

# The Two Bikes

Read Psalm 71:16,

“I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteousness, *even* of thine only.”

John 1:12

”But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:”

and Psalm 68:35

“O God, *thou art* terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel *is* he that giveth strength and power unto *his* people. Blessed *be* God.”

I was driving down a road that goes through a windmill farm in New Zealand, which is rather windy and hilly. I noticed 2 people cycling along on pushbikes. They were pedaling along and it looked like a lot of energy and sweat. Then the next minute a flash two-wheeler motorbike came cruising around the corner and roared up the hill. What a difference between the two kinds of bikes! One *costs* so much energy, time and sweat. The other one *has* so much power and energy.

Those two bikes remind me of people in life! Some are like the pushbike; struggling through the road of life in their own strength, stressing over their problems, using up all their energy trying to stay on the right track going somewhere for God. The motorbike is like the people who have learnt how to trust in God and His promises and who take all their problems to God. They live their lives in God’s strength each day, because they’ve handed their life and all their problems over to Him and they trust Him to work things out in His own time and way.

The two bikes also represent two other kinds of people. Some people are like the pushbike; pedaling furiously, trying to earn their way to Heaven. They’re trusting in their own way and their own strength. The motorbike is like the people who are trusting in Jesus Christ to get them to Heaven. They’re “riding” not “pedaling.”  
John 1:12

Which ones are you? What is your trust in? Do you waste your hours stressing and struggling? Or do you live in the strength of the LORD? Are you “trying” or “trusting?”

# Mary's Ointment

Read John 12:1-8

1Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, which should betray him,

5Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

6This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

Was what Mary did to Jesus a waste? It was very expensive perfume, did she waste it? Is anything given to Jesus a waste? Your life, your talents, your money, your future/career or your time?

Nothing given to Jesus is a waste.

Everything not given to Jesus is a waste.

“The whole house was filled with the smell of the perfume.” (V3)

What does your life smell like? Does it smell like perfume or like something dead? Does it smell good or bad? Does it smell of a rotten attitude, disobedience, rebelliousness, stubbornness, bitterness, selfishness or pride? Or maybe it reeks with the smell of bad language, a sharp tongue, dishonesty or hatred? Or does your life smell like perfume? Does it smell of a surrendered will, an obedient heart, a sweet attitude, an honest, kind and clean tongue, an unselfish, humble spirit? What does your life smell of? But remember, the good-smelling perfume was very expensive! And a good-smelling life will cost us something. We have to go against the flow and be different. We have to let Jesus be the boss and obey him. It costs; but it's worth it to be sure!

# Let's Talk About Being Unselfish!!

Philippians 2:3,4

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Acts 20:35

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Matthew 22:37

“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

There are at least 4 ways that we can be selfish. With our time, our thoughts, our actions, and our things.

Here are a few everyday examples. How could you be unselfish in these situations???

I'm tired; it's been a busy day. I want to just sit down and relax. But Mum is still washing a big stack of dishes and she'd tired, too. Should I dry the dishes for her or go relax on the couch??

I have a bag of lollies. They're my favorite kind. Should I eat them all myself or share them with my friends or family??

I've been asked to help with a children's club at my church. But usually on that afternoon I play my favorite sport. What should I do, if I want to be unselfish??

There are 2 pieces of cake left on the plate! The plate gets passed to me first. Should I take the biggest piece or the smallest??

It's time for bed, but I'm really tired. I feel like skipping my Bible reading and prayer. What would be the unselfish thing to do??

It's Saturday and I have a whole list of things I really want to do. But Dad asks me if I could please help with jobs today. What should I do??

I've just sat down to read a new book and the phone rings. It's a friend who is very lonely. I would really rather read my book, so should I tell her/him that I'm busy??

# Give It All You've Got!!

Read Colossians 3:23

“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;”

There is a group of people who will go somewhere, do something silly and video it. For example, they went to a huge train station which was crowded with people, and at a certain time they all completely froze. All the other people were most puzzled and on the video you hear their different comments. It's quite funny to watch! Then at a certain time they all start moving again. Another time in their group there were about 10 pairs of people who looked very similar. In another words, every person looked like one other person and they were dressed the same as them. They had the same hairstyles and the same shoes. And their purpose was to look like a human mirror. So they got onto a train and every person sat exactly opposite their pair. They sat in exactly the same position as their pair, and if their pair moved, they would move the same. The result was that they looked like a mirror! One lady on the train commented, “They must be twins. Maybe there's a twin conference!” Another lady said, “Oh! I thought it was a mirror!” Everyone on the train thought it was funny! One thing I noticed about this group was how much effort they put into those videos! There's really no point to them except for having fun, yet they go to such effort.

It made me feel a bit ashamed. I thought, “How much effort do I put into things that **are** important? There are things that I can do for God that are very important. Maybe teaching Sunday School, or singing an item, or anything else, but sometimes I put as little effort and time possible into them. Shame on me!

I know that we have to trust God to use us, not just rely on ourselves, but still God says, “Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;”

Whatever we can do, we should put our all into it and do it for God.

If people can get so excited over what's silly or not real, how much more should we be excited/enthusiastic over what is real, true and important??

# Our Master

Read John 13:1-17

1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him;

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

**13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am.**

**14 If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.**

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

**16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.**

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Imagine that you're a servant for a very important man! Would you expect to eat better food than your Master? Would you expect to be richer than your master? Of course not! You wouldn't even expect to be the same as him.

Jesus is our master and we're his servants, but we often expect to be better off than him, don't we? We expect to need to spend less time in prayer than Jesus. We expect to be popular and well-loved. We expect to live a normal, easy self-centered life with no sacrifices.

We need to remember who our Master is! Jesus served people, was unselfish and gave up his life. He spent a lot of time in prayer. He had love and compassion for lost people and gave up his time to help them. Jesus cared for the nobodys, the unclean and messed up people. Jesus was rejected, hated and nailed to a cross for nothing he'd done. He was falsely accused and he didn't even defend himself.

Why do we expect to be so much better off than our master? Or is Jesus not our Master? Is the devil still our Master?? There are only 2 masters.

Which one are you serving??

# Canceled Debts

Read Luke 7:36-50

36And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

38And stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment.

39Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

40And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

45Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.

48And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

49And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

50And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

Have you ever thought about how much you owe God? If we put a price on every sin, how much would our sins add up to? I mean **every** sin—**every** wrong thought, **every** lie, **every** time you disobeyed, **every** time you coveted, **every** time you stole, **every** time you were mean, the list goes on and on!

Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins, when he had done nothing wrong. We should have to pay for our sins, that's only fair. But God loved us and gave us a second chance. But if we reject Jesus, we will pay for our own sins.

Have your sins been forgiven? If not, why not? If you've realized how much you owe God, why aren't you begging him for forgiveness? If you haven't yet realized how bad your sin is, you should be asking God to open your eyes and show you what you really look like and then start looking in the mirror, the Bible.

The parable says, the one who is forgiven the most will love Jesus the most. If we would only realize just how much we owe God (if we have been forgiven), we would love God so much more. And we would hate sin so much more.



# In Everything Give Thanks

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18

**18In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.**  
and Acts 16:22-35

22And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them*.

23And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

24Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

**25And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.**

26And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

30And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

32And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

35And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go

It's easy to preach one thing, but to do something different! But did Paul do that? He said to give thanks in everything. He gave thanks even when he was beaten and put in prison!

But is it really possible to be thankful in some situations? Sometimes we go through really sad or hard times. Is it possible to even then, be thankful? When you feel like complaining or being ungrateful, start counting all the things that you can be thankful for. The list goes on and on! You'll feel better before long. There are always things to be thankful for! Usually there are more things to be thankful for, than things to complain about.

If you're sick, think of all the people who are far more sick than you, or have permanent health problems. There are always people more sick than you. If you're sick with the chicken pox, think of someone who lives in a wheelchair. If you have a broken leg, think of the people who have an amputated leg. Spend time praying for the sick people you know, instead of moaning about how sick you feel.

If you're lonely, thank God that He is always there for us. And he's the best friend you could ever have. If someone you love has died or moved away, thank God for the opportunity you had to know them while they were still there. Look around for other people that are lonely, that you can be a friend to.

If you have heaps of work to do, instead of complaining, thank God that you are healthy enough to do it. Would you rather be in a wheelchair, or stuck in bed? Some people would give anything to be able to do physical work, but aren't able. Be thankful that you have work; there are heaps of people who would love to find work.

If you are sick of schoolwork or homework, be thankful you have an opportunity to learn. Not everyone does.

**Count your blessings not your burdens!**

## The One Day Disease and the Two-Day Remedy

Read Proverbs 27:1  
James 4: 13,14, and 15,  
and Hebrews 3:13&15

Do you have the 1 day Disease?  
You know.....

One day I'll start to pray  
One day I'll give my life to God  
One day I'll get saved  
One day I'll start to study the Bible  
One day I'll get to know God  
One day I'll.....

When you die will you have a long list of things that you were planning on doing "one day," or will you have a list of things you have done?

When you give account of your life to God, will he be impressed by your list of things you would have done "one day?"

Do you know when you're going to die?

Don't tell me what you will do 1 day. (one day)

Tell me what you are doing 2day. (today)

First of all, if you're not saved the Bible says, "Now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation." It also says, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." That means get on to it now!!

There are so many people who have been planning on getting saved one day, but have never lived to tell about it. They have all eternity to wish they'd listened to that verse. Don't be one of those people. Don't put your salvation off! If you were on a train, and you were told that somewhere along the way there is a broken bridge, would you get off the train straight away, or would you say, "I'll jump off later?"

Read Hebrew 3:13 and 15 again. Notice the emphasis it puts on "today."  
In Leviticus chapter 18 &19, there is a phrase which is repeated about 18 times. "*I AM* the Lord your God."

Jesus made statements like "*I AM* the light of the world." "*I AM* the door." "*I AM* the Good Shepherd."

Notice it is always "*I AM*," not "*I WILL BE*," or "*I WAS*." "*I AM*" means right now!!

# Lessons from Rearing Calves

\*Calves need milk, hay or meal to grow. So do Christians—they need the milk of God's Word, the Bible, and then other food like preaching, Sunday School Teaching, good Christian books, or anything else that teaches them more about God.

\*When it's feeding time, and a calf has no appetite, it's probably sick! When Christians have no desire to read the Bible and it seems dull and boring, and there's always an excuse why not to go to church, or they just happen to always get the famous “Sunday-morning- sickness-that's-always-better-on-Monday”, they're probably spiritually sick! A healthy Christian will be hungry for God's Word.

\*Sometimes a calf will think that everyone else's milk must taste better! So he spends the whole time trying to knock off the ones next to him so that he can get their milk. But you know what? He eventually finds out that their milk is just the same as his! Isn't that what we're like sometimes? We always want what someone else has, we're never satisfied with what God has given us! But we don't realize that our milk is not much different to theirs, and we should be content with what we have.

\*Sometimes on the big feeders, that you use for the outside calves, one calf will be a horrible troublemaker! He'll decide he doesn't want to drink anymore, so instead of just going away and minding his own business, he tears around in front of everyone else, and manages to bunt them all off the calf feeder, so now everyone has come off! Talk about driving you nuts!!! That reminds me of what some Christians are like! Troublemakers! They decide to leave their church, so instead of just leaving and minding their own business, they try to bunt everyone else off too and cause chaos! Or they might start up some gossip, and try and bunt everyone off that way . How horrible is gossip! I heard a saying, 'Gossip is due to the fact that there are more *talkers* than *thinkers*.' But we can be like it with anything, not just church--- maybe a Club, or just with people we know. But if we can't work with them, we should just go away.

\*Calves, that have been in the shelter of their warm, cosy barns, are often hesitant to go out into the paddock. Sometimes the farmers have to force them outside! The calves are scared, because it's all new and big. But the farmer knows what is best, and won't put them in a dangerous place, so they don't need to be afraid, they just need to trust. There are times in our lives, when we have to step out into something that's new and out of the warm comfort of what we're used to, and we naturally get a big frightened or concerned, just because it's something new----- like starting school, shifting to a new country or town, going to a new school, finishing school, starting a job, getting married, having children, or even dying. But God is watching over us, and won't take us where He can't look after us. So remember that next time you do something new, if it's right and where God is definitely leading you, don't be afraid, just trust God!!

\*The milk feeder is *not* the milk, it's just a tool for giving out milk. Milk feeders don't always have milk in them, sometimes they just have water, or they might have very watered down milk. That's just like churches! They are just milk feeders--- giving out the milk of God's Word. But unfortunately all churches don't have milk in them, some have the water of their own ideas, modern thinking, entertainment or just dead religion. Others do *have* the milk, but they water it down, and add whatever they want to it, trying to keep the worldly people happy. But there are those who have the pure milk of the Word, and who do all they can to feed those that are hungry with it. But always remember, it's the **milk** that's important!! No normal calf would care for a lovely, painted, modern, very popular, in fashion ,super duper, neat calf feeder, that is empty or has water, or watered down milk. That's exactly what some churches are! They have EVERYTHING except for what's important! But some people choose a church to go to, just because of how popular it is, how many people go to it, how many activities they have etc. but they forget that it's the milk of God's Word that's the most important! Don't forget that!! Sadly, calves have more common sense than a lot of Christians---- the calves know they need the milk!

\*Sometimes a calf will get really annoying and start pushing everyone else off the feeder, so I'll give him a big slap! Ouch!! But it hurts *me*, not the calf!! So now I have a very sore hand, while the calf couldn't care less. When somebody does something nasty to us, and we plan revenge, and how to get back at them, it often hurts *us* the most!

# What's Your Garden Like?

After I got married, I moved into my husband's house. Soon I got to work on the gardens. There wasn't much gardens at all, and what there was was overgrown with **weeds** and long **grass**. Well, I didn't want a garden full of **weeds**, so the first thing I did was to start pulling out all the **weeds**. It was a big job! After a while, the gardens were looking much better as all the **weeds** were disappearing. But do you think I was happy now? The garden did look better with no **weeds**, but still there was no **flowers**, only one or 2 here and there. So I started planting seeds and plants. I want my garden to not just have no weeds, but to also be full of **flowers**.

Our life is like a garden. Naturally, our life is full of **weeds**! Sin is like a **weed**. **Weeds** are so ugly, so is sin. But you know what, it's not enough to just have our sin cleaned up. It's not enough to just not do that and not do this. It's better to be like that, than full of **weeds**, but still we're then like an empty garden. We need **flowers**!!! We need to do things that are good and right. It's one thing to not do this, and not do that, but it's another thing to do good things.

But one lesson we need to learn! You know, no matter how long I sit and watch my garden, I have never noticed **weeds** come flying out by themselves! I have to pull every single one out. And you know what? We can't pull the **weeds** of sin out of our lives. We must ask God for help. We may try our hardest and wonder why it's just not working. We need God's help. He has the power to pull those sin **weeds** out.

Also, another thing I have noticed, that even though I cleared my garden of all the **weeds**, they keep on coming back!! I will always need to keep a watch for the **weeds** growing up and keep them under control. And the **weeds** of sin keep growing back. We always need to look out for them. When we are in Heaven we will then be perfect, but until then, we always need to watch out!

So what is the garden of your life like at the moment? Full of **weeds**, empty or full of **flowers**?

What are **weeds** and what are **flowers**? I'll give you a list of both and you can think about which ones are **flowers** and which ones are **weeds**!

**Kindness**? **Gentleness**? **Stealing**? **Honesty**? Hatred? Lying? Swearing? **Love**? **Patience**? **Peace**? **Bad Temper**? **Bitterness**? **Self-controlled**? **Selfishness**? **Joy**? **Doubt**? **Disrespect**? **Friendliness**? **Prayer**? **Bullying**? **Reading the Bible**? **Pride**? **Jealousy**? **Caring**?

# Be a Star

## Read Matthew 2:1-12

1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for **we have seen his star** in the east, and are come to worship him.

3 When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

6 And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently **what time the star appeared**.

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, **the star**, which they saw in the east, **went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was**.

10 **When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy**.

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Let's learn a few lessons from this **star**! Now, how did the wise men know Jesus was born? They saw the **star**! How did the wise men know how to find Jesus? They followed the **star**!

What did the **star** do? It just shined over where Jesus was. The **star** didn't care about itself, it just wanted the men to find Jesus who was really important. If the **star** hadn't been shining in the sky, would the wise men have known Jesus had been born? Probably not. If the **star** hadn't shined over the place where Jesus was, would the wise men have found Him? Probably not.

Even though Jesus was who the men were looking for, the **star** was very important, because it showed the way to Jesus.

What's my point?? We are supposed to be like that bright little **star**, pointing people to Jesus Christ. How are people supposed to know about Jesus if no one ever *tells* them? How are people supposed to know what a true Christian is, if no one *shows* them? How are people supposed to know how to be saved, if we won't be like that little **star** and point the way??

But, remember, in order to be able to shine over the place where Jesus was, the **star** had to *know* where Jesus was! And in order for us to be able to point people to Jesus, we have to know Him personally ourselves. That's just common sense! So do you know Jesus yourself, or are you like the wise men still searching for Him? The Bible says if we'll seek, we'll find. So you should either be seeking or shining. If you're not doing one of those two things, you're on a dead end road going nowhere. Remember it was the '*wise*' men who were searching for Jesus. All wise people do! If you do know Jesus, what are you doing?? When people look at you, do they think about Jesus? Or do they not even realize that you are a Christian?? Are you praying for opportunities to share the Gospel with others? Or has that thought never even crossed your mind? Are there people who are thankful for your life because you helped them find Jesus? Or are there people who never want to be a Christian because of your bad testimony? Do you pray for your friends who are unsaved? Or are you not really concerned about their souls? Do you pray for boldness and wisdom to be able to witness to them? Or do you pray for God to send someone else? Is your goal in life to do God's will? Or is it to follow your own dreams?

Be a **Star!!**



# You Haven't Lived Yet

One time, I was having an interesting conversation with an American tourist about the differences between New Zealand and California, which is the state he was from. He was telling me all the things he had noticed since being in New Zealand, that were different back home. There were quite a few things!! For example, in California, they don't have clotheslines, they just put their clothes in the dryer--- which as we discussed, is quite strange! Since New Zealand has far more rain you would think it would be the opposite! Then he was saying how they don't have meat pies, only fruit pies. So we were discussing what kind of fruit pies etc. He asked me if cherries are common in New Zealand. I said, "Not really, I don't think." He said, "So you've never tried a cherry pie?" "Nope!" He replied,

**"Oh man, you haven't lived yet!"**

Later on, I was thinking about that phrase, **'You haven't lived yet.'**

That guy is a very religious Catholic, who has no assurance that he's going to Heaven. He hopes he'll be good enough! You know what?

**That guy hasn't lived yet!** Spiritually, he's dead. Jesus said, "I am come that they might have LIFE, and that they might have it more abundantly." That's the reason Jesus came to this earth, to give us eternal life. He paid the price --- it was so expensive it cost Him *His* life. And you know, until we've trusted Christ as our Saviour and He's saved us, **we haven't really lived!**

We may have the wildest, exciting life possible, but **we haven't lived yet.** The only satisfying life is a life that is given to God. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the LIFE!" If we know Him, we are really living! So remember this Christmas the reason Jesus came---- to give us eternal life.

# Have you lived yet??

# Don't Be a Rebel!!!

## It's not worth the mess you get yourself into!

One day when I still lived at home on the farm, I was out on the block of land that my Dad leases, shifting stock with Dad and a German girl, who was staying with us. The mob we were shifting were fluffy Highlanders with big horns. There were 2 cute little calves, whom Dad reckoned were like 'fluffy teddy bears.' But they weren't both here today. One was missing! It was nowhere inside the paddock. Surely it didn't jump over the fence into the dangerous steep bush! Well, we had to find it, so Dad jumped over the fence, with the German girl and myself following. The next minute Dad let out a groan! He saw the calf 'way down there!' It looked like it was stuck in the mud, as there were little 'streams' flowing through the bottom of the bush. So we made our way down, dreading the thought of trying to get it out of the mud, and then trying to direct it back up through the trees, and then back over the fence. But strangely enough, when we got closer we realized that that the calf wasn't in mud, or not deep mud anyway. Dad said, 'Why on earth is it stuck?' When he got right up to him, the little calf tried to charge him, but it could barely move. Then we realized that it was paralyzed! It had fallen down that cliff just over there. It was a sheer drop!! And it was a LONG way down! No wonder it had broken it's back. Well, there was nothing we could do, other than put it out of its misery. And that was the sad end to the story.

If that calf had of stayed where he was supposed to be, he would most likely still be skipping around with the other 'teddy bear!' But he chose to go his own way. Was it worth it? I don't think so. Of course, he didn't know that there was sheer drop in that bush, or he probably wouldn't have gone there. But the point was that he was where he was not supposed to be. The fences were for his safety, he realized that too late. Can you see what lesson we can learn from this little story? We live in a very dangerous world, but thankfully there are some fences! Our parents have rules, which are intended to keep us safe. And the Bible is full of guidelines, which are written for our safety. But do you stay within the 'fence'? Or are you always fighting to have your own way? Always wanting what you're not allowed? It's not worth it; if you break the rules you'll only end up in trouble. It might seem fun at first, but soon you'll land at the bottom and you'll be sore. And you may even be scarred for life. That calf could never get back to normal again, and although God does forgive us when we are truly sorry, we still get left with the scars from our sin.

Is that really what you want? You may not understand now, why God and your parents make the rules that they do, just like that calf didn't understand. But one day, when you're older, you will understand why. So....

**Don't be a rebel!**

# Someone has to pay for it

A lady was staying at a motel, and she noticed in her room that there were all these bottles of alcohol in the fridge. She didn't drink alcohol, but she really liked the bottles, so she thought that since they were in her room, she could just help herself. So she tipped out all the alcohol, and kept the bottles, as she knew of something she could use them for. But to her horror, when she went to leave, and pay for her room, the motel keeper just happened to ask, "Did you drink any alcohol?" Uh, Oh!!! The embarrassed lady had to try and explain that she hadn't actually *drunk* any, she had just *tipped them out*!! She hadn't realized that she had to pay for all those bottles!!! And they weren't cheap.

This little story, which is true, is like life. People go through the motel of life thinking they can do whatever they want. They don't realize that somebody has to pay for all the wrong things they do. They think that they can live how they please and do as they please. They think that they have the right to talk and act however they want to. Just like the lady in the story had to give account to the motel keeper, so every person who has ever lived must give account to God one day for the way they have lived.

**"So then everyone of us shall give account of himself to God."** Romans 14:12

If you go into a shop and break something, someone has to pay for it. It's the same with God. We are living in God's world that he created, and if we break his commandments, someone has to pay for it.

Our sin must be paid for. And the only way we can pay for our sins is by going to Hell for eternity. But thankfully, God didn't leave it like that. Even though we have rebelled against him, and lived just how we like, he somehow still loved us.

Romans 5:8 **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."**

He sent his Son, Jesus, down to earth, to die on the cross for wicked sinners like us, to pay the price of our sin and also to give us the power to live right. The Bible says that if we realize that we're helpless sinners and cry out to God to save us, then we will be saved and given the power to live right.

John 1:12 **"As many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the Sons of God."**

John 3: 16 **"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have everlasting life."**

**Have your sins been paid for??**

# Blind Bartimeus

Read Mark 10:46-52

46And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimæus, the son of Timæus, sat by the highway side begging.

47And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, *thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

48And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

49And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.

50And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

51And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

52And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

Blind Bartimeus is a good example of how to pray!!

First of all,....

## **He was very humble.**

When he called out to Jesus, he said, “Have mercy on me.” He asked God to have mercy on him, rather than giving Jesus all the reasons why he really should heal him. Do we have that attitude when we pray? Or do we tell God all the reasons why we deserve what we’re asking for?

## **He was very believing.**

For one thing, he wouldn’t have prayed if he didn’t believe Jesus could heal him. From reading the story, I can tell that Bartimeus believed with all his heart, that Jesus could heal him. God honored his faith. Is that how we pray? Or do we doubt that it could actually ever really happen? When we pray for people’s salvation, do we pray in faith, like Bartimeus?

## **He was very persistent.**

Nothing could put him off! In fact, when people tried to shut him up, he got even louder!! That’s being persistent. Are we persistent when we pray? Or do we just give up when we get discouraged?

## **He was very specific.**

He had a specific prayer request. He knew exactly what he was asking for. Do we pray like that? Do we ask for specific things? Do we pray for specific people? Or do we just pray for everyone in the whole wide world, and for everything to go well for everyone? Or are we specific?

# Just imagine....

that you get an invitation to a fancy dress party. You are all excited, and after thinking about it for a while you decide that you will dress up as a tiger. So you get the costume all made up, you get your face painted---- now you are all ready. You walk in the door to the party and look around. Oh no!! It's a 'fancy dress' party not a 'costume party!!!' Everybody else is wearing their best Sunday clothes, and you're dressed up like a tiger!! How embarrassing to be the only one in a costume!!! You're the odd one out!

Nobody ever likes to be the odd one out! We all naturally want to be the same as everyone else. But if we're going to do what's right, and please God, we're going to have to be the odd one out sometimes.

And it's never easy. It's not easy to be the only one who doesn't laugh at dirty jokes. It's not easy to be the only one who doesn't swear, or use God's name in vain. It's not easy to be the only one who always tells the truth etc.

None of us likes being laughed at, or mocked.

But if we remember how much Jesus went through for us; he was laughed at, spat at, mocked and then nailed to the cross. He was the odd one out, and it can't have been easy. But it was worth it! He pleased God and He made a way for us to be saved. If we are the odd one out because we are obeying God, then we will please God, and we will be a light to the people we are around. If you take a stand, you have no idea who might follow you.

**Be the odd one out for God!**

# THE BROKEN DOWN WALLS

Sandy listened carefully to her Sunday School Teacher, as she told the exciting story of Nehemiah and how he built up the broken walls around Jerusalem. When her Teacher had finished the story, Sandy put up her hand. "Yes, Sandy?" asked Miss Brown.

"Why did it matter so much that the walls were broken down? What difference would it make?"

"It would make a lot of difference! If the walls are broken down, the people in the city have no protection. Any enemies would be able to take over the city real easy! With no walls around the city, the people in the city would be helpless," explained Miss Brown patiently.

"Oh, I see!" replied Sandy thoughtfully.

The next day, Sandy was having the most frustrating day. Everything was going wrong! And it there was one fault that Sandy had, it was her very short temper. By the end of the day, Sandy had blown up a number of times, and she had hurt one of her very close friends by the nasty way she had spoken to her. Sandy felt slightly bad as she walked home from school in a moody.

"But I can't help it," she thought, "It's just the way I am. I can't stop myself, no matter how hard I try."

That night at the dinner table, Sandy's dad was reading

from the Bible, like he always did at night. He was reading from the Proverbs. Sandy was too busy thinking about her rotten day, and whose fault it was that everything had gone wrong.

Suddenly one of the verses that her Dad was reading seemed to jump out at her.

“He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.”

The bit about the walls and the broken down city had caught her attention.

“Dad, what on earth does that verse mean?” interrupted Sandy.

“Well, it just means that if we have no self-control, we are like a helpless city. Anyone can control us, and push us into losing our temper or doing what's wrong,” Dad explained.

Oh, I see,” said Sandy,” Well, how can we have self-control then?”

Well, the Bible says the fruit of the Spirit is self control. We need to have God's Spirit living in us. And we need to spend time with God, everyday by reading the Bible and praying. That will give us strength to be self-controlled.

“I see, said Sandy thoughtfully.



# Peter's Dream

Peter went to church, he read the Bible and prayed, he knew the 10 Commandments, but he had a big problem! He couldn't obey the Bible, he couldn't keep the 10 Commandments, but he didn't even care. He coveted, lied, swore, disobeyed his parents, hated people, stole, used God's name as a swear word, he would fight, and he loved other things more than God. And he didn't care! But if you asked him if he was going to Heaven, he would say "Yes, of course!" If you would say, "Why?" He would say, "I go to church, I read the Bible and pray. I know the 10 Commandments, and I know about God, so I'm going to Heaven." But he did things that he knew were wrong every day, and he just didn't care!

One night he had a dream! He dreamed that he died, and after he died, he could

see Heaven. It looked so nice, and it was made out of gold. He could hear happy voices, and he could hear singing and laughing. But there was a big gate you had to go through to get there, and it was shut. Peter ran up to the gate and knocked on the door. The door opened and there stood Jesus. He said "What do you want?" Peter said, "I want to come in, of course!" Jesus said, "Why should I let you in? My Heaven is a place for people who love and obey me. I think you're at the wrong place!" Peter said, "Wait! You know who I am! I go to church, I read my Bible and pray, and I know the 10 Commandments. Can't I please come in?" Jesus said, "I definitely do know who you are! You're the little boy who lies, steals, swears, disobeys his parents, covets, fights, and hates people. I can't let any sin into my Heaven. You'd ruin it!" Peter started crying, "But I can't help it! And I thought you forgive bad people! Why can't you forgive me?"

Jesus said, "I do forgive bad people, but only when they're sorry for their sin and ask me to forgive them!"

Peter said, "Well, I'm sorry!"

Jesus said, "You're sorry too late! You had 12 years on earth to ask me. Your time is up. I'm very sorry!"

And Jesus shut the door.

By now, Peter was sobbing, as he realized he couldn't go to Heaven. He kept thinking about what Jesus had said, "I can't let any sin into my Heaven."

Suddenly, Peter realized it was his sin that had kept him out of Heaven. Peter began to hate his sin. As he was thinking about this, he saw, in the distance, a cross. And Jesus was hanging on the cross. Peter crept close, out of curiosity. To his horror, Peter saw that Jesus had nails through his hands and feet. He had cuts all over his body, and on his head, there was a crown of thorns. Ouch!!

Peter was horrified and he cried out,

“Jesus, who in the world did such a horrible thing to you?”

Jesus groaned, and said, “It was you!”

Peter said, “You've got the wrong person! I'd *never* do something like that!”

Jesus said, “Oh, yes! It was your horrible, dirty sin. All those lies, all that stealing, swearing, hating, disobeying, *that's* what nailed me to this cross.

Peter was shocked! He had never realized that his sin was *that* bad.

Just then Peter woke up. He sat up and realized he was crying. He got down on his knees, and prayed for God to forgive him and take away all his horrible filthy sin. And he thanked God for suffering on the cross to pay for his sin.”

From then on, Peter was a different boy. He wasn't perfect, but everyone noticed a big change in him. He now hated sin, but he loved God and loved obeying God.

# What are you going to do?

There was a man in Australia who had a wife and three children. Their names were the Jacksons. His children were 10 yrs, 6yrs, and 1 year old. Now he lived about 5 minutes out in the country, but he worked in town. He was a mechanic.

One morning before he went to work, he lit a bonfire to burn all their rubbish. Now, there was a drought in the area where he was living in Australia, and it wasn't very safe to light fires. But he had so much rubbish that needed to be burnt, that he thought it wouldn't matter, just this once.

So he lit the fire before he went off to work. That night when he was just coming out of town, he heard a fire engine coming his way. He pulled over and let it pass. Then he kept on driving. The next minute he saw the fire engine pull into his road. He thought, "Oh, no!!!" He hadn't have even thought that it might be his house. "Surely it's not," he thought. So he kept driving, but sure enough it *was* his house on fire.

He raced up the drive and jumped out of the car,

and there were his wife and his two oldest children outside. He looked at his wife and said, "Where's James (the 1 year old)?"

His wife burst into tears, "I couldn't get him out, he's still upstairs. But I told the firemen, and they're trying to get him out."

The next minute out rushed a fireman with a bundle in his arms. It was James!! The parents were so glad to see him. They quickly thanked the fireman who had saved James, before he rushed away to keep working on the fire.

A few years later, when the house had all been rebuilt, it was a Saturday morning, and the Dad had the day off work. They were just sitting down for breakfast, when there was a knock at the door. Dad jumped up to answer it. There was a man at the door. Dad was thinking I wonder who on earth this man is and what he wants.

The man said, "Do you remember me?"

Dad looked at him and said, "No!"

The man said, "Look at my burnt hands and the scars on my face. I'm the fireman who saved your child from the fire. But now, I am in trouble. I need help. I have just found out that I have a cancer in my leg, and I have to have an operation right away, or I'll lose my leg. But the operation

costs a whole lot of money, and I don't have the money or the time to make the money. Could you please help me?"

## **What do you think that man would do???**

Mr. Jackson was so thankful to the fireman for saving his son, that he sold some of his stuff, so that he could give him the money for the operation.

Now, there is someone who has scars from saving us from the fire of hell. Who is that? He had nails go through his hands and feet, a spear into his side, he was whipped, and a crown of thorns was on his head. And he would have felt the pain all at once. And it was our fault. It's because of our sin that Jesus died. He loves us so much that he didn't want us to have to be punished for our sin, so he came and he died instead of us. Now he has scars just like that fireman. And he there is something that he wants from us. He wants our life. He wants us to give our lives to Him while we are still young, and live our whole lives for him. That's what he wants from you today.

# What are you going to do??

## The Speeding Ticket

Jeremy was in trouble once again! This time he had gotten into a fight with Bradley, a bully at school. It had turned into a bad fight and a window had been smashed as a result. The headmaster at the school was furious, not to mention Jeremy's parents!

On top of all the punishments from the headmaster, Jeremy's parents dealt out their own punishments. Jeremy was grounded, and had to work every day after school for two weeks to help pay for the window.

But Jeremy wasn't sorry, he was angry! "IT'S NOT FAIR! It wasn't my fault. It was that Bradley, he was making fun of me, and teasing me. He should get all the punishments, not me. It's not fair! Why do I have to get in trouble because he's so mean?!"

"Jeremy," scolded his Dad, "It doesn't matter who started it! You were fighting, so you get punished. If you had of ignored him, and gone away, you wouldn't have gotten into trouble." Jeremy just sulked and stuck his nose deeper into the book he had been reading. His Dad watched him thoughtfully, as he finished of his cup of coffee. Suddenly he remembered something.

"Hey, son. I was once in the same predicament as you, and I felt just the same way you do. When I was still a teenager, I



was following Mike, who was my friend, home to his house. It was his 19th birthday and he had invited all his mates back to his house for pudding. He had just gotten his first car, and was very proud of it. So I was following him back to his house, and I had 4 friends in the car with me, then there was another carload following us. Well, I think Mike felt like showing off his new car to all his mates, and he took off driving 120. I wanted to keep up with him as I didn't know how to get to his house ( and I didn't want the guys in my car to think I was a scaredy cat!). The car following us stuck to the speed limit though, so they lagged behind quite a bit. The next minute we came around a corner and... oh no, there were 2 policeman parked just around the corner, and who should they be giving a ticket but Mike! I thought that since they were busy with him, I'd be able to get away with it, but the next minute the 2nd policeman was after me. So we both got a ticket! The policeman didn't let me off, because I was just following Mike. We were both speeding, so we both got a ticket. But the carload behind us who were keeping to the speed limit, had a big smile on their face as they went past us! They gave us a hard time about that for a long time! But I learnt a very important lesson through it. First I was angry at Mike, because he was the one who started speeding. But later on I realized that we shouldn't do what's wrong just because someone else is doing it, because then were both guilty, and we'll both be punished.”

“So then everyone of us shall give account of HIMSELF to God.”

Romans 10:12

# *Imagine that Jesus literally stays in your home for 1 week. What would you change??*

**Saturday**----- You get a letter from Jesus; He wants to come and stay with you. He's coming on Monday.

You're so excited, because He's your best friend. You decide you will surprise Him, and let Him have your room and you can sleep on the couch, till He goes again.

**Monday**---- You get your room ready.

Woe! What a job getting your room ready! First of all, you check your walls for any pictures He might not like looking at. Wow, you didn't realize there were so many. You get a rubbish sack and put the pictures in there for now. The wall looks a bit bare, so you put up some nice pictures with Bible Verses on them. Jesus might enjoy looking at them better.,

Secondly, you look at your music , tapes, and CDs. Jesus might want to listen to some music, while He's in your room. So you quickly check to see that there's no music there He wouldn't like. The more you think about it, the more you realize He wouldn't really like much of your music, so you put that music in the sack as well, and you go and ask your parents for some good music to borrow.

Thirdly you realize Jesus might look through your cupboards and drawers. So you better just check that all the clothes in there are decent. As you look through your clothes, you realize that you'd be too embarrassed to wear some of those clothes while Jesus is around, so in they go to the sack. By now, your sack is getting quite heavy, so you decide to just make the bed, and vacuum. Surely Jesus isn't too fussy!! So, Monday night, He comes. It's so good to see

Him. You stay up late talking to Him and catching up.

**Tuesday**----- at the breakfast table, Jesus announces that He wants to go to school for the day with you and meet your friends.

You think, "Oh, that will be nice to be with Jesus all day!" But as you get to school, you start feeling a bit awkward. Your friends have never met Jesus before, they've only heard about Him. And they don't know that Jesus is your friend. When you see your friends, you introduce them to Jesus. One of them says, "You mean, He's Your friend? I never would have guessed that!!" Another friend says, "I reckon! You're good at hiding things!" You feel very embarrassed and Jesus is a bit shocked. At lunchtime, you're eating your lunch with Jesus and your friends. One of your friends tells a dirty joke. You all start laughing. But Jesus gets up and walks away.

**Wednesday**--- After school, you're going to your friends house to watch a new movie. Jesus asks if He can come. You say, "Of course!!" But then as you think about it, you realize that the movie might use Jesus' name as a swear word, there might be other bad language, there's probably rude jokes, and with some of the things that happen, you have no doubt Jesus will not want to watch it. What can you do! You decide to invite your friend over to your house instead and let Jesus choose the video.

**Thursday**--- You're sitting reading one of your favorite books. Jesus comes and sits next to you on the couch and says He wants to read the book too so could you read aloud, so He can listen.

You think, "Oh no! Jesus wouldn't like this book! I better go and get another one!" You say to Jesus, "Just hang on a minute; I just need to get something out of my room!" You dash off to your room and quickly look through your bookcase for a book that Jesus might like. "Good grief, I had completely forgotten about my books when I got

my room ready for Jesus. I had better put some of these books in my sack, hopefully He hasn't already read them, "you say. So you drag out the sack from under your bed, stuff the books in, then push the sack as far under the bed as it can go. You hope Jesus won't see it there! Surely He wouldn't look under your bed!!! You grab a good book, and run back out to Jesus.

**Friday**--- You're talking on the phone to one of your old friends. You're chatting away and catching up on all the latest gossip. Then there's a knock at the door!

In walks Jesus. He comes and sits next to you, while you're chattering away. Suddenly you feel uncomfortable talking in front of Jesus. You tell your friend you have to go, and that you'll finish the conversation another time.

**Saturday**--- You come in from working down the farm. You've had a bad day, everything went wrong. You come inside wanting to sit down and relax. But the next minute, Mum calls your name. You pretend you didn't hear, but she keeps on calling you, so now you're in a sour mood.

Guess what! Mum has a list of jobs for you to do! Does she not realize how tired you are? All she expects you to do is work, work, work! You lose your temper and blow up at your Mum, and tell her exactly what you think, then you storm out of the room, stomp down the hall into your room, and slam the door so hard the room nearly shakes! Then you nearly jump out of your skin! Who on earth is that lying on your bed?? "Oh no, how could I have forgotten Jesus is staying in my room. Oh dear, don't tell me Jesus heard everything I said to Mum! But He must have, He's not deaf!" Jesus looks at you and says, " Was it your angry voice I heard echoing up the hall? You weren't talking like that to your Mother, were you? I have given you a mother to look after you and love you. How could you treat her like that?"

**Sunday**--- Jesus asks if He can come to church with you. YOU have to admit to Jesus that you're not actually going today. You have something else that you just have to do. Jesus says "You're joking right? Surely you don't have something to do that is so important. More important than learning more about me. You say I'm your best friend, but the things you do are really more important to you than me. You say you love me, but you're too busy to get to know me!"

**Monday**--- Jesus tells you that there is a dreadful smell in your room, and He can't put up with it anymore. You go into your room, but you can't smell anything! Jesus says, 'You mean you can't smell it? It's revolting! It smells dead. I think its coming from under the bed. I haven't been able to sleep the last few nights, its soo strong! Suddenly you remembered what it was you stuffed under your bed. Your sack full of stuff you were hiding from Jesus! You really don't think it smells that bad, but since it bothers Jesus that much, you decide to burn it all.

**CONCLUSION:** If Jesus literally stayed in your house for 1 week, how many changes would you need to make????