Julie finished reading the Bible story to her little sister then she kissed her on the nose and put her off her lap. "I must go now, Jenny," she said softly, wishing she could remain at home instead of going to the birthday party at Cherrine's house.

"You's the goodest sister in the world," Jenny Lou remarked affectionately before toddling away.
Julie smiled, then she sighed. She wished it were as easy to communicate with her friends as it was with her family. If only she weren't so shy and timid.

"You'd better leave," her mother called from the kitchen.

"You're going to be late unless you do, Julie dear." "OK, Mom. But I'd far rather stay home."

Mrs. Chase stood in the kitchen doorway. "You need the fellowship of young people your own age," she commented softly and kindly.

"I know I do, Mother. But..."

"Have you asked the Lord to help you over this period of shyness and timidity, Julie?"

"Many times. And just when I think I'm on top of it, well, it overwhelms me again. Around outsiders, I mean; not here at home."

Mrs. Chase heaved a tired sigh. "I realize what you're battling, honey; I used to be the very same way. But one day, I turned every single part of me over to Jesus, telling Him that if He could get more honor and glory from my life by my timidity that I was willing to remain that way for the rest of my natural life. And right after that, things began happening. I discovered I was fax more relaxed around the boys and girls my own age than I'd ever been before. I was even able to enter into their conversations with an at-ease sort of feeling. Each time I felt my shy nature trying to come to the fore, I turned it over to Jesus, reminding Him of my vow and asking Him to make me a blessing just as I was."

"I suppose if I were some real beauty or was endowed with some unusual talent and ability, it would help matters somewhat," Julie confessed. "But I'm so very ordinary; so... . . . so common."

"I'm afraid you didn't get the real significance of what I just told you, dear," Mrs. Chase said. "It was after I turned all of me over to Jesus, that things began to change! He didn't make me an extrovert, to be sure; but He gave me grace and courage to be a social being... social enough to be able to witness and testify to my friends. And even to some of our near neighbors,
Julie. As to your 'ordinariness' and 'common-ness,' begin to thank the Lord for making you the way He wanted you, rather than the way you think you'd like to be."

"I... I'll try. I really will, Mother. I didn't mean to sound like I was dissatisfied with anything God did, nor how He made me, even though it did give that connotation. Forgive me, please. And now, I guess I'd better run along. I'll see you later, the Lord willing. Bye."

All the way to Cherrine's house, Julie pondered her mother's words. She knew she was saved; hadn't the least doubt about that. But sanctified wholly? Well... 

Bright tears bounced out of her eyes as she walked. Her heart had no firm, confident, wonderful assurance that she was dead to sin and to self and completely, entirely and wholly sanctified. She had sought for holiness several times and thought she had obtained it, only to discover that the "fruit of the Spirit" was not manifest in her soul like it should have been.

She felt miserable by the time she reached her destination. She'd perhaps sit like a loner while the others played games and laughed and had a big time, she thought, pushing the doorbell.

Cherrine opened the door and beamed down on her, telling Julie how happy she was that she'd come. "We just couldn't do without you, Julie!" she exclaimed. "You're the greatest when it comes to keeping scores straight, and Myron's needing help on a math problem again. Crazy, isn't it; him bothering you with his homework at a birthday party? I told him it wasn't fair to either of us. But he said, 'Aw c'mon, Sis, Julie won't mind. She's a good sport. And when she knows I'm hung up on that sticky problem, she'll be glad to help.' So, my dear, part of your evening's already planned for you. Rather, I should say, it's been pre-planned. Sure hope you don't mind; at least, not too much."

"That'll be fine," Julie answered, wishing Myron or Ralph would want her company for more than always just helping them solve a math problem or clarifying something in music. Oh, well, she decided, better to be wanted for something than never be wanted at all.
"You're such a whiz in math; and all your subjects," Cherrine was saying, "that we just naturally turn to you for help, I guess. Truth is, Myron and Ralph both say you make it far easier for them to understand than the teachers do. I guess it's your method of explaining. Or your approach or patience, or something. My brothers feel you're the super teacher.''

Julie felt her face blush hot in embarrassment. "Th . . . thanks," she managed weakly, following Cherrine to the basement where all the young people from the church were gathered, some laughing and talking, a few looking through photo albums and others singing and pecking away, one-finger style, on an old upright piano.

"We've been waiting for you!" Myron and Ralph exclaimed before Julie's feet landed on the bottom step.

"I'm first, with my 'headache,' " Myron declared, opening his math book and handing it to Julie. "I'm next in line," Ralph countered with a smile.

"Don't rush the poor girl," Merlin Seipp remarked.

"Yes, this is Cherrine's birthday party, not a class session, fellows," Bob Spitler added.

"Yea, for the loyal fellows! Long live Merlin and Bob!" Judy Rand exclaimed with a hearty laugh.

"Aw c'mon, you three!" Ralph answered. "It won't take Myron and me all night to get the answers through our heads. You know we have the best teacher in the school at our finger tips tonight. Right here in our very own basement."

"But is it fair to Julie?" Candie Fetters asked. "Let Julie answer for herself," Myron said. "How about it, Julie; will you help two brothers out of the slough of despond and of possible failure, by explaining the problem and/or problems until brain of said brothers has absorbed the facts and all is clarified?"

For a moment, Julie's shy nature made her all but tongue tied and speechless. Then, in a faint voice, she said, "I... I'll help, of course. It's the only Christian thing to do."
Myron and Ralph cheered and applauded loudly. Then Cherrine said, "Let's pray, then do what was planned. And, Julie, don't you let those brothers of mine occupy your entire night with questions. Let's bow our heads for prayer. Mother will be down later on to play the piano for us to sing. Clair, you and Randy and Bob and Merlin are expected to furnish us with at least one quartet number; and Marilyn, you and Dottie and Katee will sing a trio."

A moan escaped the announced singers' lips. "But we can't!" The boys exclaimed, laughing. "What a quartet this will be!"

"Do your best," Cherrine said, laughing. "This is to be a night of surprises."

"You can say that again!" the boys remarked in good humor.

"Now everybody quiet while we pray. Let's all pray together," Cherrine said, leading the way.

In a corner of the basement, heads bent over books, Julie forgot her shyness and timidity as she explained to Myron that the unknown factor is found by dividing the answer by the known factor.

Smiling appreciatively down upon her, Myron said, "You're great, Julie. Simply great! Thanks. Now I'm going to work this page, just to make sure my brain's in full command of its 'understanding' gear and if you don't mind..."

"Oh no you don't!" Ralph declared playfully, nudging his 17-months-older brother away. "It's my turn now. OK Julie, what's the meaning of this?" he asked, shoving his advanced music book under her face.

Julie read and studied, then, in a simple way, she told Ralph what it meant.

"How stupid can a fellow be!" was Ralph's comment when the light broke through. "Well, guess I'll join the gang," he said, hurrying to the other end of the basement and calling a hearty "thank you" to Julie over his shoulder.
As soon as his brother was gone, Myron said, "Julie, I've been wanting to ask you something, but every time I think I'll do it, my courage fails. But tonight I'm going to do it: Will you go with me to the youth rally at the Craigsville church three weeks from this Friday night, the Lord willing? You're pretty special to me; not at all like the other girls . . ."

Julie felt herself blushing. (Oh, how she wished she didn't blush so easily). "I . . . I . . ." she stammered.

"I really want you to go," Myron said quickly. "And though I've never had the courage to say this before, I want you to know that I... well, like I said, you..., you've always been pretty special to me. Will you go with me, please?"

Julie lifted her eyes. "I... I'd love to go, Myron. Thanks," she said. "Thanks much."

Leaning close to her ear, Myron whispered, "I'm honored, dear little teacher. Now how about us joining that noisy bunch and showing them how to play Boggle and get them down to a bit of quiet before Morn gets here to play for the 'talent' groups?"

Laughing softly, Julie and Myron joined the group.

It was during Myron's brief exhortation at the end of the birthday get-together, that Julie stood to her feet. "I have a confession to make," she said brokenly. "Tonight, before leaving home, I discovered that I'm not sanctified wholly. But I want to be. I wonder if we could have an altar service, please? I'm sorry if this is brashness on my part, Cherrine, for I realize it is your birthday party. But my heart is so hungry, and I thought that..."

"O Julie!" Cherrine exclaimed tearfully, throwing her arms around Julie's neck. "Nothing would make me happier. This will be the perfect ending to the first day of my new year of life. Perhaps someone else would like to be as honest as . . ."

"I would, Cherrine. I'm not saved," Becky Ward admitted, hurrying over to Julie's side. "I let things at school get me down." Her shoulders shook with sobs.
"Anyone else?" Cherrine asked with tears coursing down her cheeks.

Katee hurried over and joined Becky and Julie, and when the fervent praying ceased a long time later, each girl went to her home with total and complete victory in her soul.

Talking to her father and mother before going to after she got home, Julie said, "It's been one of the most wonderful times of my life: God sanctified me wholly. This time it's real! I gave God all of me, Mother dear. Every single part; timidity, shyness, ordinariness and . . ."

"And now you'll just begin to know the unbounded joys of full surrender, Julie!" her mother exclaimed, breaking into her daughter's sentence and hugging her soundly.

Julie's heart felt full and overflowing. She was glad she obeyed the voice of the Holy Spirit and made a public confession of her deep need instead of allowing her shy nature to suppress her and keep her down again. Already she felt the power of God helping her to be an overcomer and a living, burning witness for Him. Like her mother, she would perhaps never become extroverted..., and she didn't want this, unless God chose it for her..., but she would still be a witness; a part of the "salt of the earth" and a "city on a hill," shining in her own "corner" of the world in God's way. Yes, it had been a beautiful night . . . a night of victory and of surprise.