Lou Ella Pinkerton swished the bottle brush round and round in the jar, foamy mounds of suds rising with each new swish. She worked in a mechanical sort of way today. The jar had long since been made clean but she paid no mind. Her eyes, ever open and alert to the many new bird arrivals, the blooming apple trees and the beauty of her garden, seemed glued to the back fence of her property.
"O God, show me what to do!" she prayed aloud as she saw one of the neighbor boys climb the fence and settle himself in her strawberry patch where he plucked the first few ripening berries viciously and ate them greedily.

Tears trickled down her cheeks. If only Albert were still living! Things like this never happened so long as he was alive.

The boy, after making sure that he had eaten every single red berry, headed for the apple tree where he made a successful climb.

Lou Ella dried her wet hands then walked slowly down the cobblestone walk to the apple tree. It would take a world of tact and diplomacy, she knew, if she were ever to win the mischief maker's confidence. She felt her need of Divine wisdom and guidance. It had been so long since she had any little children around the place. She had been praying for days for God to give her the right approach to the new neighbor boy. She must be wise if she were to win him to Christ.

"Hello there!" she called pleasantly, her gray-blue eyes looking eagerly up into the branches of the tree. "How would you like a piece of fresh, warm homemade bread with real butter and some blackberry jam? It's awfully good. . . ."

The astonished boy's face reddened. He shifted uneasily on the limb of the stout old tree.

"Sound good?" Lou Ella teased, her tender eyes probing into the very soul of the pair of defiant eyes that looked back at her. "Hurry down the tree if you think you'd like a slice of bread and. . . ."

"Would I ever!" the boy exclaimed, interrupting Lou Ella and slithering down the tree like a snake.

Taking the berry-scented hand and clasping it firmly in her own, the silver-haired woman and the tousle-headed lad made a quick entrance into the spotlessly clean kitchen. Quickly, Lou Ella set her fare of still-warm sliced bread and butter, blackberry jam and a glass of milk upon the table.
"There it is... Johnny Or... or is it Jack, maybe? Know something? You never did tell me your name," she teased, laughing and settling herself in a chair across the table from the boy. "I'm Mrs. Pinkerton. You may call me Auntie Lou if you like"

"My name's Fried. Freid Heinrich. I wish it were Jack. I don't like my name. Freid's a wretched name. None of the boys have names like that"

"But you can make the name Freid a long-remembered name, dear boy."

The boy's eyes brightened with awe and amazement at Lou Ella's declaration. "How?" he asked suddenly. "The boys at school make fun of me and I... I almost hate my name." His head dropped onto his heaving chest.

Lou Ella put a motherly hand over his. "I think you have a beautiful name, Freid. Your name is fitting with the country from which you have come. It was Germany, was it not?"

'Yes, Ma'am. We came to the United States six months ago and I... I don't like being laughed at. Not one single bit do I like it!"

"Know what I think, Freid? I think the boys and girls here in America like you very, very much. While they may be laughing at you, they may not be making fun at all. You have a lovely accent that is most pleasant and interesting to listen to and to hear. It makes one smile as he listens. The boys and girls here aren't accustomed to hearing anything so beautiful. It is beautiful, Freid, and you must never be ashamed of either your accent or your name. If you try hard, you can make the name Freid Heinrich a long-remembered name. A much-loved and greatly respected name"

"How?" Freid asked, helping himself to a second piece of bread.

"Do you really want to know, Freid?"

"I sure do."

"Will you go with me to Sunday school and church this Sunday? You'll learn wonderful things about God, and about yourself, too. Then someday, by God's grace and His power, the name Freid Heinrich will be a beloved name."
You see, Freid, it is God who gives man the ability and faculty to amount to something. The Bible says, 'If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth liberally to all men. . . .' God can make you a power for Him and for His cause . . . if you will obey Him and His teachings."

"I used to go to church in Germany," Freid confessed. "But I . . . I don't care to go here in America."

"But you will go with me, Freid? Now that you and I are friends?"

The boy sipped his milk thoughtfully. "I guess I could. May I bring Katrina? She's my sister. She's eight. I'm nine."

"But of course. You must bring Katrina, by all means. Your father and mother, too."

"They sleep in on Sunday mornings," the boy confessed innocently but truthfully. "Katrina and I don't. We get up early to read the comics in the paper, then we watch television till Mother and Father get up."

Lou Ella's heart felt suddenly heavy. She had a mission field. At her doorstep! "I will be by after Katrina and you on Sunday morning," she said. "Be ready by nine o'clock, the Lord willing."

"Katrina and I'll be ready!" Freid exclaimed as he rose to leave. "Thanks for the bread and jam. I'll hurry home now and tell Katrina."

Sunday morning dawned clear and bright, a perfect June morning. Lou Ella's heart beat wildly. Suppose Freid and his sister misbehaved? Something akin to panic seized her. Dropping quickly to her knees, she asked God to take control of the new children she was bringing to church.

A smile played at the corners of her mouth as she drew up to the curb in front of the Heinrich home. What would the church people think; she, a childless old woman, bringing two active children to church?

Before she had time to go to the door Katrina and Freid bounded happily down the few front steps of their house to her car.
"We're ready!" Freid shouted triumphantly. "And look, Katrina combed her hair all by herself. We brushed our teeth and washed our faces and didn't wake Mother, even! That's how quiet we were!"

"Did you have breakfast?" Lou Ella queried as she put the children in the seat beside her.

"Freid ate some Fritos and I did, too," Katrina said, her blue eyes shining like the June sky overhead Lou Ella shivered. Fritos! For breakfast!

Freid broke into her thoughts. "The Fritos aren't half so good as your bread, Mrs. . . ."

"Auntie Lou, Freid. Remember? I said you could call me Auntie Lou. It's a whole lot easier than saying Mrs. Pinkerton all the time."

Katrina's eyes were shining. "Oh goody, goody!" she exclaimed. "Now we'll have an aunt right here in America."

"And she gives us bread and blackberry jam and milk, too," the boy said, sitting very straight and tall on the edge of the seat as they drove to church. "If we forget to say Auntie Lou, Katrina, we can always call her Mrs. Blackberry."

Lou Ella smiled and stifled an urge to laugh as she pulled the car into the church parking lot. Taking a small hand in each of hers, she walked proudly down the aisle of the church.

"Starting an orphanage, Lou Ella?" one of the women teased good naturedly.

"A mission station, I hope!" Lou Ella answered, smiling. Week after week found Mrs. "Blackberry," as Katrina and Freid chose to call her, lovingly, in a pew near the front with a child seated on either side of her. The eager children counted the days from one Sunday to another; from one prayer meeting night to the next, and always, they were attentive to the minister and the Sunday school teacher . . . Lou Ella being a patient teacher and guide to the pair -- both in Sunday school as well as across the kitchen table with still-warm bread and blackberry jam and milk.
It was on a crisp Sunday morning in early October that Lou Ella walked down the center church aisle to her favorite pew near the front of the church leading not only Freid and Katrina but Mr. and Mrs. Heinrich as well.

The daily visits of the two bright children to her house had taken away the emptiness and the loneliness she had felt in the loss of her husband. Her private early morning devotions became impassioned and intercessory as the burden for her many unsaved neighbors settled in upon her. Thus it was that the senior Heinrichs not only began attending church faithfully with the thin, frail little old lady, but were soundly converted and sanctified.

Not satisfied in enjoying salvation themselves, Fried and Katrina persuaded others on their block to enjoy "Mrs. Blackberry's" jam and bread and go to Sunday school and church Always, the former treat was bestowed only upon those who faithfully promised Freid and Katrina that they would comply with their latter request and accompany them to church.

Two pews were filled Then three, and finally, when Lou Ella marched down the aisle with another new family following close on her heels, she knew what her mission in life was. God needed her . . . and many another "Mrs. Blackberry" . . . to bake bread and make jam and inroads into the hearts and lives of boys and girls who didn't know about Jesus.

She sighed happily. One was never too old nor too young to be of service to the Lord. It was merely a matter of finding and using one's talents, no matter how small and insignificant they seemed or appeared to be.

Looking down at Freid and Katrina who always chose to sit up tight to her in the pew, she knew that Freid was well on his way to making his name beloved. Katrina too. They were soul winners. What greater, nobler calling!