"Guess where I'm going," Max called to his friend as he drew the old Ford along the curb in front of Arlie's house.

Mopping the sweat from his face and forehead, Arlie said, "I haven't the slightest idea, Max. But I know one thing, for a fact, I haven't the slightest hint of a doubt about it; and that is that God's Word is surely true where it says about Adam, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground.' It's hot today!"
"How come you must always mow your lawn? Doesn't Chip ever help?"

"Sure he helps. But he's too little to stick at it very long."

"Bribe him to do it," Max suggested. "Do it today. I want you to go with me to Donaldson's Car Mart. I'm getting a new car."

"New car! Are you kidding! That takes money, Max. Lots of green money. How can you do it? I mean, well, all you have is a part-time job. I thought you told me a couple weeks back that I made more money mowing lawns and caring for Mrs. Primrose's orchard than you do."

"You do, At," Max said casually and lightly. "But money's no problem these days; not when it's so easy to get on credit. Just think of it, Arlie, a beautiful shiny red sport car all my own! I have a sizeable down payment and Mr. Donaldson told me to come over today. Said he'd see about making arrangements for a loan from the bank. I'll pay it off so much a month."

"For how many years?"

"That's my secret, Arlie. C'mon, let's go. Pay your kid brother fifty or sixty cents and he'll be tickled pink to finish the lawn. You've got to use your head."

"Can't do it, Max. The Bible teaches me to do to others as I'd like to be done by and, were I as small as Chip, I'd like more consideration from my big brother than that. Not only that, I have two more lawns to mow today. One is a large lawn. You know whose it is; Chester Katters."

Max whistled a long, shrill whistle. "You can't mean it, Arlie, not old sourpuss Katters' lawn! I wouldn't mow his lawn nor shovel snow off his sidewalks if I never made another dime. I would not! He's the biggest complainer in the town. And what a crank! Whew! Nobody likes him."

"I do," Arlie said quickly.

"You... what did you say?" Max asked, cutting the motor on the car and sticking his head out the open window.
"I said I liked Mr. Katters. I honestly do. He's been a badly and sadly misunderstood old man. He's extremely lonely and frustrated since his wife died, and he's not nearly so crank and crotchety as everyone thinks; not when you get to know him. He really likes Chip. I take him with me everytime I go over to cut his lawn. Chip and he sit and talk while I do the lawn. They're great for each other."

"You must be kidding!"

"I'm not, Max."

"Will you come with me or won't you?"

"I can't. Too much work to do. Sorry."

"They have some real beauties on the car lot. Why don't you get a new car, Arlie? Yours looks worse than mine."

Arlie laughed. "It does, for a fact, Max. But it runs as smooth as good as new. No thanks, I'll hold on to Old Faithful. Someday it may have to be replaced, but until it does, I'll keep it."

"Mr. Donaldson would be fair with you, Ar; he'd give you a sensible trade-in allowance. And you could pay the new one off same way as I'll be doing it . . . monthly payments. I figured it just doesn't make sense, me driving an old rattletrap around when I could be driving something new and beautiful, and enjoying it while paying for it."

"Do you realize how much interest you'll be paying over, say, even a two-year period on a loan, Max? It's exorbitant."

"So what! Everything's costly and expensive these days. I may as well enjoy some of the luxuries myself."

"How do your folks feel about you buying a new car?"'

"Mom wasn't keen on the idea; but dad said if that's what I want, go ahead and buy it. I'll be responsible for it entirely, though, he said. Payments, gas, upkeep, insurance. The works."
"And you think you can make it on a part-time job, Max? I'm glad it's you and not me, that's all I can say."

"Work's supposed to pick up, I hear, then I'll be on full-time."

Arlie laughed. "Know what that reminds me of? Counting one's chicks before the eggs are hatched."

"Don't try to stop me, Arlie; my mind's made up; the shiny, red car will be mine before this day rolls around."

"I imagine you're right; it will be yours and the bank's, Max... mostly, the bank's. Good luck to you; you'll need it after three or four weeks, when the payments start coming due. I wanted to say God bless you. But I Couldn't."

"And why not?"

"Because I don't think it would be right to say it. God gave us brains to figure things out. And what you're going to buy... and borrow... on part-time work just doesn't make good sense. Not to mention the insurance payments, gas and upkeep. I don't believe in 'luck,' Max, but used it only because I didn't know any other word to use. I hope you don't feel badly because I've leveled with you. But you are my friend, and since we've always expressed our views and opinions frankly and candidly with each other, I felt I had to let you know how I feel."

"That's okay, Arlie. I'd have done the same thing with you, if I'd have felt as you do. Well, I'll run along, you have a full day's work again. I'll perhaps be by this evening sometime. See you then."

"The Lord willing. And say, Max, one last thing; if you ever have to let the car go back because you discover you can't afford it, Old Faithful and I'll be at your service, like we were before you got Rattletrap."

"Thanks, Arlie. I hope this will never be necessary. Again, thanks. You're a real friend. Have a good day. I'm sure glad I don't have to work out in this scorching heat. That's only one of the nice features in this little beauty I'm going to get..., it has an air conditioner in it... a real air conditioner. Well, I'll be seeing you."
Arlie got a drink of cold water, then hurried back to work. He'd have to work fast, he knew, if he was going to finish those other lawns before dark. The money he earned today was going toward the mission project in Africa. A Christian school was being built. He had pledged a sizeable amount toward it.

All summer long, he labored and sweat, thankful for work when jobs were scarce and many were unemployed. It wasn't his idea of a job, when he'd gone job hunting. But it was work. God had sent it to him, he was sure.

September and October came, and Arlie's work dwindled till there was no more need for lawn mowing. Now what? he wondered, counting what little he had been able to save after he had paid off the mission's pledge on its entirety.

He told the Lord about it that night on his knees in prayer. Then he crawled between the sheets and slept like a baby, confident that God had heard his prayer and would answer in His time.

Two days later, while on his knees in prayer, he heard the phone ring; heard his mother's cheerful "Hello." He continued praying, thanking God for the summer's work, making it possible for him to pay his pledge, and thanking Him that he had no debts or bills staring him in the face month after month. He then reminded the Lord of his need of work and of His promise to supply every need. Then he got up.

"What can I do to help you today, Mom?" he asked, stepping into the sunny kitchen. "Any rooms you wanted painted? I finished the" outside of the house yesterday. I'd rather stay busy till the Lord opens a job up for me than to be idle."

"That phone call was for you, Arlie," Mrs. Savage told her son. "Mr. Katters; he wants you to call him back. We'll discuss room painting after you've spoken to him."

Arlie hurried to the phone. Mr. Katters! What could the old gentleman want?
"I figured you'd perhaps be needing a job," he told Arlie over the phone. "My son-in-law is the head of the plant here in town. I told him about you; how diligent and honest you are. He'll be contacting you, Arlie, today yet. Thought you'd like to know. He's a great man, my son-in-law. You'll enjoy working for him. Figured one good turn deserved another: You did my work when no one else would do it; you loved me when I was hateful and unlovely; you did something wonderful for me . . . made me see and realize that the Christ whom once I knew hasn't changed. I've returned to Him, Arlie, and I'm a happy man again. Thanks to you and your wonderful display of Christlikeness. Don't worry about doing my lawn, come spring; Chip and I'll take care of it together, God willing. You'll be getting on at the plant; Josh takes my word for what I tell him. Drop in and see me like always; I love your visits and I need them, Arlie, my boy."

Long after he had thanked Mr. Katters and hung the phone up, Arlie sat, praising the Lord. Then he heard heavy footsteps on the porch.

"Arlie. Hey, Arlie," a voice called.

"Come in Max," he answered hurrying to greet his friend. "Say, you look sick! What's wrong?"

Max slumped into the nearest chair. "I am sick, Arlie. Sick! Believe me. I can't face my friends. What'll they think of me?"

"If they're your friends, they'll love and appreciate you no matter what your humiliation may be. A friend sticks by when there's trouble. Oh, I'm not talking about standing up and sticking by for sin--you know that. But a friend will stand by in trouble."

Max raised troubled eyes to his friend. "Then you're the only true friend I have," he confessed humbly. "I lost my car. Those easy-sounding payments just..."

"Lost your car! How?" Arlie asked quickly.

"Not able to keep the payments up," Max said sadly. "And I not only lost my car, I've lost my friends too . . . all but you. So long as I could haul everybody around, they were great to me. As soon as they learned what
happened, they dropped me like I was poison, or something. Now I can't seem to face any of them anymore."

"I'm sorry to hear that, Max. So sorry."

Max sighed. "It's been an eye opener for me, believe me! In more ways than one. First, God used it to show me how vain and proud I've been . . wanting that car for show; for prestige and popularity. Then, He allowed me to see who my real friends were, and are. And now I come, crawling as it were, to you, when you warned me same as mom did. But would I listen? No. So I guess I've earned this horrible humiliation thing. At least, it was for my good; it let me see how far from God I really was. I came back to Him. Last night on my knees, I came back. I'm seeking holiness of heart now, Arlie. This time; I've purposed to go clear to the bottom and die out to all of me. I've been so vain and proud that it makes me sick every time I think about it."

"Then I think we should have a praise meeting, Max. You learned something through this that you may not have learned any other way. And, like I told you before you bought the new car, Old Faithful's at your disposal: She's running like a charm. She may not be a 'girl catcher' but this doesn't bother me. The girl who goes riding in my car will be doing it because she admires me, not my car."

"Thanks, Arlie. You're a great friend. I'm going to begin patterning my life after yours."

"Not after mine--" Arlie said quickly, "after Christ."

Max slapped him on the shoulder. "After Christ, yes, and yours, too: No more easy monthly payments! They're not easy; they're hard. Believe me, I know!"

Arlie nodded. The lesson, though hard and bitter and humiliating for his friend, was doing a beautiful work in Max's life, He would never be the same again; he would emerge mature in Christ, dead to the old Max and alive unto Christ.

Arlie smiled, pleased and thankful.