

## 6 B's

There are 6 words that start with 'b', and they are all a picture of sin.

**Blot**---- A blot is like a stain. Our life is like a clean white piece of paper, until we sin, then our life is stained, we have a blot, and the older we get, the bigger the blot gets. Can anything clean it up? There's only one thing. "The blood of Jesus... cleanseth us from all sin." Don't you just hate sin??

**Burden**-- Imagine if you carried a bag with you through life, and every time you sinned, you put a stone inside that bag! Man, by the time you were getting old, it would be so heavy. Sin is a burden; it weighs people down with guilt. When Jesus died on the cross, the burden was laid on His shoulders, so we can be freed from it. There is a story of when Mt. Tarawera erupted; there was a Maori village that got covered in lava. There was a mother with three children inside their house, and the mother realized what was happening. The lava was about to make the roof cave in, so the mother gathered her children together and crouched over top of them, and the roof fell on her back. She died but the children were found alive. She had taken the burden

for them; she died so they could be saved. And that's exactly what Jesus has done. He died so that all who will believe and trust in Him are saved. Don't you just hate sin??

**Barrier**---A barrier is what separates you from something or someone. Hey, that's what sin is! Remember when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit? They were separated from God, they didn't want to talk to God anymore. There was now a barrier in between them and God. Since then everybody has been separated from God. But thank God, He cared enough about us to make a way back to Him. He took our sin upon himself, when he hung on that cross, and the veil in the Temple was ripped in half. There is now a way back to God, through Jesus Christ! Don't you just hate sin??

**Bee**---- Ouch! A bee stings! That's exactly what sin does. It stings, it hurts. Once I got stung on my eyelid, and man, it stung! Not to mention, it getting all swollen and itchy. And to make matters worse, 2 Israeli girls arrived to stay with us shortly after, and you know what? They had been medics in the Israeli army! So they fussed over me the whole time. And they would always growl me if they saw me about to touch my eye! Imagine having a swollen, awfully

itchy eye that you're not allowed to touch! It nearly drove me crazy! So remember, sin is like a bee that leaves you with a nasty sting! Don't you just hate sin??

**Bulb**---Some plants have seeds, others have bulbs. You plant them in the ground, and they grow. Imagine hiding them in the ground, thinking that no one would find them! Soon, they would grow, and everyone would see where it had been hidden. That's exactly like sin. If you try to hide what you've done, soon enough people will find out. The Bible says, "Be sure your sin will find you out." Also, "..... He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy." If you've done something wrong, don't try to hide it, own up and ask God and whoever else to forgive you. Otherwise, you'll just get found out one day. It's definite! Be sure!! Don't you just hate sin??

**Bullet**--- A bullet kills people, and that's exactly what sin does! It was because of Adam and Eve's sin that they died. It's because of our sin that we die. "The wages of sin is death." Also, a bullet can injure people for life, which is exactly what sin does! Sometimes when people do what's wrong, it ruins them for life.

There is a story about a guy who just about got shot, by some robbers, but somebody else jumped in front of him and got hit by the bullet instead of him. That's exactly what Jesus did for us. He got hit by the bullet of sin, so we could live.

**Don't you just hate sin??**

**Don't you just love Jesus???**

## A Good Thing to Write

“What shall I write on my slate?” said Harry to himself.

He could not write very well, but he sat down and wrote, 'A good boy.' Then he took it and showed it to his mother.

“That is a good thing to write,” she said. “I hope you will write it on your life as well as on your

slate.”

“How can I write it on my life?”  
said Harry.

“By being a good boy every day  
and hour of your life. Then you  
will write it on your face, too,  
for the face of a good boy  
always tells its own story. It  
looks bright and happy.”

## Keys for Kids

### The Broken Eggshell

“I hate you, Peter!” Tom shouted. “Don't ever come in my room again! You're a thief!”

“Whoa, there,” called Grandpa, coming down the hall. “What's all this yelling about?”

“Tom says I stole his scissors, but I didn't,” Pete called from his room. “He's a liar, and he better stay out of my room, too!” Pete slammed his door.

With a sigh, Grandpa checked into the situation. It wasn't long before he discovered Tom's scissors on the hall table. With angry words, both boys insisted the other had left them there.

“Quiet!” ordered Grandpa. He motioned for them to follow him and headed for the kitchen, where he placed an egg and an empty

teacup on the counter. "Peter, you crack this egg into the cup," said Grandpa. With a curious look, Peter obeyed. "Now," said Grandpa, "Tom, you put the egg back into the shell again, please—just the way it was."

Tom frowned. "What do you mean?" he asked. "That's impossible, Grandpa. You can't fix a broken egg."

"Like Humpty Dumpty, eh?" Grandpa chuckled. Then he became serious. "The point is, there's something else that can't be easily mended. I'm thinking of feelings. You boys said some ugly things to each other. Taking words back is just as impossible as mending an egg." Both boys' faces showed that they felt bad. "Never forget how harmful words can be," cautioned Grandpa. "God says the tongue is like a fire that can't be put out. That's how much damage words can do. Even saying you're sorry doesn't make them disappear."

"I am sorry, though," Tom told his brother.

"Yeah....well....me too," replied Peter. "You can come in my room if you want."

## How about you?

Are you careful about the words you speak, or do you say things before you think? Even when we say we're sorry, the other person may still remember the words we said. WE all need to ask God to help us tame our tongue.

# Think Before You Speak

## LITTLE DROPS OF WATER

*Little drops of water,*

Little grains of sand,  
Make the mighty ocean,  
And the beautiful land.

And the little moments,  
Humble though they be  
Make the mighty ages,  
Of eternity.

And our little errors  
Lead the soul away  
From the paths of virtue,  
Far in sin to stay.

Little deeds of mercy,  
Sown by youthful hands,  
Grow to bless the nations,

Far in heathen lands.

Little deeds of kindness,

Little words of love,

Make our earth an Eden

Like the heaven above.

## Becky's Other Voice

by Gladys B. Spence

At first Becky began to read silently, "Jane ran after the puppy." Then Becky began to read in a whisper, "Jane ran after the puppy." That was no good either. Because a little voice inside her kept saying, 'You told a lie, Becky.'

Then Becky tried to drown out the little voice. She began to read aloud, "The puppy went dashing around the corner." That didn't work either. She had to read still louder yet.

"Becky!" Mother called from the kitchen. "Do you have to shout when you read?"

Becky started reading silently again. But the little voice grew louder. 'You told your best friend, Rachel, a lie!' It seemed to shout. It got so loud that Becky couldn't stand it. She closed the book. She went into the kitchen where the good cupcake smells were.

"Um," she said. "When the cupcakes are done, may I make the frosting, Mother?"

"We'll see," said Mother, washing up pans at the sink.

"I hope it will be chocolate. I love chocolate. Do you think it will be chocolate, Mother?"

Becky's mother looked at her sharply. "You're so fidgety today, Becky," she said. "You're not yourself at all."

"I'm me, Becky," said Becky. Her little voice had followed her into the kitchen. 'You told a lie,' it whispered, 'to your very best friend, Rachel.'

To her mother, Becky said, "I'll dry the pans for you." She picked up the dish towel and began to dry pans. The second pan clattered to the floor.

"Becky," Mother's voice sounded worried. She dried her hands. Then she put her hand on Becky's forehead. "No," she said. "I don't believe you have a fever."

"I'm fine," Becky said. She smiled brightly.

Then her mother who knew just about everything, said, "Have you done something wrong, Becky?"

"No, I don't think so," said Becky. She put some measuring spoons in the drawer. 'Now,' the little voice said, 'you've told two lies, Becky.' Outside the snow began to fall gently."Oh, look," said Becky.

Mother came and stood beside Becky at the window. Great, soft snowflakes settled on the pine trees outside. Then Mother said, "God gives us so many beautiful things that sometimes I get a lump in my throat.'

"Me, too," said Becky. And suddenly she got such a big lump in her throat that she began to cry.

"Mother!" she wailed. "I told two lies today! I told Rachel I didn't have her birthstone ring, and I do. It's in my bottom dresser drawer." Mother didn't say anything. She just stroked Becky's hair. Becky whimpered and went on, "Then I told you I hadn't done anything wrong. That was another lie."

"We were just talking about all the things God provides for us," Mother said in her quiet mother voice. "He also provides a way for us to be forgiven. First, we must ask to be forgiven. But there's something else we must do, too."

"I think I know," Becky said. She ran to her room. She got down on her knees beside her bed. "Dear God," she prayed. "Please forgive me for telling two lies today." Then she got the ring and said to her mother, "I have to take this back and tell her I'm sorry, and ask for her forgiveness, too."

Her mother smiled.

"I'll do it right away," Becky said as she put on her coat. "But what if she won't be my best friend, anymore?"

"I think she will," Mother said, "if you let her know that you are really and truly sorry."

Becky opened the door and looked out. The snow made all the bushes look like giant cupcakes with white frosting. Then Becky discovered something. The little voice inside her had changed. Now it was happy little voice. It kept saying: 'God loves me. God loves me. God loves me...'"

## JMore Wally JokesJ

What happened to the wally tap dancer?

She fell in the sink.

Why did the wally drive into the ditch?

Her turning signal was on.

Three wallys were driving down the highway trying to get to Disneyland. They saw a sign that read 'Disneyland Left.' So they went home.

How do you know if a wally sent you a fax?  
There's a stamp on it.

Why did the wally spring out the window?  
To try his new jump suit.

Why did the wally cross the road?  
To get to the middle.

Why did the wally put a chicken in a hot bath?  
So she would lay hard-boiled eggs.

How do you make a wally laugh on a Sunday?  
Tell him a joke on Saturday.

How can you tell a wally on an oil rig?  
He's the one throwing bread to the helicopters.

What did the wally call his pet zebra?  
Spot

Did you hear about the wally who got a boomerang for his birthday?  
He spent the next two days trying to throw the old one away.

How do you keep a wally busy for a whole morning?  
Give him a piece of paper that reads P.T.O. on both sides

# Lessons from David (part 1)

## 1 Samuel 16: 6-13

Samuel has been sent by God to find the king that God had chosen. He was sent to the family of Jesse (David's family).

"...And it came to pass, when they were come, that he (Samuel) looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him.

But **the LORD said** unto Samuel, **Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.**

Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this. Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren; and the spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah."

\*David's brothers looked good. In fact, so good that even Samuel was fooled. He thought that the first boy must have been

the right one. But God wasn't fooled. God can see inside us, and see what's in our heart. We might fool even the best of Christians, our parents, or our pastor, but we can never fool God. He sees our heart and knows if we are right with Him or not. It's not enough to look good on the outside. We need to have a good heart.

**\*Why did God choose David instead of his older brothers??  
Read the 2nd verse again, the answer is there. David had a good heart! That's what God wanted, and still wants from us today.**

**\*How do you choose friends or husband/wife?? Because of how pretty, good-looking, strong, popular, tall or impressive looking? Everyone naturally likes those things, but it's the heart that's **most** important. Do they love God? What are they living for? Are they a good influence on me? Are they kind? Are they unselfish? Do they care about others? Those are better questions to think about, rather than, Are they good looking? Are they brainy? Are they the right weight? Take God's advice that he gave Samuel! But use it on yourself too! Ask yourself the same questions, do I love God? What am I living for? Am I a good influence on others? Am I kind? Am I unselfish? Do I care about others?**

## **God Looks On the Heart**

### **Reviled, He Reviled Not Again**

From This is Victory

Many years ago three boys were playing, a mile outside a large Australian town. The eldest, a lad of twelve, was the leader of the other two, who were slightly younger. Presently, along the road

from the town there came a crippled man, with arms and legs all twisted and gnarled by disease. As soon as this eldest lad spied him he was so un-British (I quote his own words) as to suggest to the others that they should mock him.

“Say, boys, let’s have a lark with him and make fun of him!”

This boy was the idol of the other two, and whatever he said was law to them. So when the crippled with two sticks painfully dragged himself by them, they jeered at his calamity, and mocked his helplessness. Never a word escaped the man’s lips as he crawled past them.

Boy-like, it was quickly “out of sight, out of mind,” and they continued their play without another thought of their victim. Playtime over, they made for their homes, and out heroic hero,” wanting his mother for some triviality, began calling, “Mother, where are you?” No answer came, as she sought her from room to room. At last, bursting open the drawing-room door with “I say mother, I’ve looked----!” he found her sitting talking to this very crippled man whom he’d been so cruelly mocking half-an-hour before.

“Here’s a nice go; he’s told her what I did to him,” raced quickly through his mind. He pulled up sharp, and only wished the earth would open and take him down quickly.

“Well, Henry,” said his mother, seeing him staring from one to the other with quick changing color, “have you forgotten all your manners? Come and say, how d’ye do, to our friend.”

Henry felt and looked a sheep, and unwillingly sidled up to the strange visitor. But the latter, with a winning smile greeted him, and then slowly raising one of his crippled hands, he laid it on the lad’s curly head, and said: “God bless you, Henry, my lad; God bless you! May you grow up a true and faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. Again I say, God bless you! God bless you, Henry!”

And then the crippled hand came down from the lad’s head.

Finally, with a warm greeting to the mother, he hobbled slowly and painfully from the room. As soon as the front door was closed the boy rushed to his mother, and in a torrent of words, asked:

“Mother, who is he? Tell me, quick! Where has he come from? Why is he crippled? What has he come for? –quick, mother!”

“Why, Henry, my boy, I thought you knew. If you will just calm your strange excitement I’ll tell you, so sit down.”

Not he; he knelt quickly and impatiently at his mother’s knee and drank in these words of hers about the strange visitor.

“Henry, when you were a little chap, only about four years old, you were playing near our river (the very spot, it turned out, from which he had come), and, seeing a big butterfly, you chased it till it took you to the edge of the river, and then as it settled on a clump of reeds you made a grab at it and fell headlong into one of the deep fish pools of icy cold water. That gentleman was passing, saw you fall in, and, just as he was, he dived in after you and managed to reach you in time. He saved your little life, but rheumatic fever set in, and after a fearful struggle between life and death, he pulled through, but he has been a hopeless and helpless cripple ever since, my boy. That’s what he did for you, Henry; he saved your life, and ruined his own for your sake!”

And now it was the mother’s turn to be amazed, for the boy had fallen like a stone on the rug at her feet, and was sobbing as if his heart would break.

“Why, Henry! Henry! What is the matter? What has happened? Tell, my boy? Tell me!” she pleaded. At last through his sobs came the words:

“Oh, mother! Mother! I’ve been—mocking—and insulting—the—one—the—one—who risked his life—for---for---me. Will he---can he---ever forgive---me? Oh, mother, it’s broken—my heart! I’ve insulted my best friend!”

You who read this story of Henry B. McCartney’s boyhood, does it fit you, and your conduct towards a perfectly gracious Savior Who went farther than risking His life, Who gave His life for you when you were helpless, to rescue you, and still, to-day, bears the marks of that rescue even now—five clear wounds in all? How have you treated Him these years? Mocked him? Put him to an open shame, while you have gone the pace in sin? Scorned his great love? Perhaps you have never seen it in this light before.

# The Puddle

There was a puddle in our driveway, really rather small.

Just some left-over raindrops from the last shower's fall.

But then black clouds came over and some drips began to drop

--- Just a little splatter, then a loud and angry 'plop'

That little puddle soon filled up, and then it overflowed.

It ran straight down the driveway to the garden down below.

Lies are like that puddle---the first lie might be small.

But then, so you don't get found out, you have to tell some more...

Then that puddle of lies gets bigger and it just grows

And grows 'till you can't remember all the lies, and the puddle overflows.

So next time you are tempted to tell a lie, just stop!

Don't start fill up that puddle, Not one little drop!

-Jenni-Lyne Harris.—

## Words to Think About...

I got a Christmas card from a poor boy in the Philippines that I sponsor. This is what he wrote in the card...

“Let’s find joy in simple things and see beauty in every situation. When times are difficult, let’s remember that God does not leave us nor forsake us.

Sadhu Sundar Singh was a Sikh from India who got saved. Years later he went to America to preach. He was shocked at some things he saw (Unfortunately it’s true in most ‘Christian’ countries). These are some of the things he said to the people....

“I found a stone in a pool among the Himalayas. It was hollow, and when I broke it I found the center completely dry. So it is here in the West. You have lain for centuries in the water of Christianity, but it has never penetrated to your hearts.”

“In the day of judgment the non-Christians of the East will get a lighter sentence than you of the West. They have never heard the Gospel. You have had your chance and thrown it away.”

Some thoughts from gardening...

“I can’t make a seed grow into a plant. Only God can make a seed grow. But I can plant a seed in the ground and I can water it every day. But I can’t make it grow. But if I do plants some seeds and water them, some will grow.

I can’t save people. I can’t ‘make’ them get saved. Only God can save people. But I can plant the seed of God’s Word in their heart, and I can water it with much prayer. But I can’t make it grow. But if I do plant the seed of God’s Word and water them with prayer, some will grow!!

## Put a Shine On

### From *More Tales Worth Telling*

A great revival came to a church not long ago. It began with a little servant-maid. She was in the senior class of the Sunday school and one of her favorite hymns was one the little folk used to sing: Jesus bids us **shine** with a clear pure **light**, Like a little candle **shining** in the night.

She worked in a large house where there were many servants, and it was her task to clean many boots. The **shine** she put on those boots! The wearers could see their faces in them. But the cook, who was head of all the servants, said to her one day, “I think you waste your time putting on a **shine** like that. Your master doesn’t notice it.” “Oh but, cook,” said little Polly, “I don’t put this **shine** on only for master, I do it for Jesus.” And away she started

with her little hymn once more, Jesus bids us **shine**. Now, Cook was a good woman, and Polly's example set her thinking." "I'll do my work for Jesus too," she said. "I'll put my **shine** on."

The result simply was better cooking than that house had ever known. It made a sensation and both master and mistress noticed something. The young mistress made a special visit to the kitchen to thank the cook, and the cook told her about Polly and "the **shine**." The young lady was a teacher in the very Sunday School Polly attended, and she began to do her teaching for Jesus in real earnest. She made up her mind to "put a **shine** on" all her teaching work. So great was the success that resulted from her efforts that the minister heard about it and came to see her class. He, too, was told about Polly's "**shining** for Jesus" and its influence on the cooking, and was so cheered and encouraged that he tried to "put a **shine** on" his preaching. Such sermons had never been heard before in the old church, and a great revival spread over the church and district. So even "blacking boots" may have a lot to do with religion. You may be in a small corner, but if you "**shine**" the **light** will travel far.

# No Parking Allowed

from *Please Give A Devotion For Young People*

by Amy Bolding

“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 3:14

One day I was in a big hurry to shop and left my car too long without putting a coin in the parking meter. When I remembered the time I hurried back to the car but as I stood across the street waiting for the light to change I saw the policewoman place a ticket on my windshield.

For some reason shopping lost its appeal. I did not mind paying the dollar fine so much as I minded getting my first ticket of any kind.

In all cities and towns there are signs prohibiting parking in certain places. If one thinks, “I can get by this one time,” he is likely to be disappointed. Perhaps he may succeed in stopping at the wrong place for some time then suddenly be surprised with a ticket.

I know a lady who for months parked by a curb plainly marked red. She would be late for church and the spot looked so handy and tempting. She felt that the police would not be working much on Sunday anyway. Then one Sunday she went out to find her lovely new car had the back fender crushed. The red mark was to leave room for people to turn. She had paid the price for being in the wrong place. So it is with life. There are places young people must not park. Some places it is better never to drive by.

Paul said he was pressing toward a mark, and a prize. Youth should set a goal toward which to press and then try to keep from parking along the way.

Youth must not park in school. One must constantly be pressing forward to learn more, to make better grades, to learn to live with those around. School's a place of activity, for those who are active; so never plan to park there any longer than the time needed to get an education.

Dr. Courts Redford said in a message: "It is not your ability that counts, but your availability—not what you have, but what you do with what you have."

Never be guilty of parking by the old excuse, "I haven't any friends to pull wires for me." So what! If you want an office or a position go out and work for it. It is nice sometimes to have a friend say a good word but it is wonderful to just keep pressing on toward the prize you hope to reach. That is usually the quickest way to reach the goal.

Never stop and park by a disappointment. All people have to face some disappointments. Be like the boy on the trampoline, the harder you fall the higher you will bounce. If you are disappointed in some friend, or teacher, or leader, if you have been disappointed because something you felt you should have received went to another, don't park and cry; press on.

Never allow yourself to park by some handicap, some disadvantage you think you possess. The world would be a poor place indeed if all the people with handicaps just parked and said, "Life, drive on without me."

Think of the countless blessings Helen Keller has brought to the world. She had more than a few handicaps. Annie Johnson Flint was handicapped by crippling arthritis; yet her poems are some of the sweetest and most cheerful. I am so glad she did not park by her troubles.

No one ever parks by troubles, sorrows, handicaps, or disappointments, without paying a price.

Do you know some young people park by high tempers? They fail to get their way about something in their

class or club or even their church; so they park by anger and waste their potential for accomplishing something.

I once knew a young man who lost his sweetheart to a more handsome fellow. He was only nineteen and if he had driven on could soon have found a new sweetheart. He parked by his anger at losing his girl. He dropped out of his church; he left his school, and wasted three precious years of his life. As a result his friends soon left him absolutely alone. They pressed on to finish school, to get good jobs; most of them forgot why he had parked.

It is very tempting to park by failure. If you fail a course in school, that is no excuse for dropping out; try again. If you apply for a job and fail to get it, that is no excuse for not working; there are other jobs—perhaps better for you than the one you wanted.

Tennyson once wrote: ‘Men may rise on stepping stones of their dead selves to higher things.’

Let the past be past; press on to reach your goal.

One summer we were taking a trip across the country to see the city of Quebec in Canada. The rain seemed to come down in sheets part of every day. We only had a short time for our trip and had planned a certain number of miles to travel each day. On the border of Canada we rented a motel room and decided we would give up our project and next morning turn back toward home. In other words, we parked because of rain.

Next morning we half-heartedly got in the car and started to drive out of the motel parking lot.

“Let’s go right back across that bridge and on to the place we started,” I said.

“Would you?” my husband asked. “We can cut out some of the things we planned to see on the way home.”

So we went on to the old French city and had a wonderful day. The sun started shining before the day was over.

So goes life. If you refuse to park, but keep pressing on, the sun usually comes out in time to make life happy and useful. No one really parks free in life. We were once in Mexico. ‘How lucky to find a parking place right by the market,’ we thought.

A boy came up and said, ‘I’ll watch your car for a quarter.’ He was given the money and the car was all intact and safe when we returned. We really just thought he needed the money. Later some friends told us of parking in a city like that and refusing to pay the quarter. When they returned their car had lost all four hub caps.

We could write a book on the things people might be tempted to park by: jealousy, envy, sorrow and even laziness.

When your life seems pointless and uninteresting ask yourself the question, “Am I parking by something?”

### **\*My Creed\***

This is my creed: To do some good,  
To bear my ills without complaining,  
To press on as a brave man should  
For honors that are worth the gaining;  
To seek no profits where I may,  
By winning them, bring grief to others;  
To do some service day by day  
In helping on my toiling brothers.

This is my creed: To close my eyes  
To little faults of those around me;  
To strive to be when each day dies  
Some better than the morning found me;  
To ask for no unearned applause,  
To cross no river until I reach it;

To see the merit of the cause  
Before I follow those who preach it.

This is my creed: To try to shun  
The sloughs in which the foolish wallow;  
To lead where I may be the one  
Whom weaker men should choose to follow.  
To keep my standards always high,  
To find my task and always to do it;  
This is my creed—I wish that I  
Could learn to shape my action to it.

---S. E. Kiser

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## Hero Story

### **John Bunyan: Prisoner with a Pen**

“Mommy, Mommy! Help me! He’s going to get me! Come quickly!”

For the third night in a row, little John’s cries pierced the quiet night. His mother quickly lighted a candle, slid on her slippers, and hurried to comfort the fitful sleeper.

“John, John, wake up.” She gently shook him as she sat on the edge of his bed. ‘It’s only a dream, son wake up,’ she said, kissing his forehead.

“Mommy,” he panted, wide-eyed and frightened, “the jugglers were chasing me, and the puppets were laughing because I couldn’t run fast enough!”

“John Bunyan,” his mother said sternly, “I knew I shouldn’t have taken you to the fair. Too much excitement always stirs up your imagination.”

Truly the Stourbridge Fair was the most exciting event of the year. Those living in the small village of Elstow looked forward to it all year long. For three weeks in September, merchants and entertainers from all over England--and from

other countries as well—set up stalls to sell goods of every kind.

Farmers and their wives bought tools, furniture, cloth, and other household items. But children had the best time watching jugglers, puppet shows, performing animals, and musicians. For a ha'penny they could buy delicious sweets like gingerbread and peppermint drops. Children with extra money could choose from a delightful array of toys such as dolls, drums, hobby horses, popguns, kites, hoops, shuttlecocks, and much more.

An imaginative child like John Bunyan would always remember the sights and sounds of the fair.

Except for his visits to the fair, John's boyhood was uneventful. He lived in a small village in the countryside and learned to read and write at a school for poor farmers' children. When he was still young, he left school to become a tinker like his father, repairing pots and pans and other metal utensils.

Though John didn't have much schooling, he heard and read many tales and saw plays of medieval romance. These experiences filled his mind with visions of knights, dragons, and giants.

He also heard many sermons and read the Bible. But the Bible reading in the Bunyan family did not indicate that the family had a saving faith in Jesus Christ. The Bunyans were religious people and members of the Church of England. But John was not saved during his boyhood in the church his family attended.

In 1644 when John was sixteen, his secure and happy home life came to an end. In June his mother died, in July his younger sister Margaret died, and in November he was mustered--that is drafted--into the army of Lord Oliver Cromwell.

For two years England had been fighting a civil war. The

English Parliament (like our Congress) had many disagreements with the king, Charles 1. They wanted the king to change many things in government. Parliament usually argued with the king about money--harsh taxes and foolish spending. Many members of Parliament were also concerned with the religious condition of the country. One member, Oliver Cromwell, was a leader of the Puritans (those who wanted to purify the Church of England). He especially wanted freedom for personal religion in England. The Church of England controlled every church in the land and the ways in which the worship services were conducted. Cromwell believed that groups of Christians should be able to follow their own methods of worship. In 1642 the House of Commons, one of the houses of Parliament, appointed Oliver Cromwell to help command an army to fight the king.

When John Bunyan came into Cromwell's army, he had many new experiences. Besides gathering his soldiers around campfires at night for prayer meeting, Cromwell made sure his army had good treatment and regular pay, but he exercised strict discipline. Any soldier who swore had to pay a fine. A soldier who got drunk was put in stocks. If he deserted, he was whipped. All this discipline made good soldiers, and Cromwell was able to win many battles, ultimately defeating the king.

Although John Bunyan didn't become a Christian in the army, the prayers and actions of Christian soldiers greatly impressed him. One particular event made a lasting impression on him. One day John was pulled out of his regular troop and ordered to fight at a nearby town. While he was away, a friend who took his place was shot and killed. Later when John became a preacher, he gave God the glory for sparing his life.

After leaving the army, John married a girl whose name we

do not know. She was an orphan, and she and John were so poor that they didn't have one dish or spoon between them. But his wife did bring to their little home two Christian books, which they read together over and over.

John had not been a particularly naughty boy or a wicked young man, but he had been lively and sometimes mischievous, and his imagination often ran away with him. As he became a man, John was confused and restless in his search for God. The people of Elstow knew him as a carefree fellow who spent Sundays with rowdy friends and whose main vice was his constant swearing. But since he was pleasant and hard working, most folks liked him. However, in his soul John was tormented with doubts and guilt. He thought that God was a terrible Judge who would send him to hell for all his frivolous ways. He had nightmares, just as he had experienced as a boy, dreaming he was in everlasting fire. Often, though, to shake off these fears, he became even rowdier in his attempts to forget about God.

One day John was walking to the town of Bedford on business. It was a beautiful day—gardens and orchards in bloom, a little river flowing under stone bridges. As he walked past the churches, stores, and thatched-roof cottages, he saw a group of women, their housework done, and sitting in the sun spinning and talking. They weren't talking about families or neighbors but about religion.

"I'll join them," John thought, "for I like a good conversation, and I know something of religion too."

Yet when he listened for a moment, he heard them speaking of a joyous Christian life, of a loving God, and of Jesus as their friend! John's casual friendliness turned to deep interest and concern.

"Please," he begged them, "how can I know this great happiness that you have? My religion fills me only with

dread and terror.” Explaining that they knew little of theology, the good women urged him to speak to their pastor, John Gifford, at St. John’s Church.

He left directly to find this man they called pastor, the leader of a little church, not part of the Church of England. But knowing himself to be only an ignorant tinker, he hesitated to speak to so godly a gentleman. “Sir,” he said after having introduced himself, “can God save so wretched a sinner as I?”

“As you?” the preacher smiled. ‘Let me tell you what I was before God saved me. Then you’ll worry no more about your own sins.’.....

Part 2 (next month)

# Who am I?

\*I have no mum or dad, and I was never born like you were. I could be one of two people. Who am I??

\*I’ve had a trip like none other—inside an animal!!

Who am I??

\*I disobeyed God and as a result I died a very strange death. Who am I??

\*I risked my life in order to try and save my relatives from being killed. Who am I??

\*I wanted to do things my own way instead of God’s, but my brother obeyed God. My brother was

accepted by God and I wasn't. I couldn't handle that, so I got rid of my brother. Who am I??

\*I wanted to see this Jesus I had heard about. But in order to see him, I had to use my imagination and my arms and legs!! Who am I??

\*I'm a naughty rebel! But thank God, I've realized it and am sorry. I'm on my way home to apologize and start over again. I hope my father will forgive me, though I sure don't deserve it. Who am I??

\*I stood up for what's right and lost my head as a result!! Who am I??

\*I'm a religious man, but I've just been told that being religious isn't enough to go to Heaven. I have to be born again. I'm glad I got told that. Who am I??

\*I was a very proud man! I was in love with myself so much that I expected people to bow down to me when I walked past. But unfortunately my pride killed me! Who am I??

\*My favorite saying is, "I doubt it!!" Can you guess who I am?? I doubt it!!

\*It's not fair! I've been kidnapped and taken far away from my Mum and Dad. And now I have to be a servant. My mistress' husband has got a horrible disease. I could be glad because of what he did to

me, but instead I'm going to tell him how he can get better. Who am I??

## Missionary Story

Brother Andrew Learns to Trust God....even for cake!! (Part 1)

Introduction; Brother Andrew is a Dutchman who became a Christian. Later he was used by God to smuggle Bibles into communist countries. But this is a story of some experiences he had before that. Right now he is on his way to a Bible School.

....This time I had no trouble finding my way to the address I wanted. I walked up the hill carrying my suitcase until I came to Number 10 Prince Albert Road. The building itself was a tall two-story house on the corner. A low stone wall ran around the property. I could see the stump-ends of iron railings in it, melted for scrap during the war no doubt. Over the entrance on a wooden archway were the words "Have Faith in God.'

This I knew was the man purpose of the two-year course at Glasgow: to help the student learn all he could about the nature of faith. To learn from books. To learn from others. To learn from his own encounters. With fresh enthusiasm I walked under the arch and up the white pebbled path to the door.

My knock was answered by Kees. How good it was to look into that solid Dutch face again. After we had slapped one another's shoulders many times, he seized my bag and ushered me to my top-floor room. He introduced me to my three roommates, showed

me the fire escape, and pointed out where the rest of the forty-five young people slept—men in one of the attached houses, women in the other.”And ne’er the twain shall met,” Kees said. “We’re hardly supposed to talk to the girls. The only time we can see them is at dinner.”

Kees sat with me through the formal introduction to the director, Stewart Dinnen. “The real purpose of this training.” Mr. Dinnen told me, “is to teach our students that they can trust God to what He has said He would do. We don’t go from here into the traditional missionary fields, but into new territory. Our graduates are on their own. They cannot be effective if they are afraid, or if they doubt that God really means what He says in His Word. So here we teach not so much ideas as trusting. I hope that this is what you are looking for in a school, Andrew.’

”Yes, sir. Exactly.”

“As for finances—you know of course, Andy, that we charge no tuition. That’s because we have no paid staff. The teachers, the London people, myself—none of us receives a salary. Room and board and other physical costs for the year come to only ninety pounds—a little over two hundred and fifty dollars. It’s as low as this because the students do the cooking, cleaning, everything, themselves. But we do request the ninety pounds in advance. Now I understand you will not be able to do this.”

“No, sir.”

“Well, it’s also possible to pay in installments, thirty pounds at the start of each session. But for your sake and for ours we like to insist that the installments be paid on time.”

“Yes, sir. I altogether agree.”

I did agree too. This was going to be my first experiment in trusting God for the material needs of life. I had the thirty pounds I had

brought from Holland for the first semesters' fee. After that I really looked forward to seeing how God was going to supply the money. During the first few weeks, however, something kept happening that bothered me. At mealtimes the students would frequently discuss inadequate funds. Sometimes after a whole night in prayer for a certain need, half of the request would be granted, or three-quarters. If an old people's home, for example, where students conducted services, needed ten blankets, the students would perhaps receive enough to buy them six. The Bible said that we were workers in God's vineyard. Was this the way the Lord of the vineyard paid his hired men?

One night I went out for a long, solitary walk. On several occasions students had warned me not to "go in Patrick." Patrick was the slum sitting at the bottom of our hill. It was, they said, the home of addicts, drunks, thieves, even murderers, and walking its streets was unsafe. And yet this area drew me now as if it had something to say.

All around me were the dirty gray streets of Patrick. Litter blew across the cobblestones. The September air was already raw. Before I had gone five blocks I was accosted two times by beggars. I gave them all the money I had in my pockets and watched as they moved without pretense toward the nearest pub. I knew that these drifters, begging in the streets of the Glasgow slums would receive a better income than the missionaries-in-training at the top of the hill.

I could not understand why this bothered me so. Was I greedy? I didn't think so. We had always been poor, and I had never worried about it. What was it then?

And suddenly, walking back up the hill toward the school, I had my answer.

The question was not one of money at all. What I was worried about was a relationship.

At the chocolate factory I trusted Mr. Ringers to pay me in full and on time. Surely I said to myself, if an ordinary factory worker could be financially secure, so could one of God's workers.

I turned through the gate at the school. Above me was the reminder "Have Faith in God."

That was it! It wasn't that I needed the security of a certain amount of money; it was that I needed the security of a relationship.

I walked up the crunchy pebble walk feeling more and more certain that I was on the verge of something exciting. The school was asleep and quiet. I tiptoed upstairs and sat by the bedroom window looking out over Glasgow. If I were going to give my life as a servant of the King, I had to know that King. What was He like? In what way could I trust Him? In the same way I trusted a set of impersonal laws? Or could I trust Him as a living leader, as a very present commander in battle? The question was central. Because if He were a King in name only, I would rather go back to the chocolate factory. I would remain a Christian, but I would know that my religion was only a set of principles, excellent and to be followed, but hardly demanding devotion.

Suppose on the other hand that I were to discover God to be a Person, in the sense that He communicated and cared and loved and led. That was something quite different. That was the kind of King I would follow into any battle.

And somehow, sitting there in the moonlight that September night in Glasgow, I knew that my probing into God's nature was going to begin with this issue of money. That night I knelt in front of the window and made a covenant with Him.

"Lord," I said, "I need to know if I can trust You in practical things. I

thank You for letting me earn the fees for the first semester. I ask You now to supply the rest of the fees. If I have to be so much as a day late in paying, I shall know that I am supposed to go back to the chocolate factory.”

It was a childish prayer, petulant and demanding. But then I was still a child in the Christian life. The remarkable thing is that God honored my prayer. But not without first testing me in some rather amusing ways.

The first semester sped by. Mornings we spent in the classrooms studying systematic theology, homiletics, world religions, linguistics—the type of courses taught in any seminary. In the afternoon we worked at practical skills; bricklaying, plumbing, carpentry, first aid, tropical hygiene, motor repair. For several weeks all of us, girls as well as boys, worked at the Ford factory in London, learning how to take a car apart and put it together. In addition to these standard trades, we were taught to build huts out of palm fronds and how to make mud jars that would hold water. And meanwhile we took turns in the kitchen and the laundry and the garden. No one was exempt. One of the students was a doctor, a German woman, and I used to watch her scouring garbage pails as though she were preparing a room for surgery.

The weeks passed so fast that soon it came time for me to head out on the first of several training trips in evangelism. “You’re going to like this, Andy,” said Mr. Dine. “It’s an exercise in trust. The rules are simple. Each student on your team is given a one-pound banknote. With that you go on a missionary tour through Scotland. You’re expected to pay your own transportation, your own lodging, your food, any advertising you want to do, the renting of halls, providing refreshments---“

“All on a one-pound note?”

“Worse than that. When you get back to school after four weeks, you’re expected to pay back the pound!”

I laughed. “Sounds like we’ll be passing the hat all the time.”

“Oh, you’re not allowed to take up collections! Never. You’re not to mention money at your meetings. All of your needs have got to be provided without any manipulation on your part—or the experiment is a failure.”

I was a member of a team of five boys. Later when I tried to reconstruct where our funds came from during those four weeks, it was hard to. It seemed that what we needed was always just there. Sometimes a letter would arrive from one of the boys’ parents with a little money. Sometimes we would get a check in the mail from a church we had visited days or weeks earlier. The notes that came with these gifts were always interesting. “I know you don’t need money or would have mentioned it,” someone would write. “But God just wouldn’t let me get to sleep tonight until I had put this in an envelope for you.”

Contributions frequently came in the form of produce. In one little town in the highlands of Scotland we were given six hundred eggs. We had eggs for breakfast, eggs for lunch, and eggs as hors d’oeuvres before a dinner of eggs with an egg-white meringue dessert. It was weeks before we could look a chicken in the eye. But money or produce, we stuck fast to two rules: we never mentioned a need aloud, and we gave away a tithe of whatever came to us as soon as we got it—within twenty-four hours if possible.

Another team that set out from school at the same time we did, was not so strict about tithing. They set aside their ten percent all right, but they didn’t give it away immediately, “in case we run into an

emergency.” Of course they had emergencies! So did we, every day. But they ended their month owing money to hotels, lecture halls, and markets all over Scotland, while we came back to school almost ten pounds ahead. Fast as we could give money away, God was always swifter, and we ended with money to send to the WEC work overseas.

There were times before the end of the tour, however, when it looked as though the experiment was failing. One weekend we were holding meetings in Edinburgh. We had attracted a large group of young people the first day and were casting about for a way to get them to come back the next. Suddenly without consulting anyone, one of the team members stood up and made an announcement.

“Before the meeting tomorrow evening,” he said, we’d like you all to have tea with us here. Four o’clock. How many think they can make it?’

A couple dozen hands went up, and we were committed. At first, instead of being delighted, the rest of us were horrified. All of us knew that we had no tea, no cake, no bread and butter, and exactly five cups. Nor did we have money to buy these things: our last penny had gone to rent the hall. This was going to be a real test of God’s care.

And for a while it looked as though He was going to provide everything through the young people themselves. After the meeting several of them came forward and said they would like to help. One offered milk; another, half a pound of tea; another, sugar. One girl even offered to bring dishes. Our tea was rapidly taking shape. But there was one thing still missing—the cake. Without cake, these Scottish boys and girls wouldn’t consider tea tea.

So that night in our evening prayer time, we put the matter before

God. “Lord, we’ve got ourselves into a spot. From somewhere we’ve got to get a cake. Will You help us?”

That night as we rolled up in our blankets on the floor of the hall, we played guessing games: How was God going to give us that cake? Among the five of us, we guessed everything imaginable—or so we thought.

Morning arrived. We half expected a heavenly messenger to come to our door bearing a cake. But no one came. The morning mail arrived. We ripped open the two letters, hoping for money. There was none. A woman from a nearby church came by to see if she could help. “Cake,” was on the top of all our tongues, but we swallowed the word and shook our heads.

“Everything,” we assured her, “is in God’s hands.”

The tea had been announced for four o’clock in the afternoon. At three the tables were set, but still we had no cake. Three-thirty came. We put on water to boil. Three-forty-five.

And then the doorbell rang.

All of us together ran to the big front entrance, and there was the postman. In his hand was a large box.

“Hello, lads,” said the postman. “Got something for you that feels like a food package.” He handed the box to one of the boys. “The delivery day is over, actually,” he said, “but I hate to leave a perishable package overnight.”

We thanked him profusely, and the minute he closed the door the boy solemnly handed me the box. “It’s for you, Andrew. From a Mrs. William Hopkins in London.”

I took the package and carefully unwrapped it. Off came the twine. Off came the brown outside paper. Inside, there was no note—only a large white box. Deep in my soul I knew that I could afford the drama of lifting the lid slowly. As I did, there in perfect condition, to

be admired by five sets of wondering eyes, was an enormous, glistening, moist, chocolate cake!!

# Mystery Story

## **The Secret of the Caves.**

### Chapter 2---The Sandal-Wood Box

For several moments the two boys were breathless with excitement, then Raymond whistled.

“This is a discovery, Nigel, and if you hadn't fallen over we should never have made it. I've never heard anything about this, and I shouldn't think anyone else knows about it. Shall we go down?”

“Of course! I say, Raymond, this must be the way that Black Mike came. This must be the way through.”

‘But this leads downwards, and the Manor is above us,’ Raymond pointed out. “Go easy, Nigel,” he warned, as Nigel lowered himself into the opening. “This trap can't have been opened for ages, and the air may be unbreathable.”

They slowly descended the iron ladder, and after counting ten rungs Nigel felt the solid rock beneath him. The air was dank and rather heavy, but it was breathable, and they looked eagerly around them.

They were at the end of a rocky passage which led into the heart of the great cliff. After listening for a few moments, they moved carefully forward. For about a dozen yards the passage was level, and then it rose steadily. It was not of even width, and the boys guessed that it was a natural crack in the rock that had been widened by hand where necessary.

“I'm sure this is the way Black Mike came,” Nigel said, as they struggled upward. “We must be above the level of that other

cave now. All this darkness makes one feel a bit creepy, doesn't it?"

Raymond was feeling that way too, but they plodded steadily on, and suddenly the walls of rock fell away as they stepped into another cave. It was larger than the middle cave, and as Raymond swept the torch round they saw a dark opening on the far side. Again the boys listened intently, but no sound came from the far opening, and they advanced into the cave.

Raymond swept his light round again, and a gasp of astonishment came from the two boys as the beam of light revealed a number of boxes that were stacked in one corner of the cave.

"Boxes!" Nigel gasped. "Not Black Mike's contraband, surely, after more than a hundred years?" He followed his brother across the cave, and they examined the boxes carefully. They were all about a foot square, strongly made, and securely locked. Nigel counted eight of them.

"They're not Black Mike's boxes,' Raymond said slowly. "The locks are all new, and the boxes don't look very old. I wonder whose they are, and what is in them."

"I don't know, but it's strange, finding them here like this. Someone else must know about this cave, after all. Let's have a look in that other passage, Raymond, and see where it leads." They hurried across to the dark opening, and found that it was nothing more than a deep recess of the cave. Clamped to the back of the recess was another iron ladder, and Raymond flashed his light upwards. The ladder extended beyond the beam of light, and, counting the steps as they ascended, the boys climbed upwards. At the twenty-fifth step the ladder came to an end.

Another passage lay before them, but they had gone only about a dozen yards when their way was barred by a solid wall. It was

made of stone, and they pushed hard at all the slabs within their reach, but none would yield even an inch.

“It’s no good!” Raymond said at last. “If there’s a secret opening it may take us hours to find it, and we shall be cut off from the sea cave if we don’t go back soon.”

They descended the long ladder thoughtfully. Nigel felt very disappointed, because he had been so sure that there was a way through into the Manor.

“Do you think there is a secret opening in that wall, Raymond?” he asked.

“I do, and I think someone must be using it fairly often. Look at the rungs of this ladder. They’re bright and shiny, and only use would keep them right.”

Nigel’s drooping spirits rose again as he saw that Raymond was right and he almost fell off the ladder in his excitement.

“You’re right, and it helps to prove that those boxes have not been in the cave for years and years. But why would anyone put them there, and what on earth do they contain? Let’s have another look at them before we go back.”

Once again they examined the boxes, and the corner in which they were stacked. As Nigel probed around he saw a narrow ledge of rock behind and above the boxes, and on the ledge was a small, flat box. He took it down, and they examined it carefully. The box was made of sandal-wood and was beautifully carved. There was a little catch on one side, and when Nigel pressed it the lid flew open. The boys looked in eagerly, and were disappointed to find that the box was empty. Nigel looked at it thoughtfully as he turned it over in his hand.

“I wonder,” he mused, ‘if there would be any harm in our taking this away with us.’

“Why should we?” asked Raymond. “It’s not our property, and an empty box is of no use to us.”

“Well, whose property is it?” argued Nigel. “I’m not intending to keep it, of course. We can bring it back with us when we come again. I was thinking of taking it, just as proof of our story. We’ve made a wonderful discovery this afternoon, and I’ve been wondering if we ought not to report it to the police. I can’t help thinking that there’s something fishy about this business.’

“It’s queer,” agreed Raymond, “but we’ve no proof that anything dishonest is going on. If this cave is connected with the Manor, the occupants have every right to use it as storehouse.”

“But surely,” Nigel argued, “they will have storehouses—cellars and the like—that are much easier to get at than this place.”

“That’s true enough,” his brother agreed slowly. “Well, I don’t know what to make of it! I think we’d better tell Bessie the story before we mention it to anyone else.”

“All right. And we’ll take this box along for her to see. There can be no harm in that.”

“Slip it in your pocket then, and come along. This torch is pegging out, and I’m sure the tide will be coming in again now.” Snapping the box shut, Nigel slipped it into his pocket, and they hurried down the long passage to the middle cave.

Chapter 3---Mr. Langton Behaves Strangely  
(next month)