"THINK ON THESE THINGS"

by Mrs. Paul E. King

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"Whiter than snow, yes whiter than snow,
The Blood's been applied: I am whiter than snow."

Wally sang the chorus over and over as he hurried toward Moose Lake High School, his soul happy and blest in the knowledge that his sins were forgiven and "whiter than snow."
It snowed during the night. Another six inches lay clean and shimmery and white on top of the twelve inches that had accumulated earlier. It was the whiteness of the snow that brought to mind Isaiah 1:18 and gave rise to the song in his heart and the utterance of his lips. His heart was whiter than snow, and purer, too. Snow had many impurities in it; not so his heart. Ah no. Not since the burning, cleansing, purifying fire of Pentecost had sanctified his soul and made him clean. Clean!

"Whiter than snow --I'm whiter than snow . . ."

"Hey, Wally, wait up. Say, wasn't that some snowfall we had again last night! Hey, what were you singing?"

Bud's two-hundred pound frame finally caught up with Wally. He fell in step with his neighbor boy.

"Now, where do I begin?" Wally asked lightly. "Oh yes, you remarked about the snow, didn't you? Well, now, six inches is a light snowfall for us here at Moose Lake, as you'll see this winter, Bud. But since you haven't lived here long enough to know, I guess six inches would seem like quite a lot. A ten to twelve inch drop is the norm for us, though."

"Bud whistled, a long, shrill, sharp whistle. "No, kiddin', Wally?"

"It's a fact. Bud. Usually, we can expect from ten to twelve, or more, inches each time it snows. But we love it. Guess it's what a fellow gets used to."

"Doesn't the town get snowed in?"

"Sometimes. That's the fun of it. You feel like you're in a beautiful world of white, isolated completely from the outside world and functioning on your own. It's exciting. You'll like it, Bud, if you're a winter enthusiast."

"I guess I'll soon know if I am or am not. But say, that song you were singing . . . What was it?"

A song we've sung at church for as long as I can remember: Whiter Than Snow."
"It . . . it's quite different, isn't it?"

"Isaiah 1:18 says. 'Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' It's a beautiful Scripture verse and a beautiful song, and I have experienced it inside my heart."

"Is that what makes you . . . different, Wally? I mean, well, I never see you laugh -- nor even smile! -- at the off-color jokes some of the students tell, and you never participate in any discussion that deals with the baser things of life. . . ."

"For me, 'Old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new.' II Cor. 5:17. Since I have been saved, I am what the Apostle Paul calls, 'A new creature in Christ.' It's what I've been telling you about, Bud. You'd make a wonderful Christian."

Bud laughed. "I'm not too sure about that. I couldn't take all the taunting and ribbing you get for being different."

Wally stopped dead still in his tracks. He looked the 6 foot 3 Bud full in the face. "You mean a giant like you is scared of faces of clay? Look, Bud, any fish can swim downstream, if swim they must; usually they can just float; but it takes a fish with grit and stamina and a will to swim up stream, against the current. Being a Christian's not hard; especially when one is a student of the Word and digs out 'gold nuggets' -- promises -- for each day. You're putting the cart before the horse. Get saved first; you'll be amazed at how God furnishes the grace for each trial and test, II Cor. 12:9 says, 'My grace' -- God's grace, that is 'is sufficient for thee. . .."

Bud shook his head. "When I'm ready to get saved, I'll let you know. I really believe in you, Wally, but I couldn't take some of the taunts and jeers you're taking without doing something about it. I'm pretty quick on the trigger, temper-wise, I mean. I'd blow up and knock some of those bullies down, like they deserve."

"Not if you were genuinely saved and sanctified, Bud, you wouldn't. The 'get even' spirit's gone. In its place is love and joy and peace in the Holy Ghost."
"It sure works in your life, and someday, when I've made up my mind, I may ask you to pray with me about changing my way of living, Wally."

"Don't procrastinate, Pal: we have no promise that we'll see another tomorrow."

Bud's head dropped. The two walked in silence, their boots making deep furrows in the newly-fallen snow and their breath coming out in great wisps of something akin to smoke or fog.

The wind was rising, coming out of the northeast. Wally knew this would plunge the temperature to a low minus-zero reading for the Moose Lake area and its surrounding valleys and hamlets.

A thrill of exhilaration raced through him as he thought how cozy-warm the fireplace would feel when he returned home from school that afternoon. Mother would have an enormous bowl of popcorn popped and ready for eating after supper, with hot chocolate staying just the right temperature on a thermostatically controlled burner on the stove.

Deep in thought, Wally sighed in contentment. Home, ah, it was wonderful! A haven of peace and love and goodwill, one toward the other, and a place where holiness of heart and life was displayed as naturally as breathing. A place of cleanness -- of heart and lips.

At thought of clean lips and clean thoughts, Wally's heart skipped a beat. Tonight was the night for the parent-teacher meeting regarding the pornography in some of the school's textbooks. If it got too cold, many of the parents may stay home and not show up at the school.

Quickly, the boy's heart and lips sent an earnest prayer heavenward for help.

"What's on your mind?" Bud asked suddenly, sensing his friend's concern.

"Tonight's meeting."
"I wouldn't worry too much about it, Wally; after all, if the students want to get the trash all they have to do is go to the town's drugstore. Me? I don't care for it; but I feel each one should be able to decide for himself what he wants to read or doesn't want to read. We shouldn't legislate. . ."

"That's where I disagree!" Wally asserted firmly. "When we enforced the moral laws of our land, crime and murders and rapings were minimal, comparatively speaking, and we had a much safer land in which to live and move and function than we have today. Since a person is pretty much what he reads, it's high time something's done about the filth and the garbage in our books here at Moose Lake High."

"You'd make a tremendous Patrick Henry. . . 'Give me liberty, or give me death!' " Bud quoted in deep, sonorous tones.

"Did you know what the Bible says about our thoughts?" Wally asked suddenly.

"I hadn't known it said anything. But then, I've never actually read too much from it."

"It's the greatest book there is, Pal. You really should begin reading it. You'd discover so many things. Back to my question though: Paul, in his writings to the Philippian Christians, told them this: 'Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, (Venerable, in the margin) whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.' Phil. 4:8. You see, Bud, it's impossible to think on good things, pure things and lovely things if we fill our mind with the devil's garbage of pornography.

"Learning's good, so long as the things being taught are wholesome and help build character and encourage clean thoughts. But when it does otherwise then something's got to be done. Much prayer has gone up for tonight's meeting. It's no small matter, this pornography that's entered our textbooks."

"If everyone's as set against it as you, I'm sure we'll soon be getting different books Wally, and that will suit me fine. From all the talk I've heard,
I'm sure the citizens of Moose Lake are almost 100 percent against what's written and displayed in some of our books. Keep your fingers crossed. . . ."

"Not my fingers crossed, Bud, but my knees bent and my eyes heavenward. With Jesus we shall win a mighty victory over sin. Tonight! See if we don't."

"I could never doubt; not when you talk like that, Wally. I believe you're right. Yes, I believe you're right: Things are going to change after tonight."

And they did! The devil's plan was foiled and his cause defeated -- regarding the textbooks in Moose Lake.