

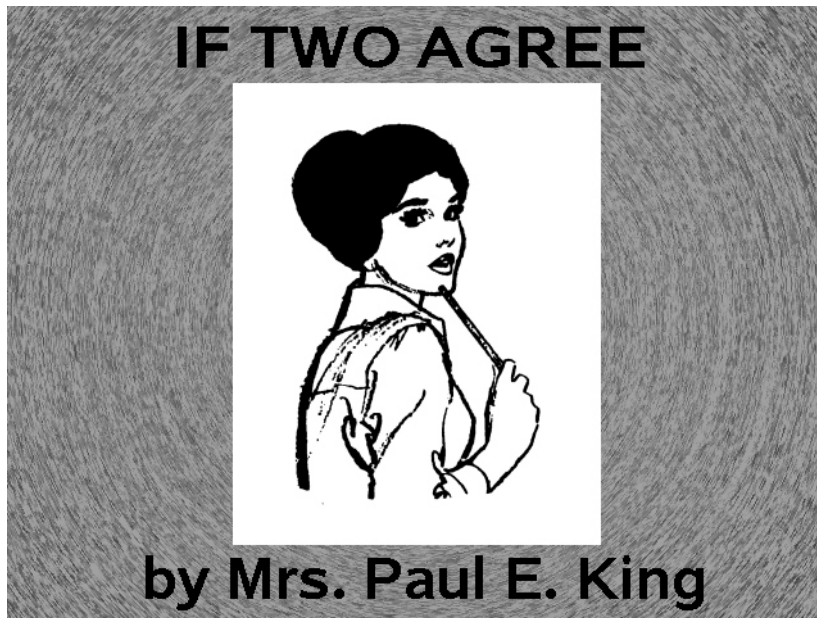
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**IF TWO AGREE**  
**By Mrs. Paul E. King**

Alice searched the room with her eyes but nowhere could she see Tami. What could have happened to her friend? she wondered, feeling uneasy and greatly concerned. Lately, Tami had been restless and secretive; almost like she was trying to hide something from her, Alice thought.

She hurried to her desk and sat down just as Mrs. Jagers asked, "Where is Tami this morning, Alice? I missed her yesterday. . . ."

"I don't know, Mrs. Jagers. She didn't call me, and I was so busy helping Mother prepare the food baskets for several families in our church until I didn't have time to call her."

"I hope she isn't ill," Mrs. Jagers added, as she got to her feet and began the opening exercises for the morning.

Alice could scarcely wait until school was dismissed for the day and she could go by to check on Tami. Tami had been very special to her: she had become Alice's first known convert.

Alice closed her eyes briefly and whispered a silent but heartfelt prayer for her friend. Tami didn't have an easy life at home; her parents were not Christians and sometimes they made life miserably unhappy for her. Her mother especially so. More than once, Tami came to school with eyes swollen and red from weeping.

Alice felt a wave of pity and compassion and love wash over her for her friend. How different her life -- her home life was from Tami's, she thought, as a lump popped up in her throat. Her mother and father were devout Christians. They loved the Lord and each other and they loved their children and tried to make life as pleasant and beautiful as they possibly could for them. Yes, she had great parents, Alice knew; some of the best in all the world. They encouraged each of their children in their Christian walk by words of encouragement and commendation and instruction and by much earnest praying for them. Alice felt blest. How different things would be for Tami if her father and mother were Christians.

It was difficult for her to concentrate properly on her school work with her thoughts so much on Tami. Something was wrong, Alice knew, or Tami would have been in class. She loved school too much to miss, without there being a perfectly legitimate reason, Alice knew. And Tami was always on time too. Always. She was a diligent student, seriously intent on doing her best in each of her subjects. She was on the honor roll and. . . .

Alice pulled her thoughts away, quickly and abruptly, from her friend: Mrs. Jagers was telling them something about an upcoming test; she must not miss it.

She wrote down which pages were to be reviewed and studied thoroughly and carefully, making a mental note to be sure and tell Tami about the special test. Then she settled down to concentrating on the open textbook on her desk. Mrs. Jagers was an excellent teacher but she couldn't tolerate a wandering mind nor an idle dreamer. She stressed the importance of exercising the mind by memorization and by thinking and working on a problem until it was solved. Alice set her mind on the problems at hand, loving school and its textbooks and teachers.

She called her mother during the lunch hour and received permission to check in on Tami on her way home from school. She felt better already, just knowing that soon she would find out what Tami's problem was, hoping and praying that it was nothing either major or serious.

She stopped by her teacher's desk on the way out of the room when the dismissal bell sounded, and told Mrs. Jagers that she would be stopping in to check on Tami. Mrs. Jagers seemed relieved, stating she thought Tami looked like something was bothering her or worrying her. Quickly, she added, "Tell Tami I miss her when she isn't here."

"I certainly will, Mrs. Jagers. That will mean a lot to Tami."

Alice wasted no time in getting to Tami's house. She was surprised when Tami met her at the door before she had time to knock.

"Hi," she cried joyously, as she gave Tami a hug. "Where've you been?" she asked quickly. "We've been missing you from school, Tami. What's wrong? Oh, by the way, and lest I forget, Mrs. Jagers said to tell you she misses you when you're not in class. And like I said, we all miss you. Have you been sick?"

"No, nothing like that."

"Well, thank the Lord for that," Alice remarked quickly.

"It would be a whole lot easier if I had been sick," Tami declared sadly. "At least I'd know how to cope with illness. As it stands now, I am completely and totally frustrated and . . . and discouraged. Mom's thinking of making me go and stay with Aunt Myra."

"Your Aunt Myra? Why, Tami? Why?" Alice was incredulous.

"Number one: She doesn't want me dating Alton."

"Bu . . . but Tami, you and Alton don't date all that much, nor that often. You're both serious minded students and devout Christians who have put Christ first and foremost in your lives. I . . . I guess I don't understand. . . ."

Tami drew her breath in deep and long; then she exhaled. "Oh Alice," she cried, "what will I do? All my church family is here. I love every one of them. And I love our Christian school. I feel Mother doesn't want Alton to date me simply because he's such a godly young man. You know how she's been to me since I got converted and was sanctified wholly. Well, I feel she resents Alton because he lives such a godly and holy life. I honestly believe it puts her under conviction. Then the second reason is that Aunt Myra's driving habits are becoming a bit on the hazardous side. Mother told me I am needed there to drive Aunt Myra around, now that she is a widow."

"But Tami, her daughter lives there, doesn't she?"

"Only two blocks away. As a matter of fact, two of her girls live nearby - Cecile, two blocks away, and Ramona, about three miles. I had to go over there yesterday; this is why I wasn't in school. Mother insisted that I must go with her. We spent the night there and a great part of this day. Oh Alice, what can I do? As a Christian, I am obligated to obey."

Alice was silent for a long while; so long, in fact, that Tami grabbed her by her wrists and cried out, "Oh Alice, what will I do?"

"I was thinking, Tami dear. And praying. We can pray. Prayer is a powerful 'weapon.' By the way, what does your father think about all this? How does he feel about it?"

"He thinks its ridiculous. He told Mother so."

"That's like a light in a dark corner, Tami," Alice declared softly. "God knows how to work this out for you. And I believe that, by much prayer and fasting, coupled with the fact that your dad is opposed to the idea, God will solve this problem for you. I now understand why you were acting so differently and so strange."

"Mother is so strongwilled, Alice. She nags and nags and nags until, usually, Daddy gives in just to have a bit of peace and quiet in the home. Generally, she gets her way, I'm sorry to say. And I am not meaning to be disrespectful when I say this; but it's a fact."

"Thanks Tami, for sharing that. But please don't tell it to anybody else. Like you said, we must not be disrespectful to or of our parents: we are told to honor them. We are praying for the salvation of your dear mother and father and in order to win them we must be very careful what we say and do. I know you have been, and that you will continue to be this way. So let's make this newest and latest crisis/issue a matter of earnest and fervent prayer. I feel confident the Lord is going to work it out for you, even though it looks hopeless and bleak. 'With God .... '"

"All things are possible," Tami broke in, finishing the scripture verse as tears surfaced from her dark brown eyes. Then, in an ecstasy of joy, she cried, "God sent you here, Alice! I was almost entrenched in that dreadful slough of despond. But I got hold of the rope of faith just as you began quoting, 'With God all things are possible.' That adjective, all, and the noun, things, seemed to link my hand right into God's big never-failing Hand. I don't know how, but I know He's going to make a way out of this for me. I know it, Alice! Praise His holy name! Oh, thanks for coming."

"God willing, I'll fast supper tonight and spend that hour in prayer for you," Alice told her friend.

"Some things, we are told in the Bible, only happen by prayer and fasting."

"I'll join with you, Alice."

"Oh, I almost forgot to tell you -- Mrs. Jagers plans to have a test ready for us day after tomorrow, the Lord willing. She told us to be sure to

review the last forty-five pages in English Lit. And before I leave, remember what Matthew 18:19 says?"

"And I say unto you," Tami began to quote, "that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

"I'm so proud of you, Tami. You have memorized more scripture already, as a new Christian, than some people who have been professing Christians for years.

We both 'agree,' so that means the answer's on the way. See you at school tomorrow, God willing. . . ."

A week went by. The two continued their praying and fasting, joined now by Alice's mother and father. On the tenth day, Tami called her friend. She was beside herself with joy and praise.

"Alice! Alice!" she cried. "It's settled. Settled! God answered prayer in a wonderful way. It's a miracle!"

For once, Dad put his foot down and told Mother that I was going to stay right at home where I belonged, and that my schooling would continue on in the Christian school until I graduated. Imagine it! Oh, God is so good.

"Right after Dad issued his 'dictum,' Ramona came by. She's not a Christian, as you know, and she was seething with anger. She told Mother she was bossy and conniving and scheming, and that she had no right to try to run her mother's life and her affairs.

She said Cecile and she had always been good to their parents and that they would look out for their mother, now that their father was deceased. "She said a lot of other things, then she left the house, telling Mother to take care of her own affairs and to stop meddling in other people's business."

"Truly, God answers prayer, Tami! And I'm wondering if this answer to prayer wouldn't fit into Psalm 76:10, where it says, 'Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.' Be kind to your mother, and let's fast for herbs and your father's salvation."

"I planned on doing this," Tami answered. "And I'm going to shower her with more love and kindness than ever, God helping me. Right now, though, she's as angry as Ramona was; so I'll have to 'tread softly.' But I feel this is going to work together for good, since she is awakened to the fact that she can't continue to have her own way. I'm so encouraged in the Lord, Alice for my parents' salvation. 'If two of you agree. . . .'"

"We do, Tami. Yes, we do," Alice exclaimed joyfully.