

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

* * * * *

Digital Edition 09/01/2001
By Holiness Data Ministry

* * * * *

A Bit Of Kindness

By Mrs. Paul E. King

From the January 18, 1981 Sunday School Beacon

Esther Pearsall reread the letter from her friend for the third time: "It's snowing up here," Alice wrote, "and honestly, Esther, it's beautiful. Beautiful!" she emphasized by underlining the word.

"I miss you dreadfully, Esther," the letter continued, "and today, while walking to school and watching the snow swirl in dizzy little circles in front of me, the thought that you had actually moved struck me anew with such force as to render me weak.



God wanted to use her new environment, she realized.

"I know your dear father's health is the most important thing, and I'm thankful that the climate down there has already affected a partial cure upon him; but Cranberry High just isn't the same anymore; my spiritual prayer partner's gone. But like you said, God does have a reason, and each day finds me leaning harder and harder upon Jesus. Guess I depended on you too much. Perhaps this is part of the reason God took you away. (By the way, are you liking Florida better now?)

"Denny seems to be getting over the loss quite well. I saw him sitting with Lenore Felter in the cafeteria yesterday. Guess his devotion to you wasn't as deep nor as strong as he pretended although he did act like a poor, forlorn, lost pup the first couple weeks after you left. Oh, well, such is life, I guess. I only hope he makes up his mind for sure before he proposes marriage to any girl..."

Esther laid the letter down and gazed through the open door to the coconut palms adorning their lawn.

It was just as well that she learned the real Denny, she thought, marveling at how little she actually missed him. Her father and mother, while liking him and being 100% Christian in their attitude toward the tall, handsome senior, had always told her he was fight and chaffy.

Suddenly she wondered if what they had said were not the truth. This could well have been God's way of delivering her out of a too serious relationship with Dennis Munson.

She rushed outside for a breath of warm sea air, feeling with all that was within her that the move to this tropical climate was all in God's timing and His planning. To be sure, she missed the snow and the fun times she and her brothers and sisters shared on the pond, skating. But sunshine and sea air and blooming flowers everywhere were God's special gifts to her and those she loved, she mused silently, suddenly overwhelmed with true thankfulness that her dear father was still alive and that he was improving physically. Yes, God did all things well, she realized quickly.

Rushing back into the house, she collected her armful of school books. Calling a loving "good-bye" to her parents, she started for the school building six blocks away.

She was deep in thought when she came in sight of the pale yellow cottage home. Something made her look up, and when she did, she saw the frail looking old lady sitting framed inside the window. Did she never change positions, Esther wondered, smiling and waving warmly at the silver-haired stoop shouldered woman.

A thin, pale hand fluttered upward in slow motion and Esther, feeling rewarded, hurried on her way.

Someday she would have to stop and pay a visit on her "friend," she decided with positive conviction.

Old people, she was sure, were some of the most lonely of all. Their lives, once rich and full, so frequently became suddenly empty and meaningless, rendered thus frequently by illness or the loss of a life's companion. Yes, she must see what could be done to cheer this aged woman whom she had seen each day on her way to and from school.

Her mind wandered back to the church and her friends up north. The young peoples' group was active and alive spiritually and full of holy fire, zeal and enthusiasm. They were ever on the look out for ways to help those less fortunate, and each took it upon himself to make their Christian influence felt in the community. She herself visited and prayed with no less than three to four elderly couples weekly, running errands for them and helping in any way possible.

A wave of homesickness washed over Esther at thought of the home church. How she did miss everyone, especially the spiritual church in which they had all been members. Everything was so different here, she thought, comparing the church where they were attending with her beloved church "back home."

A crippled girl stumbled down a path in front of her and Esther, fearing lest the child would fall, hurried to her side, her homesickness forgotten in view of the immediate need.

"Here, let me help you, honey," she said softly and soothingly, extending her free arm as a support for the child.

The great, round dark eyes that smiled up into Esther's face held a hint of pain in them.

"Where are you going?" Esther asked, feeling the weight of the girl on her arm.

"To school."

"Where is your school? Maybe I can help you all the way there. Oh, and my name is Esther -- Esther Pearsall. I'm on my way to school, too."

"You are? Oh, that's good! Maybe we can walk together. My name is Bonnie and I live in that big white house right there." And the child pointed to a large two-story stucco.

"Good. That's a pretty house, Bonnie. And now if you'll tell me where your school is, I'll help you to get there."

"My school is near your school."

"Are you sure? How do you know where my school is?"

"I saw you go into your school building three times. I told mother how sweet and pretty you looked when you passed our house."

Esther laughed softly. "Well now, isn't that nice of you, Bonnie! And I never even knew you were around here -- not until just now. But I'll see more of you, I promise. Perhaps we can walk to school together every morning, God willing. Would you like that?"

"Oh-h, do you mean it Esther? Really and truly?"

"Yes, really and truly. And maybe you could go to Sunday School and church with me some Sunday. Do you ever go to church, Bonnie?"

"No-o. Mother said it's the only day Daddy and she can rest; so we don't go anywhere."

"Well, you ask your mother if you may go. OK?" Bonnie's dark eyes brightened perceptibly. "I will," she promised quickly. "But I believe they'd be more apt to let me go if you asked them. You see, Father and Mother have told me never to go with strangers."

"That's good advice," Esther admitted. "My folks told me the same thing. So, the Lord willing, I'll be stopping by your home sometime before Saturday. And now, here's where your school must be. You see how good I followed you?" she teased.

Impulsively Bonnie reached up and kissed Esther on the cheek, almost falling in doing so. Then she stumbled inside the building.

Touched greatly by the simple but loving gesture, tears filled Esther's eyes. It was love's way of paying for a bit of kindness, she mused, hurrying up the steps of Seabreeze High.

Sliding into her desk seat, Esther realized suddenly that the Lord had need of lights in towns and cities other than that which had been her home in Vermont for all her life. She would make her life here as useful for the Lord as she had done in the church back home, she decided, getting down to serious book work.

On her way home from school the following afternoon, she stopped at a shopping center and bought a light-weight shawl, paying extra to have it gift-wrapped. A card with the warm message, "To my friend," was taped lightly beneath a corner of the pale blue bow.

Feeling suddenly useful and excited with the thought that God wanted to make her a blessing in her new environment, Esther hurried toward the pale yellow house.

Her shy knock was answered by some one from the far end of the small house shouting for her to be patient, that they'd come as soon as they could, and when a slightly-built woman with unkempt hair and a scowling face opened the door, Esther was shocked. Who was this woman? she wondered. Certainly not the elderly, kind-faced woman's daughter.

Collecting her senses, she said softly, "I'm Esther Pearsall and I've come to see my friend."

"Mrs. Galloway, you mean. She's just getting ready for her nap. I come over every day and help her to bed; by the time she's ready to get up, John's home from work. John's her son," the woman added by way of explanation.

"That's very kind of you, and I'm sure Mrs. Galloway appreciates your help," Esther said warmly.

"Oh, she pays me well for doing it!" the woman exclaimed frankly. "Guess I'm not the generous kind. But come, you wanted to see the lady of the house. I'll show you to her room then I must be going."

"Thank you kindly," Esther replied, following the uncouth woman to a small but cheerily-pleasant, sunny and clean bedroom.

Walking to the bed, Esther greeted the silver-haired, gentle-faced woman. Smiling down upon her, she said softly, "I'm Esther Pearsall and I brought a little gift by for you. Thought it may help to keep you warm while you sit in your chair by the window hour after hour."

Tears sprang to the woman's eyes. "God bless you, my child! Thank you!" Mrs. Galloway exclaimed. "I was hoping to meet you. You'll never know how eagerly I look forward to your smiling face and the wave of your hand every school day. You are rare indeed. I dare say that no other young person has ever noticed me before. At least none has ever paid me a visit. You make my day, and I am happy to finally have my prayers answered and have the privilege of actually meeting you. You are a Christian, I know."

"Yes, I am a Christian, Mrs. Galloway, and I believe you are, also."

The aged woman's countenance radiated her inner holy possession. Joyously she exclaimed, "Yes, Esther I am a Christian -- saved from every sin and sanctified wholly through the precious blood of Jesus Christ, my wonderful Lord and my Saviour."

From then on conversation came easily and flowed smoothly, and not until the back door opened and a tall, dark-haired, smiling-faced young man stood in the bedroom doorway did Esther realize how long she had been with Mrs. Galloway.

Getting quickly to her feet, she said apologetically, "I'm sorry I stayed so long. You missed your nap. Again, I'm sorry. Forgive me, please!"

"By the look on Mother's face," the young man said, "she's had something of far more value than her daily nap. By the way, I'm John Galloway, first, last, and only son of Anna and George Galloway." His deeply-set blue eyes were laughing.

"John, this is Esther Pearsall," Mrs. Galloway said by way of introduction. "She's the young woman whom you've heard me speak about so frequently. And, John, she's a Christian, just like I told you."

"Praise the Lord!" John replied happily. "It's wonderful to meet those of kindred spirit. And, since I presume you're relatively new to our area, Mother and I give you a very special invitation to become part of our church, It's spiritual, and God meets with us."

Esther's eyes filled with tears. "Thank you," she replied. "I'm sure this is an answer to Father's and Mother's and my prayers. We're not satisfied with the church where we are now attending; it's so very dead and cold and formal."

"Then you must come to ours, Esther. Like I stated previously, God meets with us." "We'll be there, God willing," Esther promised, tucking the little card John gave her with the church location into her handbag. "And now, unless I can be of any help to you, Mrs. Galloway, I'll run along. I told Mother this morning that I planned to stop in and see you; so she knows where I've been."

"Promise me one thing, my dear..."

"Yes? What is it?"

"That you'll come back to see me."

Esther laughed pleasantly. "Oh, you needn't worry, my dear; I'll be back . . . often . . . the Lord willing. I have a crippled girl I want to visit today, also. She doesn't go to church anywhere."

"Say!" John exclaimed suddenly. "You're the very person I need to help me."

Esther's face registered the questions of her mind.

"I've been wanting to organize a 'calling group' and frankly I didn't know whom to put in charge. You're the answer to my problem and to my prayer."

"John's the young people's leader in our church," Mrs. Galloway explained kindly.

"I see. Well, I'd like to pray about it first. Neither of us would want anything except God's will for this, I'm sure, John."

"Right. But I'm positive this is God's will. Take time to pray about it though, Esther, and then do let me know your answer as quickly as possible. I have a feeling God's going to do great things for us in the very near future."

All the way home, Esther's heart was singing. God wanted to use her here in as great a measure as He had done in the past, she was sure, and with the promise from Bonnie's parents that the girl could go to church with her, she was sure it was only a matter of time until the father and mother would be attending also. Already, her small

deeds of kindness and acts of love toward Bonnie had softened their hearts until it was easy to talk to them and pray with them.

A mocking bird hiding somewhere in a nearby flame vine trilled a happy song. It rose and fell with the soft, warm breeze. Esther's heart soared with it. Working for the Lord was wonderful, she mused silently. Happily. Yes, wonderful!

* * * * *

THE END