

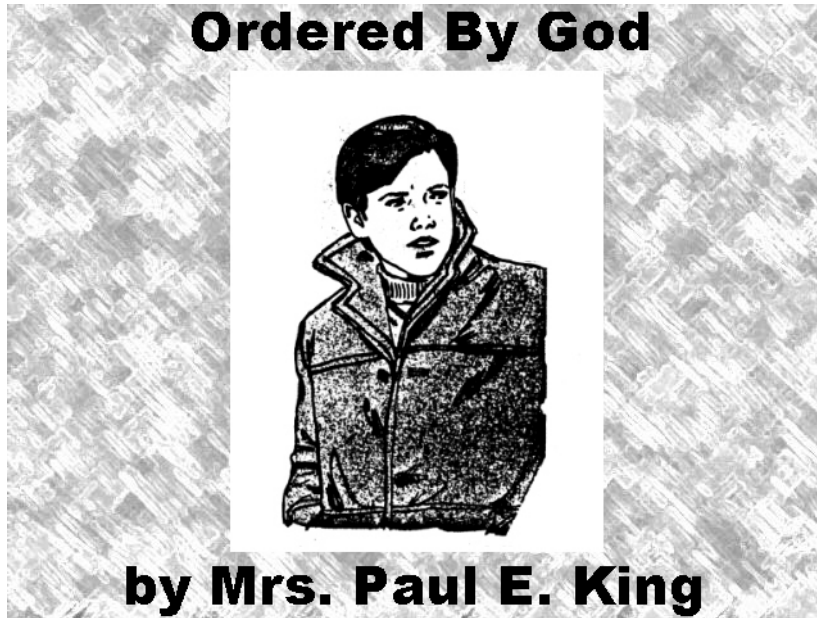
Copyright 2001 By Lucille King
All Rights Reserved and Duplication
Of This Publication Is Forbidden,
Except For Personal Use

* * * * *

Digital Edition 10/22/2001
By Holiness Data Ministry

* * * * *

The Sunday School Beacon
November 2, 1986



ORDERED BY GOD
By Mrs. Paul E. King

Tom Jeffries got up from his knees feeling refreshed and spiritually alive in his soul. He was thankful that he had learned what the secret of being an overcomer was the day of his conversion: the call to prayer and consistent, daily Bible reading became a vital and integral part of his everyday life from that very moment. It, along with his glorious and

subsequent experience of heart cleansing, or entire sanctification, was giving him the power to be an overcomer.

He hurried into the kitchen and gave his mother a quick peck on her cheek then picked up his school books and hurried away. It was simply wonderful to know that God was running his life, he thought, recalling how, in prayer just a short while ago, he had asked the Lord to take charge of his day completely and totally. "Please," he had cried, "order my day for me, dear Father. Every part of it, and every single minute and hour of it."

It was blissfully wonderful to have a God whom he could trust so implicitly, he thought silently. No wonder then that David, in the Psalms, had cried out, "In God will I put my trust."

He smiled as he walked. His life was so different since he was born again and was sanctified wholly. It was as if he was living in a new world; only, the newness was within himself . . . in his soul . . . and not in the world around him at all. He even had a deeper appreciation for school and a desire now to learn all that he possibly could so that he would be better prepared and more knowledgeable for whatever God may want him to do later in life.

He hurried along the school's tree-lined sidewalk and had just stepped up onto the top step leading into the school building when someone came up behind him and, deftly and quickly, tripped him, dropping him to the hard concrete like he was shot and sending his books scattering in all directions. With a raucous laugh, the offender darted through the doors, calling out, "It serves you right. You're nothing but a square."

Dazed momentarily by the fall, Tom ran a hand across his eyes. Then he felt something warm trickling from his nose. Quickly he got to his feet. His nose was bleeding!

"Let me help you," a soft feminine voice said, stooping and collecting Tom's scattered books and papers.

"He's nothing but a bully!" she exclaimed vehemently, her voice full of pity and concern.

He brushed his hand across his face again. "Maybe you could find me a couple paper towels, Shelly," he said, attempting to smile in spite of his

bleeding nose. "Better wet them," he added as she disappeared through the doorway.

He leaned against the red brick building, thankful for the beautiful abiding peace deep within his heart. It was like a great, deep inner calm. He breathed a fervent prayer for Marvin, wondering why he had decided to trip him. Truth of the matter was, he hardly knew the young man. He was a grade below him in school.

"Here." Shelly's voice brought Tom quickly out of his wondering. "Hold these cold, wet ones up on the bridge of your nose, Tom," she told him. "It will help to coagulate the blood. Are you feeling weak? Do you think I should get the school nurse?"

Tom shook his head no.

"That was a dirty-mean thing to do to you," Shelly continued. "I have a good notion to tell the principal."

"Don't. Please. I'd never be able to help Marvin, should he need my help anytime, if he thought I had anything to do with Mr. Hower finding out about this. I'd rather just turn it over to God, Shelly. I'm not a stranger to Him, nor He to me, anymore." His sentence-statement was packed full of meaning.

"But Tom, it isn't right that he should get away with doing this, either. The Bible says that the law is for the lawless, and I am sure that Marvin falls into that class," Shelly insisted softly. "Anybody who can deliberately and willfully trip up an innocent person and then run away and laugh like a hyena about it, well. . . ."

"The devil gets people to do all kinds of strange and horrible things," Tom said. "You know this as well as I do. Before leaving my room this morning, I asked the Lord to order my day; every single hour, minute, and second, in it. This must be part of His arrangement for me. I am both content and happy in whatever He permits, chooses, or allows to come my way. I am no longer my own; I belong entirely to Christ."

Shelly was silent for a long while, her brow furrowed deep in thought. "That's quite a commitment," she remarked. "I'm wondering if Marvin isn't testing you -- you -- wanting to see if you are genuine or not, a phony or real.

In the hallway, recently, I overheard him tell someone that you bugged him lately. But then, he's such a bully, too, until I don't know."

"We'll have to do more talking to God about him," Tom answered. "And, say, I really appreciate your kindness to me, in picking up my papers and my books then going after those paper towels. Thanks a lot, Shelly. But now, we'd better be shuffling along to class or we'll be tardy. Thanks, again. Much. You came along at the right time. Someday, God willing, I'll return the kindness."

Tom took his seat in time to hear the last buzzer sound for starting classes. Mr. Hawkins looked at him over the rim of his glasses. "Troubles, Tom?" he asked. "Just a nose bleed, Mr. Hawkins."

"If you wish, you may be excused until it stops bleeding," the teacher told him, "I'll mark you present."

"Thank you, Sir," Tom replied, getting out of his seat and heading for the lavatory. He had been careful not to mention anything about what had happened, so none of his classmates knew how he had gotten the nosebleed. Unless, of course, they had seen it, which he hoped they had not.

It was some time until he brought the bleeding under control and, finally, to a stop. Then he hurried back to his class room. He was thankful to Shelly for rescuing his papers; they were the by-products of long hours of diligent homework and study and, now, when Mr. Hawkins asked that all the papers be turned in to him, Tom thanked the Lord silently that not a single paper was missing from his stack of completed homework papers. It would have been so easy for them to have blown away when Marvin tripped him and they scattered, he realized. But God had had Shelly on hand to retrieve them for him before the wind could take them away. He felt blest in his soul over God's concern and care for His children in matters as small as completed homework papers. Since his glorious heart-change, he had acquired the habit of discovering God's workings and His movings in the everyday blessings of life; those blessings which, unless looked for, would be overlooked and would go unnoticed. His heart felt full of singing and of melody. God's blessings were, without a doubt, innumerable, And they were ceaseless and never ending, too.

The day wore on. He went from one class to another and, always, his heart possessed a song and was filled with praise. At noon, he ate his lunch with Shelly and two other Christian friends, Charles and Mindy. It was a time for strengthening and reinforcing each other's faith in God and solidifying the standards and the principles of right and righteousness for which each stood and believed in. He was thankful that Shelly made no reference or inference about the incident that took place that morning on the top step leading into the school building.

On the way home from school that afternoon, Tom felt strangely impressed to go home the longer way. It would take him longer, he knew, but the urge that he was to do so was so strong and impelling that he felt he must obey it.

He hadn't gone far along the river road until he came to a cottage. "Go and knock on the door," a voice beckoned to him. It was as plainly spoken as though one of his parents had issued the order to him.

He shifted the armload of books he was carrying to his other arm and looked at the small cottage. He hadn't known that anybody lived in it. At least it gave the appearance of being uninhabited. Its exterior looked like decay had long since set in, with its sagging roof and equally sagging porch and its rotting, weather-beaten siding, long since devoid of any paint.

Tom paused for a moment; but only for a moment. Little matter that the cottage looked desolate and un-lived in. The command-order was for him to knock on the door; he would obey. Hadn't he asked the Lord to order this day for him! It was exciting and wonderful to obey, and then to see how God was working for him and in him and through him.

Stepping carefully onto the porch with its rotting boards, Tom knocked on the door. There was an almost eerie silence that pervaded the atmosphere and his knock sounded hollowly strange within. He smelled the dank, musty odor that accompanied the tightly-closed cottage with its porch resting almost on the damp earth. He waited. Then he knocked again. Had he merely imagined the order to knock? he wondered? But, no, he hadn't imagined it. That was for sure!

He knocked again, a bit louder and harder this time. He saw the pulled-down shade flutter for a moment, but only for a moment. And he was sure he

saw a wrinkled face appear briefly from behind that fluttering shade, too. It was a fleeting glance, to be sure, but he saw the face.

He knocked again. Then again. And again. All that he heard was the eerie hollowness from within; a sort of lonely sounding echo of his knocking. "Leave a gospel tract."

Again, the order. A bit different, perhaps, but still a part of the final plan. It was not his to question; it was his to obey.

Without a moment's hesitation, Tom withdrew a wonderful tract from his inner coat pocket and slipped it carefully through the crack along the side of the door. Then, feeling like his mission was accomplished, he went whistling off the porch, entrusting the man or woman inside the cottage into God's hands.

Leaves scuttled and rattled around his feet. In the distance he heard the cawing of a crow, to be answered in some nearby trees by many others. A cardinal flitted across the road and disappeared in a clump of thick bushes. It was a beautiful world into which God had allowed him to be born, he mused silently as his eyes took in the splendor and the beauty of his surroundings. It was all according to the Genesis account where the Bible stated, "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."

All the way home, Tom's heart was filled with a song. God had indeed ordered his day and he rejoiced in it. Some things he would not have chosen had he had his way, he knew. But it was not his to wonder why nor to question since God was all-wise and worked only for the best interest of His children. He may never know the result of his carefully-inserted tract into that crack in the door; but he had obeyed God's gently-prodded order to knock and to leave a tract: this was all that mattered. It was now up to God the Holy Ghost to make that printed message of salvation come alive to its reader. And, as for Marvin and what he had done, it, too, was in God's hands. If the opportunity ever afforded itself, he, Tom, would kindly and lovingly "heap coals of fire upon his head."

There was a new spring in his step as he hurried homeward. He had had a beautiful day, a wonderful day. His heart was at peace and at rest and he was blissfully happy serving the Lord.