly, "Let's go, Cindy. I can scarcely wait till I get there. O everything's so changed in my life and at our house!"

"Praise the Lord!" Cynthia exclaimed, giving Barbara's hand a tight little understanding squeeze. "We sure prayed a lot for you."

"I know you did. Thanks, Cindy. Some evening I want our prayer group over for a prayer meeting. It will do mother and dad so much good and give them courage. They're ashamed to face people... because of the sinful lives they had formerly lived."

"We'll make it a cottage prayer meeting." It was Leon. "Pardon me for eavesdropping but I . . . I could hardly wait to see you, Barbara. Say, your face is shining! The Lord Jesus Christ coming into one's heart sure changes his looks!"

Barbara smiled. She was so happy. Tears filled her eyes as she testified, "O my heart is so happy and so pure and clean! Do you suppose the dear Lord will allow me to feel this way all year? Every single day? O I want Him to ever and always stay within my heart and never, never leave me."

"He won't leave you, Barbara: Not so long as you want Him to remain; and pray and read your Bible and strive earnestly to please Him," Leon said, brushing tears from his eyes.

"And here I was, worrying if I could live this in school! O I know I can! I'll not worry about it again. I see it plainly now. He keeps me so long as I obey and follow Him in every way and everything. O this is wonderful and I'm so happy!"

With tears of joy on their faces, the trio entered the prayer room. This time, to praise the Lord!

* * * * *

THE END