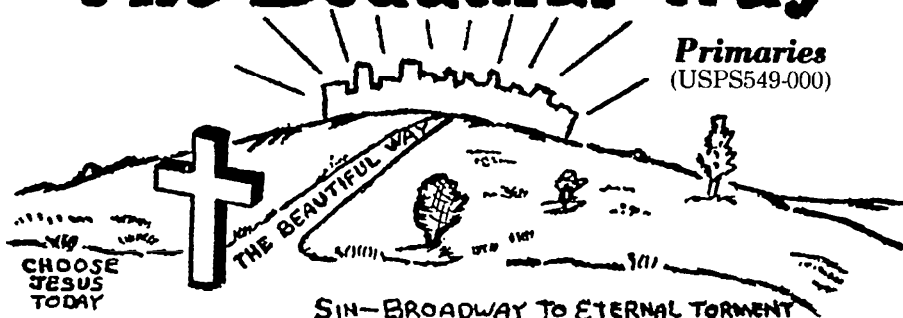


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Part 14

Jan. 2

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 10:1-14

Jesus told His disciples this story:

If someone enters the sheepfold any way except through the door, he is a thief and a robber. He that enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. The sheep know his voice and follow him. They do not know the voice of a stranger, but will flee from him. The false shepherd wants to do the sheep harm. When the wolf comes to harm the sheep, the false shepherd will run away because he does not love the sheep.

The people wanted to know what Jesus meant. Was He really talking about sheep? The sheep are Christians, or people who live for the Lord. They make up the Church, or the sheepfold. The shepherds are ministers. God calls men to be ministers. These are true shepherds and care for the people. Sometimes people become ministers without going through the door, or without the Lord calling them. Perhaps they think preaching is an easy way to make money. Or maybe they want others to be their followers. Jesus wants His people to follow true shepherds.

Memory Verse: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
Psalm 23:1.

Israel and the Sheep

Lance was visiting his grandparents in New Mexico. They lived on a farm and had lots of sheep. It was fun watching the sheep. There were a number of baby lambs among the herd. They were especially cute.

"Tomorrow we will have the shearer come to shear the sheep," Grandfather said.

"What does it mean to *shear* the sheep?" Lance asked.

"Do you see all this wool?" Grandfather asked as he buried his fingers in the thick covering of one of the sheep. "We will have a man come out to shave off this wool. There is a company that will buy the wool."

"But the sheep will look naked," Lance said.

"It will soon be getting warm weather anyway," Grandfather replied, "and the sheep will be thankful to be rid of all that heavy coat."

The next day Lance was up bright and early to watch the man come to shear the sheep. The man drove up in a big red truck and began to set up his shearing equipment. The man walked up to the sheep, but the sheep began to move away from him.

"I guess I had better get Israel out here," Grandfather said as he went to the barn to call the boy who cared for the sheep. Soon Israel came out and walked over to the sheep. He went to one of the larger sheep and fed it some oats. He then began to walk toward the pen where the man had his shearing equipment ready. The large sheep followed Israel and all the other sheep followed along, too. Israel walked right up to the man and the sheep was right with him. All the sheep walked into the pen and

Grandfather closed the gate.

"Look how the sheep follow Israel!" Lance exclaimed.

"It's kind of funny that Israel is the only one they would follow, isn't it?" Lance later commented to his grandfather.

"It's not really so strange," said Grandfather. "Israel takes good care of the sheep. He feeds them every day and he has protected them from danger many times. The sheep know they can trust Israel."

"Mother said that we are like sheep and that Jesus is like our shepherd," Lance said. "I guess we follow Him because He takes good care of us."

—Sandra Whitson

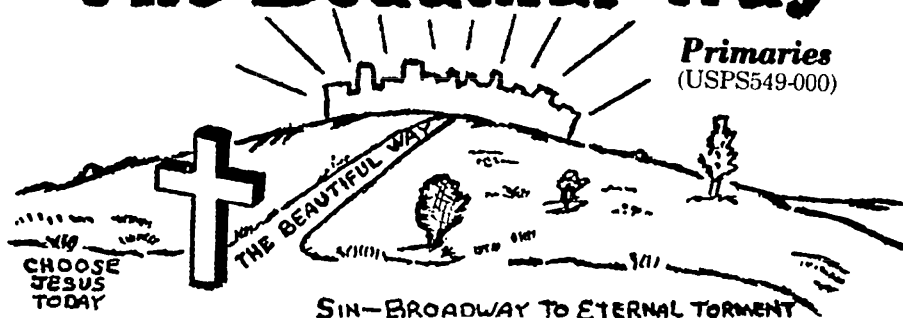


Questions:

1. How does the true shepherd enter the sheepfold?
2. Does the false shepherd care for the sheep? What will he do when the wolf comes?
3. Who are the sheep?
4. Who are the shepherds?

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Part 15

Jan. 9

THE SOWER

Mark 4:3-20

A man went out to sow some seeds. Some of the seeds fell beside the tilled ground. The birds flew down and got them before they ever began to grow. Some of the seeds fell on stony ground. These seeds soon began to grow into plants, but their roots were not deep and they could not get water from the ground. When the sun got hot the plants died. Other seeds fell among thorns, but the thorns choked these plants and they died. Other seeds fell on the good, soft earth. These seeds grew into healthy plants and produced much fruit.

Jesus likened the Word of God to seeds and men's hearts to the ground. Some people hear the Word of God, but the devil immediately causes them to disbelieve it. Some people are like the stony ground. They hear God's Word and believe it, but when others make fun of them they give up their love for the Lord. Others' hearts are like the ground with thorns. They love God, but they love worldly things better. But some people's hearts are like the good ground. They believe God's Word, read the Bible, pray much, and keep their hearts soft.

Memory Verse: The seed is the word of God. Lk. 8:11⁵.

Watching the Seeds

"I want to plant my flower seeds in this pretty, yellow pot," said Jamie as she held up the new shiny pot.

"All right, and Jody can plant his seeds in the blue pot," Mother said as she dropped a few small pebbles into the blue pot.

The children watched as Mother put some soft, black dirt into the pots.

"I like to smell that dirt," Jody said. "It smells just like the dirt smells in the woods when I rake the top leaves aside."

"That is where Daddy got this dirt," Mother replied. "Woods' dirt is good for flower seeds to grow in."

Mother gave each of the children some seeds to put into the pots.

"We must check the dirt every few days to make sure it doesn't get too dry," Mother told the children.

The children watched their pots during the following weeks. When the soil would begin to get too dry, they would add water. Soon the plants began to sprout.

"Look, Mother," Jody remarked one day, "I have two different kinds of flowers coming up in mine."

Mother looked at Jody's flowers.

"This plant here is not a flower," Mother said as she pointed to the largest plant. "It is a weed. We must pull it up, but we must be very careful not to uproot the flowers."

Mother gently pulled up the little weed as she held her fingers on the soil around it.

"Our hearts are like the soil," Mother said. "In order for the flowers of goodness to grow, we must keep them tender toward the voice of God. We must not let weeds or bad desires grow up.

And we must read the Bible to keep our hearts from drying out."

"I want to watch my heart as closely as I watch my plant," said Jamie, "so it will bloom for God." —S.W.

WE THANK YOU

We thank Thee, kind Father,
For Thy care and Thy love,
And for this food
From thy bounty above.

When a boy or girl has a coating on his tongue that shows that his body is sick. When you use your tongue to say unkind words, that tells that your heart is sick.

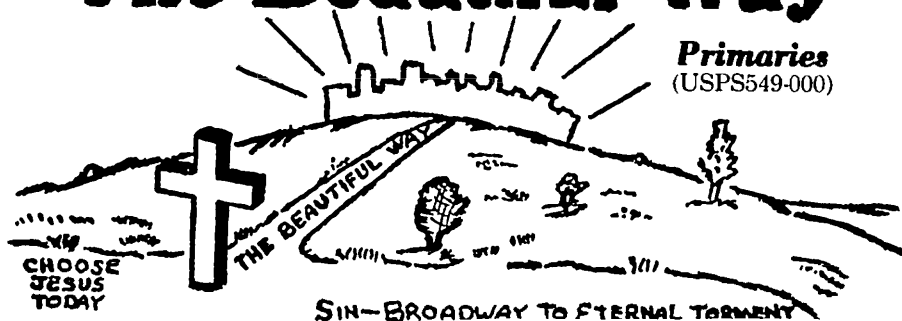


Questions:

1. What ate some of the seed the man planted?
2. What did the thorns do to the plants that grew up among them?
3. What did Jesus say the seeds are?
4. Who takes the Word of God out of a person's heart?
5. How can a person keep his heart soft toward God?

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Part 16

Jan. 16

THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT

Matthew 18:23-35

There was a king who had all his servants brought before him. One of his servants owed him ten thousand talents. Since the servant could not pay the money, the king ordered him, his wife, and children all to be sold. "Please, have patience with me and I will pay thee all that I owe," the servant begged. The king felt sorry for the man. He forgave the servant all the debt.

That same servant went to one of his fellow servants who owed him some money. He took the man by the throat and said, "Pay me that thou owest!" The man cried, "Please have patience with me and I will pay thee all." But the king's servant wanted his money right then. He would not forgive the man. He had his fellow servant cast into prison.

When the king found out what had happened, he called to him his servant. "You are a wicked man! I forgave you the large debt you owed me, but you would not forgive your fellow servant of this small debt. Since I had pity on you, you should have had pity on others." The man was thrown into prison.

Jesus wants us to forgive others as He forgave us.

Memory Verse: Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. Lk. 6:37b.

The Broken Cup

Jenny and Sara were playing house out under the shade trees. Sara had some new dishes to play with. They were real china!

"Be very careful with the dishes," Sara reminded Jenny.

"I will," Jenny replied. "These are such pretty dishes."

The girls pretended they were having a tea party with their dolls. Sara gave her doll Gertrude a sip of tea. When she set the cup down, it was very near the edge of the table.

"Gertrude needs to wipe her mouth," Sara said. "Would you please help her, Jenny."

Jenny picked up her napkin and reached over to wipe Gertrude's mouth. Just as she did, her arm touched the cup just enough to knock it off the table. Crack!! the handle broke off the cup and a large chip broke off the rim.

"Oh, my!" exclaimed Sara, "the cup is ruined!"

"Oh, Sara, I am so very sorry. I did not mean to knock it off," Jenny said mournfully.

"You were careless, Jenny. You cannot play with my dishes again."

Jenny was sad. She was sorry she had broken the cup. Now Sara was angry at her.

That night when it was time for supper, Mother asked, "Will you set the table for me, Sara dear?"

Sara was glad to help Mother. She put the forks to the left of each plate and the knife and spoon to the right.

"Oh, Sara, will you please get the salad dressing from the refrigerator door?" Mother asked.

Sara got the dressing and was about to hand it to her mother when it slipped

from her hand. The bottle broke and the salad dressing ran across the floor.

"Oh, Mother, I am sorry!" Sara pleaded. "The bottle was slippery."

"I know you didn't mean to. We must be more careful next time, though," Mother said. "Get a rag and wipe up the dressing after I pick up the glass."

Sara was so glad that her mother had forgiven her. Immediately she thought of what had happened earlier that day when Jenny had broken her cup. She had not forgiven Jenny.

"I will call Jenny and tell her that I forgive her," Sara thought. "I will tell her that I am sorry I acted so unkindly." And she did.

—Sandra Whitson

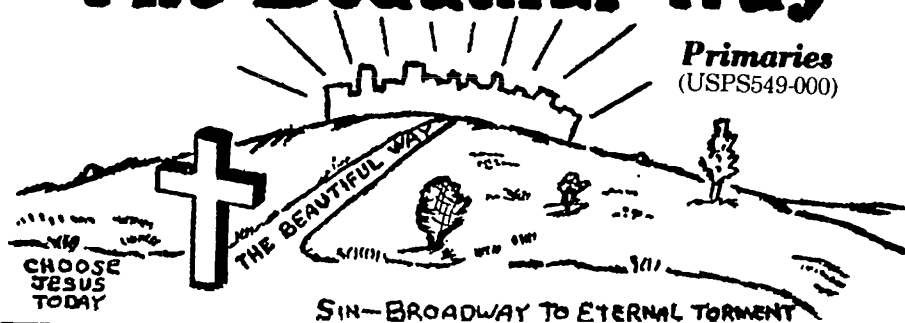


Questions:

1. Could the servant pay the king the money he owed him?
2. Did the king forgive him of the debt?
3. What did the servant do to a fellow-servant who owed him money?
4. Was the king displeased with his servant?
5. What did the king have done to the unmerciful servant?

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Part 17

Jan. 23

THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

Luke 18:9-14

Two men went up into the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee. Pharisees were Jews who separated themselves from others and obeyed the Mosaic law strictly. The other man was a publican, or a tax collector. The Pharisee stood boldly and proudly to pray. He prayed, "I thank you God that I am not wicked like other men—such as this publican over here. I fast twice every week and I pay my tithes faithfully." God knew this man had pride in his heart because he thought he was better than others.

The publican felt unworthy to pray to God. He stood over by himself. He did not even feel worthy enough to lift his eyes up to heaven. Instead he looked down. He felt so unfit before God that he beat on his chest. "Oh, God," he cried, "be merciful to me a sinner!" God was pleased with the publican's prayer. The publican asked God for mercy because he knew he was undeserving.

God wants us to realize how little we are. He does not want us to feel that we are better than others. God wants us to realize that we have no goodness of our own.

Memory Verse: Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. James 4:10.

Doing What is Expected

Carrie and Dawn were helping their mother clean the house. There were some women from the church who were going to drop by to see Mother.

Carrie dusted the furniture and Dawn put all the books in place.

Soon the company began to arrive. There were Sis. Brown and Sis. Tyler. Sis. Dover brought her two little girls Dorie and Katie. It was nice sitting with Mother and the grown up ladies. Mother served punch and she had Carrie and Dawn pass out cookies. Then the girls sat down beside the women.

Ding-dong! Mother went to the door. There were Sis. Hatcher and Sis. Bryar.

"Do come in ladies!" Mother said with a smile. "We are just having some punch and cookies."

The older ladies smiled and walked into the room where the other ladies and girls were sitting. There were no vacant seats. The ladies stood for just a moment looking about the room as Mother put away their coats.

Carrie nudged Dawn. "Let's give them our seats," she whispered softly. Then she spoke to the ladies. "You may have our seats. We will be glad to sit on the carpet."

"That is very kind of you," Mrs. Hatcher said, as the girls got up to sit on the floor.

"Maybe Mother will give us something special for giving the ladies our seats," whispered Dawn.

"Why?" asked Carrie. "We are suppose to give our seats to older people. I should think Mother would be very ashamed of us if we did not."

We should not expect special thanks or favors because we do the things we are suppose to do.

—S.W.

Fixing Up Mistakes

Jason forgot all about the neighbor's new driveway. He raced right into the fresh cement. He was frightened and very sorry when he saw that he had made footprints in the cement. But no one had seen him. If he didn't tell about it no one would know who did it.

But Jason loved Jesus and wanted to please Him. Mr. Rogers, the neighbor, was in his garage. Jason walked up bravely and said, "Mr. Rogers, I'm sorry, but I made some tracks in the new cement."

The man walked out with Jason and looked at the prints.

"I'm so glad you told me right away, for now I can fix it. The men left some cement here for me to spread on the driveway while it is fresh. If you had waited, the cement would have gotten hard and then it would always have been a bad spot."

Jason smiled happily. "I'll help you carry the pail of cement out there," he volunteered.

As they worked, fixing up the bad spots, Jason said, "I think that's the way with all mistakes. It's easier to fix them up at first, than to leave them until they get old."

That's a good, true thought to remember. Don't let your mistakes harden. Fix them up at once.

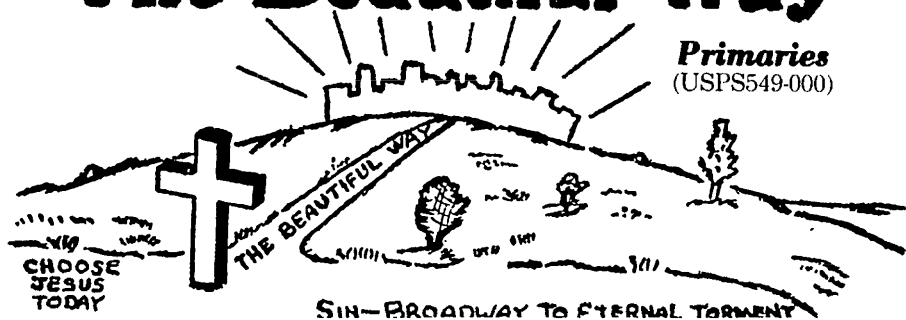
—Sel.

Questions:

1. What two men went into the temple to pray?
2. How did the Pharisee pray?
3. Did the Pharisee think he was better than the publican?
4. What did the publican pray?
5. With which man was God pleased?

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Part 18

Jan. 30

THE UNFAITHFUL SERVANT

Luke 12:35-48

Jesus told His disciples that some day He would return to take all the Christians to heaven. He told His disciples not to grow tired while waiting.

Suppose a certain ruler left a man in charge of his household while he went on a trip. The ruler was gone for a long time. The man left in charge began to think: "My master has been gone for longer than I would have thought. I will run this house the way I want to." He begins to beat the servants under him. He spends his time in eating, drinking, and just having a good time. The master returns when least expected. He finds the servant left in charge spending his time in foolish ways and treating others unfairly. The master takes away his authority and beats him with many stripes. Had the servant been just and faithful, his master would have greatly rewarded him.

Jesus wants us to spend our time in telling others about Him. If we are faithful servants, God will reward us. If we are unfaithful servants, God will punish us with the wicked.

Memory Verse: Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. Matt. 25:13.

Jeremy Does Wrong

"Children," the teacher said, "I need to be out of the room for a few minutes. I'm not sure just how long I will be out—perhaps five or ten minutes. Stay in your desks and do not talk. I expect you to be very quiet."

The teacher left the room. At the beginning the children were very quiet. Five minutes had passed and still the teacher did not return. Some of the children were growing restless. Jeremy thought, "She will probably not return for fifteen or twenty minutes." He shot a paper wad at one of the girls.

"Ouch!" the girl exclaimed. "Who did that?"

"Jeremy did!" said Tim pointing his finger at Jeremy.

"You be quiet, Tim," said Jeremy. Just then Jeremy shot a paper wad and hit Tim on the ear.

"Ouch!" said Tim. "That stung, Jeremy. Don't do that again."

"You can't stop me," replied Jeremy. Jeremy stood up and went over to Tim's desk. "You can't tell me what to do. Make me stop if you think you're big enough."

"Jeremy!" the teacher called from the door. She had entered the room without Jeremy's seeing her. Jeremy turned quickly with his eyes wide. He darted back to his desk.

"What are you doing out of your desk, Jeremy?" she asked.

Jeremy was scared. He knew he had disobeyed. "Why were you at Tim's desk?" she asked.

"I just was," he replied, looking downcast.

"Since you disobeyed, you must stay after school this afternoon and write the

sentence, 'I will not talk or get out of my desk when the teacher is away' fifty times."

Jeremy was sorry that he had disobeyed the teacher. At first he had been good, but then he had begun to think that she would not return for quite awhile. He had acted as though she would never return. But the teacher returned when Jeremy was not looking for her.

We should not be like Jeremy. Jesus has told us to watch for His return. We must always do right and live for the Lord, for He may come at a time when we least expect Him. —S.W.

The Worm

How does a worm get inside an apple? Perhaps you think the worm burrows from the outside in. Scientists have discovered that the worm comes from the inside out. But how does he get in there?

Simple! An insect lays an egg in the apple blossom. Later the worm hatches in the heart of the apple, then eats his way out.

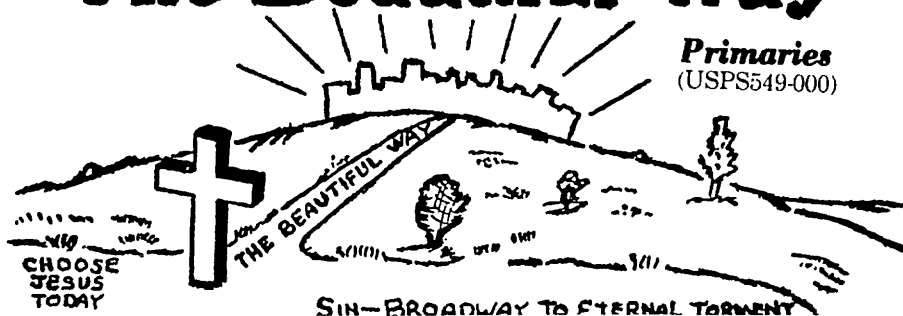
Sin, like the worm, begins in the heart and then works out through a person's thoughts, words, and actions. For this reason, David once wrote, "Create in me a clean heart, O God," Psalm 51:10.

Questions:

1. Who did the man leave in charge of his household?
2. What did the man left in charge begin to do?
3. What did the master do to the unfaithful servant?
4. What will God do with us if we are unfaithful?
5. When is Jesus coming back?

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Part 19

Feb. 6

THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND

Luke 6:31-45; Matt. 7:15

Jesus told the disciples: "Watch out for wolves in sheep's clothing." Wolves in sheep's clothing? How could a wolf get into a sheepskin? "I mean beware of men who appear to be Christians but only want to lead you astray." Jesus told his disciples that everyone who calls himself a Christian is not really a Christian. Some men may stand up and preach but tell the people false things. Jesus warned His people not to follow these men. "Not everyone that says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but **he that doeth the will of God**," Jesus said. "You shall know a Christian by the fruits he bears." What kind of fruit does a Christian have? Kindness, patience, gentleness, meekness, longsuffering, love, faith, joy, and such like.

If you were blind would you ask a blind man to lead you around? What would happen? Jesus said you would both fall into a ditch. If you follow someone who teaches false ideas, both of you will follow the path to hell. Jesus wants us to listen to holy men of God. They will lead us in the right way.

Memory Verse: Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing. Matt. 7:15a.

Butch Takes Bad Advice

This was Butch's first day at Lee Elementary School. He had transferred from a school across town. Everything was new and different to him.

The day was long, but finally school was out. It was time to go home. Butch was to ride the bus home.

"Mrs. Baker, do you know which bus I am suppose to ride?" Butch asked his teacher.

"Since you live on South Park Road, I believe you will ride the same bus as Amy," she replied. "Amy, which bus do you ride?"

"No. 88," Amy replied.

"That's the bus you should ride, too, Butch," Mrs. Baker told him.

Butch went outside to wait for the bus. Rex and Tommy were also waiting for their bus.

"Hey, Butch," called Rex, "come over here and wait with us."

"I have to find the bus line for bus 88," Butch said.

"No, you aren't suppose to ride that bus," Rex said. "You will ride my bus, No. 64. It goes right by your house because we passed it this morning."

"But Mrs. Baker said to ride No. 88."

"Phooey! She doesn't know," replied Rex. "She probably never rode a bus in her life. You're suppose to ride No. 64. Come on; we can play while we wait for the bus."

Butch walked reluctantly over to the boys. Soon the three boys were absorbed in play. Then the buses arrived. Butch boarded bus No. 64 with the other boys. They were having a good time. The bus stopped to let children off here and there until no one was left on the bus except the bus driver and Butch.

"Where do you live?" the bus driver asked Butch.

"On South Park Road," he replied.

"You are on the wrong bus. You should have ridden bus 88."

Tears came into Butch's eyes. He was on the wrong bus because he had listened to the boys instead of the teacher.

"I will take you home, today," the driver said, "but tomorrow you must ride the right bus."

After that Butch always listened to what his teacher told him. —S.W.

"Strangers and Pilgrims"

The Bible says that Christians are "strangers and pilgrims" on earth. Read 1 Peter 2:11.

This means that our real home is in Heaven, to which place we are going. It means also that we do not speak and act like sinners do—those who do not love Jesus. And we do not expect to stay here.

When Jesus comes again, He will take us with Him, if we are "**strangers and pilgrims**" here. We will not be strangers in Heaven, because it is our real home.

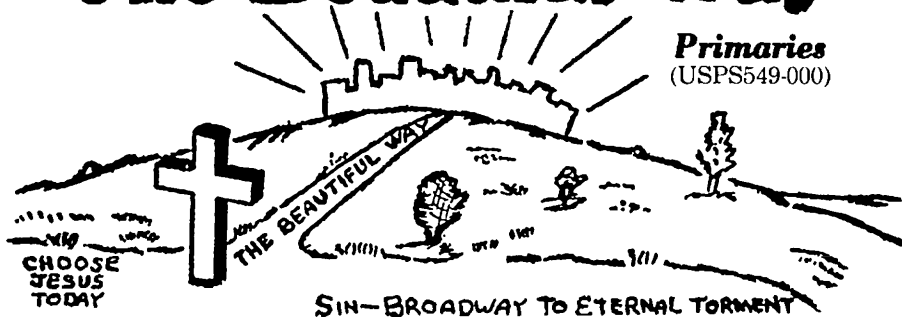
—Selected

Questions:

1. What did Jesus tell His disciples to beware of?
2. Are there people who will lead others away from God?
3. What kind of *fruit* do Christians have?
4. If a blind man led you around, what would happen to both of you?
5. Will God's ministers lead you in the right way?

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Part 20

Feb. 13

THE WEDDING FEAST

Matthew 22:1-13

Jesus said: "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who planned a marriage for his son. He invited all his friends and close acquaintances. He sent his servants out to invite the people. The people ignored the invitation. The feast was ready, but no guests had come. The king sent his servants out again to ask the people to come. Some of the people laughed and went on about their business. The farmers continued farming and the business men continued their buying and selling. Some of the people who were invited actually took the servants and killed them. This angered the king and he had those murderers killed. The king said to his other servants, 'The wedding is now ready and those that were invited were not worthy to come. Go out along the highways and invite everyone you see.' The servants did as they were told and the wedding was filled with guests."

God sent His son to the Jews to offer them salvation, but they turned it away and killed Jesus. God then offered salvation to everyone, not only the Jews. God wants His kingdom to be filled.

Memory Verse: Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15b.

God Included All

Jeffrey was looking through his new Bible Story Book Aunt Emma had given to him for his birthday. He liked many of the pictures—the one of Daniel standing fearlessly among the lions, and the one of brave David, though just a boy, fighting the giant with only a sling. One picture, though, made Jeffrey sad. It was a picture of Jesus hanging on the cross. When he looked at this pictures, he almost cried.

"Mom, why did the people nail Jesus to the cross?" he asked. "He never did anything bad, did He?"

"No, son, Jesus never did anything bad," Mother explained. "In fact, He told the people how they could be happy and free from sin. He wanted all men to be saved and go to heaven. But the people would not listen. His own people the Jews are the ones who crucified Him."

"You mean his own people didn't believe in Him?"

"No, many of them thought He was a deceiver. The Jews had been used to keeping rules and ordinances and Jesus told them that their hearts could be made pure and there would be no reason to perform all these rituals. They obeyed the laws God had given to Moses, but they did not really understand the meaning of the laws or they would have believed in Jesus," Mother said.

"I guess Jesus was really sad that the Jews didn't believe in Him, wasn't He?" Jeffrey said.

"Yes, but He did not let that hinder His plan of salvation," Mother said. "Since the Jews would not accept Jesus as their Savior, God made it possible for everyone—all nationalities—to come to Him. His chosen people would no longer

be one race but would be any and everyone who would believe in Him."

"I'm glad that Jesus made it that way," Jeffrey said smiling, "because we are not Jews, but we are Christians."

"God loves everyone and wants everyone to come to Him. We should indeed be thankful that God included us in salvation," Mother said.

—S.W.

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Whose Money was Lost?

Tommy started to Sunday school with two nickels. Mother had given them to him. One was for the Lord. One was for himself.

On the way, Tommy lost one nickel. He said, "There goes the Lord's nickel!" He should have said, "There goes my nickel."

When Tommy got to Sunday school, he did not put any money in the offering. He kept *his* nickel in his pocket. Tommy did wrong.

We should be glad to give God the *best* that we have. We should be glad to give God *all* that we have. We should never rob God of what belongs to Him.

—Selected

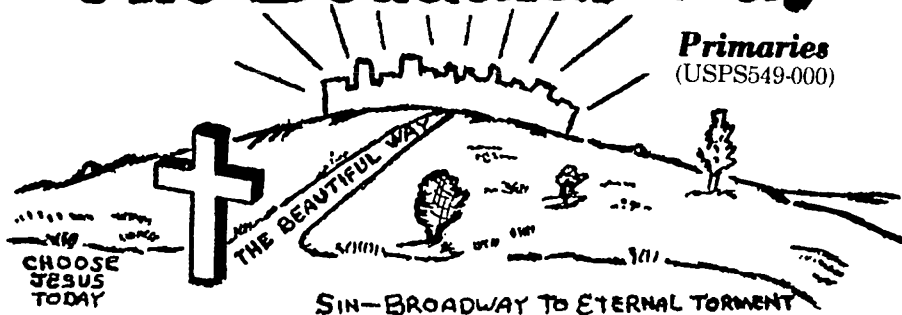
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Questions:

1. To what did the king invite his friends and acquaintances?
2. Did the people go to the wedding?
3. What did some of the people do to the servants?
4. Did the king then send out his servants to invite others?
5. Who does God invite to be saved?

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Part 21

Feb. 20

THE PERSISTENT WIDOW

Luke 18:1-11

In a certain city there was a judge who was not afraid of any man. One day a widow came to him and cried, "Please take vengeance on my enemy. I have been greatly wronged and I want justice." At first the judge just listened but did not do anything about her request. Day after day she came to him and made the same request. Finally the judge said, "I will give her what she wants lest I grow weary by her coming to me day after day."

Jesus told this story to His disciples. He said we should be like the widow when we want something from God. At first God may not give us what we ask for, but He has long patience. If we do not give up, God will give us our request if it is good for us. If we ask our mother or father for bread, they will not give us a stone. If we ask them for fish, they will not give us a snake. Neither will God give us bad things when we ask for good things. He loves us better than our parents do. If your prayer is not answered immediately, do not give up. Keep praying and believing in God.

Memory Verse: Pray without ceasing. 1 Thess. 5:17

The Persistent Baby

Cindy was sitting on the couch looking at her picture book. Suddenly she heard a wail coming from the baby's room. "Oh, my, David is awake! There will be no peace till Mommy feeds him."

Mother was very busy mopping the kitchen floor. Mommy heard Davie's cries but she needed to finish mopping the floor before she took care of him. His cries grew louder and louder, or at least that's the way it sounded to Cindy.

"Cindy," Mother called from the kitchen. "Please go to the baby and put his pacifier in his mouth."

Cindy went to Davie's bed. She stuck his pacifier into his mouth, but he pushed it out with his tongue, and his cries became nearly deafening.

"Don't you know Mommy is busy right now?" Cindy tried to explain to the baby. "She will feed you as soon as she is finished."

The baby, of course, did not understand what Cindy said and he continued to cry.

At last Mother came into the room with a bottle of milk in her hand. She gently lifted Davie into her arms and put the bottle into his mouth. Immediately his cries hushed and he was contented.

"That baby is selfish," Cindy said. "He will not let you finish mopping the floor. He should not keep crying and crying once you've heard him."

"He does not know that I heard him, Cindy dear," Mother explained. "He wants to make sure that I know he wants his bottle. He is only a baby and does not understand that I need to finish my work and that I will feed him then."

"Mrs. Jacobs said that is the way we

are sometimes when we pray," Cindy said. "She said that God hears us from the first, but sometimes He waits to answer our prayer. We do not understand why He is waiting, but just think that He doesn't hear us."

"That is right, Cindy. God does hear us when we pray but sometimes we must wait for the answer. We should not give up faith in God, but we should learn to have patience. God loves us dearly and will answer our prayers if they are best for us."

—Sandra Whitson

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Why God Keeps Us

Lucy was four years old. She was a dear little girl and Mother loved her very much.

One day the minister at the church took little Lucy up in his arms. He looked at her and asked, "Are you worth anything?"

Lucy replied, "No."

Then the minister asked, "Why does your mother keep you if you are not worth anything?"

Little Lucy smiled and said, "Oh, I can tell you why Mother keeps me! Mother loves me!"

We do not know why God loves us, but He does love us. How thankful we are for His wonderful love! Because He loves us, we love Him. The Bible says, "We love him, because he *first* loved us."

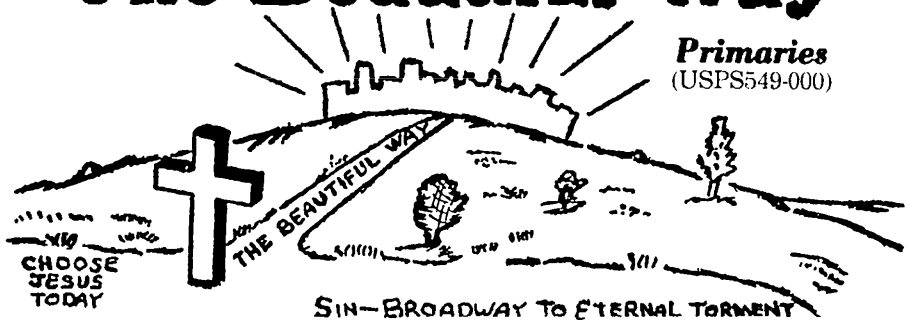
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Questions:

1. What did the widow want the judge to do?
2. Did he finally do what she asked?
3. Why did the judge give her her request?
4. Will God give good things to us?

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Part 22

Feb. 27

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Matthew 25:14-30

A householder decided to go on a long journey. He called his servants to him and gave each of them some money. It was his money but he left it in their keeping and they were to use it in whatever way they thought would be wise. The householder was gone a long time and when he returned, he called his servants to him. "What did you do with the talents I left in your keeping?" he asked them. The man who had been given five talents said, "I traded with others and gained five more talents." "Very good," the householder said. "You have been faithful over a little, I will make you ruler over many." The servant who received two talents said, "I have gained two more talents." The landowner was happy with this servant, also. The third man said: "I knew you were a careful man, so I went and hid the one talent you gave me." The householder was angry. "You could have tried to do something with the talent! I will take your talent and give it to the servant who has ten." He cast this man away from him.

The Lord wants us to use our money and talents to bring Him glory. How can *you* work for Jesus?

Memory Verse: Ye are the light of the world. Mt. 5:15a.

Singing for Jesus

Janet and Cathy were sisters. Janet was seven years old and Cathy was five. Their mother loved God and taught them to also love Him. Mother taught the girls beautiful songs like "Jesus Loves Me," "Let the Sun Shine In," "The Family of God," and many others. Each night the girls sang with their mother in their farmhouse.

One evening a man happened to be passing the house and he heard beautiful singing coming from the windows. He went to the house and knocked.

"Hello," he said when their mother came to the door. "I am Jim Brasher. I am the director of several nursing homes in this county. I heard some beautiful young voices, and I wondered if perhaps I could find out who was doing that singing."

"My two little girls are singing to me as they do each night," Mother said. "You may come in and listen to them if you would like."

Mr. Brasher took off his hat and entered the house. The little girls sang several songs to him and he enjoyed it very much.

"Could you girls come to sing for some of the elderly people in the nursing homes I run?" he asked. "It would brighten their day to hear you sing."

The girls felt happy to know Mr. Brasher liked to hear them sing, but the girls were rather shy.

"I have never sung before anyone but Mother," Cathy said, "but if people want to hear the songs about Jesus I will sing to them."

Mr. Brasher smiled. "I'm sure they would be delighted to hear the songs about Jesus. And you, Janet, will you go and sing, too?"

"No, I don't want to," she said shyly. "They might laugh."

"I don't think anyone would laugh," Mr. Brasher said. "God gave you beautiful voices and I know He would be pleased for you to sing songs about Him."

But neither Mr. Brasher nor Mother could persuade Janet to go and sing. Cathy went to sing at the nursing homes the next Sunday. The elderly people who could not get out enjoyed very much her singing and her happy face. She went to the nursing homes every week or so, and continued to do so as she grew older. She brought joy to the people and through her singing some of them learned to love God as their Savior.

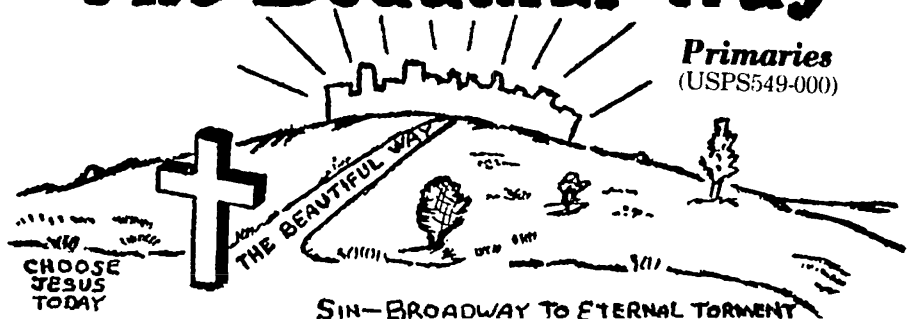
—Sandra Whitson



Questions:

1. What did the householder give to each of his servants?
2. How many talents did the servant with five talents gain? the one with two?
3. What did the servant with one talent do with his talent? What did the householder do to this servant?
4. How does God want us to use our talents?
5. Name some talents God gives us.

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Part 23

March 6

THE TARES

Matt. 13:24-43

A man went out to sow good seed in his field. While he slept an enemy came along and sowed tares, or weeds in the field. When the young plants sprang up and began to bear fruit, the weeds also sprang up. The servants came to their master and said, "Didn't you sow good seed in the field? Where did all these weeds come from?" "An enemy has done this," the master replied. "Do you want us to pull up the tares?" "No, because you might pull the good plants with them," the Master said. "Let them grow together until the time of harvest. At that time I will say to the reapers, 'Gather ye first the tares, and tie them into bundles. Then cast them into the fire, but gather the wheat into my barns.'"

The man who sowed the good seed is Jesus. The good seed are Christians. The tares are the wicked people. The field is the world. The enemy that sowed the tares is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world. The reapers are the angels. As the tares were burned in the fire, so shall the wicked be burned at the end of the world. But the righteous shall be gathered to heaven.

Memory Verse: The angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just. Mt. 13:49b.

God Can Keep Us

"Daddy, Terry said that somebody broke into their house while they were away for the weekend and stole some of their things," Rodney told his dad. "They tore up some of the things in their house, too."

"That is really bad," Dad replied. "People can't go away from their homes anymore without somebody doing them harm, it seems."

"Why are there so many wicked people around?" Rodney asked.

"Men who don't let Christ rule their hearts and lives grow selfish and care less and less about other people. If God is not in their hearts the devil is and the devil causes people to grow very wicked."

"But, Daddy, why doesn't God take the wicked people out of the world?" Rodney asked. "It doesn't seem right for them to do bad things to good people."

"Well, Rodney, God wants to save the wicked people," Dad explained. "Sometimes very wicked people have repented of their wrongdoings and given their lives to God. If God had taken them out while they were doing their wicked deeds their souls would not be saved."

"But won't wicked people cause other people to be bad?"

"Sometimes that is true, Rodney," Dad said. "But if we really love God He will protect us from being overcome with evil. Jesus prayed to God concerning righteous people: 'I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.' God has power for us to live good lives right amid all the wickedness that goes on."

"I'm glad that God has more power than the devil," Rodney said. "I'm glad

I'm on the most powerful side."

"That is right," said Dad. "God is very powerful and will take care of the righteous people." —S.W.

I Can and I Can't

"I Can" is a little chap,
He is both brave and true.
He makes success with everything
That he tries to do.

"I Will" is "I Can's" brother,
And they always do agree;
Everybody likes them,
For they are nice chaps, you see.

"I Can't" lives in another house,
He's as shiftless as can be.
He never does a single thing
That anyone can see.

"I Won't" is "I Can't's" brother,
But people pass them by,
For nobody even likes them,
And they never seem to try.

—Selected

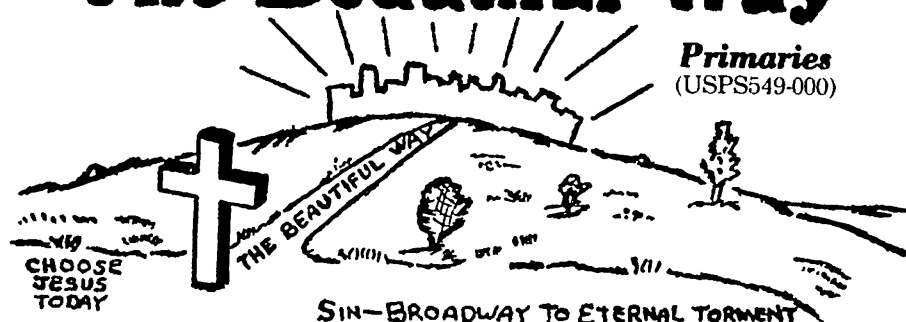
"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

Questions:

1. What did an enemy plant among the good seed?
2. Did the man have his servants pull up the tares at first? When would the tares be gathered?
3. What were the good seed? What were the bad seed?
4. What will happen to the wicked at the end of the world?
5. What will happen to the Christians?

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Part 24

March 13

THE RICH FOOL

Luke 12:16-31

There was a man whose fields and gardens produced good crops. He thought, "I do not have enough room to store all my crops. What shall I do?" After thinking about it, he said, "I know. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones. There I will store all my crops. I will have enough food for years." The man was pleased that he would not have to work so hard in the coming years. He said to his soul, "Soul, you have goods stored for many years. Just enjoy yourself. Eat, drink, and have a lot of fun." But God was looking down on the man. He saw that he had forgotten about God. God said, "Thou art a fool. This very night I will call for your soul. Then whose will all those riches be?"

God does not want us to think so much about riches. He said that He will supply all our needs. God said, "Do not worry about where your food and clothing will come from. I will see that you have clothes to wear and food to eat. But be more concerned with the kingdom of heaven." Our greatest treasures should be in heaven and not on earth.

Memory Verse: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Luke 12:34.

Rich, but Poor

"Mother, did you hear about Mr. Adams?" Todd asked as he rushed into the kitchen where Mother was preparing supper.

"No, what happened?" Mother asked.

"He was found dead in his house this morning. The police think he had been dead for over a week."

"Oh, my, that's terrible that he died all alone," Mother said. "What did he die from?"

"They think he starved to death," Todd said with a grimace.

"Really? But he had plenty of money."

"I know. The police said there was a cash box open on the table beside the bed. There were stacks of fifty and hundred-dollar bills in it. Apparently he had been counting it. But, Mother, with all that money his cupboards were bare."

"I am so sorry to hear this," Mother said, "but different ones have tried to help him. A few months back your daddy and I took a fruit basket and went to visit him. We talked to him about the Lord. He said that he had done all right all his life without God and he didn't see that he needed Him now. He felt that the only reason we wanted to visit him was to try to get his money, so he never even let us past his door."

"Does he have any children?" Todd asked.

"No, he has no relatives that I know of," Mother replied.

"What will happen to his house and all his money?"

"I suppose the house will be auctioned and all the money will go to the state. I doubt that he left his money to any charities," Mother said.

"He is like the story of the rich man in the Bible who forgot God, isn't he?" Todd asked.

"Yes, that is right. His riches were no good to him when it came time to die."

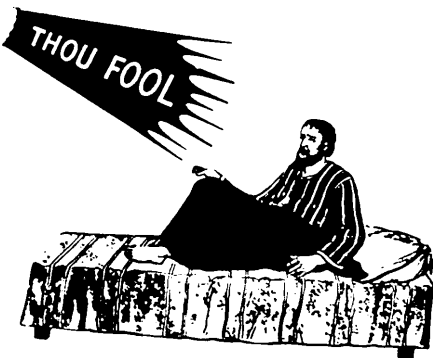
—S.W.

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"Trust and obey,
For there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus,
But to trust and obey."

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Jesus was always courteous. He loved even the unlovely people. Can you do that? Jesus was filled with pity for others. Courteous people are polite and very thoughtful of others.

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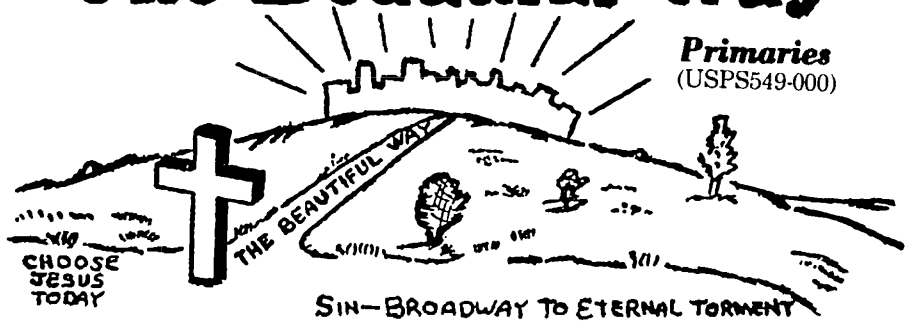


Questions:

1. What was the rich man going to do with his barns?
2. What did the man plan to do for the following years?
3. Who was looking down on the man?
4. Why was God displeased?
5. Will God supply our needs?

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Part 25

March 20

THE LOST SON

Luke 15:11-24

A certain man had two sons. The younger son said, "Father, give me everything that belongs to me." The father divided all his money and other valuables between his two boys. The younger son took his money and left. He went far from home and spent his money in just having a good time. He wasted his money until he had none left. There was a famine in that land and the son could hardly get food to eat. He got a job feeding hogs, and would gladly have eaten the pigs' feed. He was poor, lonely, and miserable. "I will leave this disgusting place and return to my father. I will say, 'Father, I am not fit to be called your son. I have done badly. Please, make me as one of your servants.'" He started for home. As he began to near his home, his father saw him coming and ran to meet him.

When we do wrong, we are like the son who ran away. God is like our father. It makes God unhappy if we turn away from Him. If we come back to God and ask Him to forgive us, He will gladly do so.

Memory Verse: Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us. 1 John 3:1a.

The Stolen Four-Dollars

Jerry and Marvin were sitting down on an old log between the garage and a tree. The boys were finishing off some candy bars. Somehow the candy didn't taste as good as it had at first.

"I feel kind of sick," Jerry said, as he wrapped the last of his candy bar in the wrapper.

"Yea, I don't feel so good myself," Marvin said with a pale face. "I don't think I want any more of this candy." With that remark he handed the bag he was clutching to Jerry.

Jerry set the bag down between them. The boys sat with their elbows on their knees and their chins in their hands.

"Marvin, I wish we hadn't taken that money," said Jerry with a deep sigh.

"Yea, so do I. The man at the candy store will never take the candy back, so we have no way to get the money back."

"I guess we can't ever pay back the four-dollars we took, can we?" remarked Jerry.

"Marvin! Jerry!" the boys heard Mom's voice calling them.

Slowly the boys got to their feet, leaving the bag of candy sitting on the log.

The boys washed their hands and sat down at the table. Mother noticed they were unusually quiet. The boys took very little food on their plates.

"Well, aren't you going to eat?" Mother asked. "Jerry, you haven't touched your food, and Marvin you're just nibbling. What's wrong?"

Both boys put their heads down and their hands in their laps.

"Mom," Marvin said, barely lifting his head. "We did something very bad. It was my fault since I'm the oldest, so don't be mad at Jerry. We took four-

dollars from your purse and bought candy with it. I-I'm sorry," he said with tears trickling down his cheek.

"I'm sorry, too, Mom," Jerry said bursting into sobs.

Mother saw how sorry the boys were for their bad deed. "Boys, stealing is very bad indeed. I see you are very sorry. Let's kneel and ask God to forgive you."

The boys knelt down and after prayer stood wiping their eyes. Mother put an arm around each boy. "It makes me unhappy when you do wrong. But I am glad your hearts are tender and you are sorry when you do wrong. I love you both very much."

The boys felt good again. Mother gave the candy they had left in the bag to some neighbor children. —S.W.

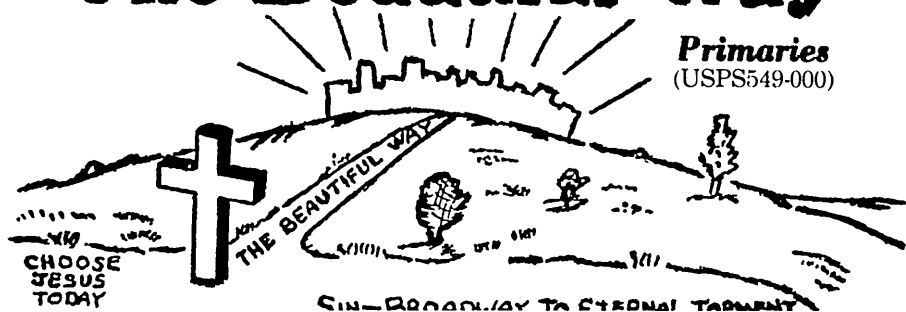


Questions:

1. What did the younger son want his father to give him?
2. What did the boy do with his money?
3. Was the boy sorry for what he had done?

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Part 26

March 27

THE TEN VIRGINS

Matthew 25:1-13

The kingdom of heaven is like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of the virgins were wise; they took oil in their lamps. Five of them were foolish; they took no oil. While they waited for the bridegroom, they all fell asleep. At midnight a cry rang out, "Here comes the bridegroom. Go out to meet him." The ten virgins arose and began to trim their lamps. "Our lamps have gone out because we do not have any oil," the five foolish virgins cried. "Give us some of your oil." The wise virgins replied, "We cannot give you our oil because there may not be enough left to keep our lamps burning. Go and buy some for yourselves." While the five foolish virgins were gone to buy oil, the bridegroom came. The wise virgins went in with the bridegroom to the marriage. When the foolish virgins returned, the doors were locked.

We are like the virgins. The bridegroom is Jesus. We should be watching and waiting for His return. We must keep oil, or the spirit of the Lord, in our hearts.

Memory Verse: Watch . . . for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. Luke 12:37a.

Waiting for the Bus

Alyce and Myron were waiting for the school bus.

"What time is it, Alyce?" Myron asked. "Isn't the bus late?"

"It's 7:40," Alyce said, looking at her watch. "The bus is nearly ten minutes late."

"Maybe it had a wreck," Myron said.

"I hope not," replied Alyce.

The children sat on a big rock beside their drive for awhile. They were growing restless. Now and then they stood and looked down the road, but no yellow school bus topped the hill. There was a deep ravine near the drive way.

"Alyce, let's see if we can hit that can down there," Myron said, picking up some choice rocks. The can lay far down in the ravine.

The children threw rock after rock. Some of the rocks landed far from the the can, and others came somewhat closer.

Ping! "I hit it," yelled Myron excitedly.

"I wish it were upon a stick and we could hit it more easily," suggested Alyce.

"I'll go down there and put it on a stick," Myron volunteered.

He climbed down into the ravine. He found a stick just the right length.

"I can't get it to stick into the ground," he called up to Alyce.

"Push down in the clay and not on the rock," Alyce said.

"I can't find any clay that is soft enough."

"I know where there's some," Alyce said as she began to climb down into the ravine. She took the stick and began to poke it into the ground. Both of the children had forgotten all about the bus.

Suddenly Myron heard something coming down the road. Just as he looked up there passed the yellow school bus. He waved his hands and yelled.

"Oh, no! Alyce, there goes the bus. The driver could not see us down here."

The children had done like the five foolish virgins in our lesson. They forgot to keep watching. —S.W.

Partners

A sturdy little figure was trudging along with a pail of water. She had passed our gate so many times that morning that I was prompted to go out and make the acquaintance of the little water carrier.

"You are a busy little girl today," I said.

"Yes'm, it takes heaps of water."

"Is there no one to carry the water?"

"No one but Mother, and she's washin'."

"Well, you are a good girl to help her."

The little water carrier did not consider this a compliment, and there was a look of surprise in her gray eyes and a sharp tone in her voice, as she answered, "Why, of course, I help her; she hasn't anyone else. Mother and I are partners."

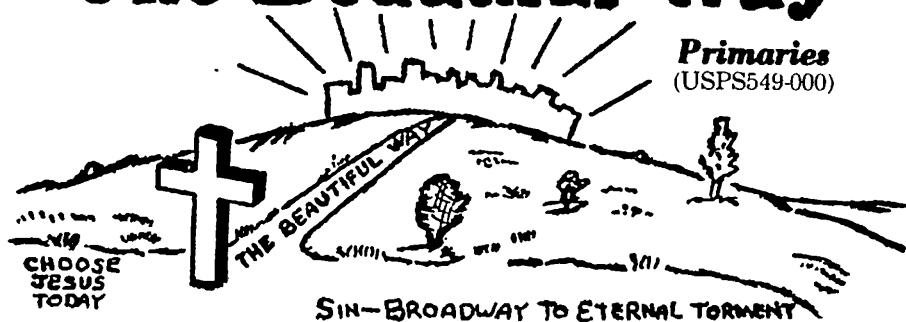
—Selected

Questions:

1. How many virgins were waiting for the bridegroom?
2. How many were wise and how many were foolish?
3. What did the foolish ones forget?
4. For whose return should we be watching?
5. What should we keep in our hearts?

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Part 14

April 3

THE VINEYARD

Luke 20:9-16; Matt. 23:34-38

Another story Jesus told the people was about a vineyard, a place where grapes were planted. A man owned a vineyard. He went on a long trip and left other men to care for his vineyard. When it was time to gather the grapes, the owner sent a servant to get some of the fruit. The men caring for the vineyard beat the servant and sent him away. Three times the owner sent a servant, and three times they were beaten and sent away. At last the owner sent his own son. "They will have respect for my son," he thought. But when the men caring for the vineyard saw their owner's son, they said, "Let us kill him; then we shall inherit the vineyard." They killed the owner's son. The owner did away with the men and gave the vineyard to others.

Hundreds of years ago, God called the Jews His people and did wonderful things for them. But they turned away from God. They even killed God's Son, Jesus. Now God's people are those who believe in Him and obey His words. When we are born again we are in the family of God.

Memory Verse: . . . If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples. . . . John 8:31.

About the Dogwood

"Oh, Mother, aren't these trees beautiful!" exclaimed Amy as she and her mother walked along the path at the edge of the forest. The trees were blossomed out in beautiful white flowers. "What kind of trees are they?"

They are dogwoods," Mother replied.

Amy ran over to a low hanging branch and broke off a stem. She stood silently looking closely at the flowers.

"Mother," she said presently, "look at the petals on these flowers. There's a brownish spot at the tip of each one."

Mother looked at the dogwood blossoms that Amy held up for her to see.

"There's a story, or legend, about the dogwood tree, Amy," Mother said. "It is said that when Jesus was crucified, the dogwood tree was chosen to make the cross from. At that time they supposedly grew straight and tall. After it was used as the cross, never again did any dogwoods grow to be so tall and straight. And from that time their flowers, which are shaped like a cross, had a rust looking spot on the tip of each petal. These spots were said to represent the blood of Jesus where the nails were driven through. And this little spiky-looking part in the center was said to represent the crown of thorns He wore.

Amy listened closely to what her mother said. She looked at each part of the flower as Mother told the story. There was a solemn look on her face as she listened.

"Now that's just a story," Mother went on. "We do not really know what kind of tree was used for the cross on

which Jesus died. But the dogwood blossom is a good reminder of Jesus' death on the cross for our sins."

Amy looked around at all the dogwood trees with their snowy white blossoms.

"From now on the dogwood is my favorite tree. When I look at its blossoms, I will thank Jesus for dying for me," Amy said. —Sandra Whitson

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Resurrection Morn

Early on that morning,
Filled with grief and gloom,
Mary came with weeping
To the silent tomb.

Seek not Christ, the Saviour
Here among the dead,
For the Lord hath risen,
Thus the angel said.

Go and tell the story,
How from out of the grave
Christ arose triumphant,
Lives with power to save.

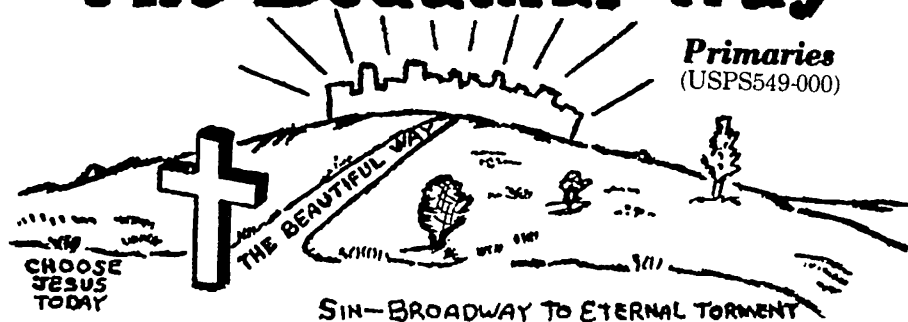
—Harriet Heine

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Questions:

1. What did the man do with his vineyard when he went away?
2. What did the men caring for the vineyard do to the servants their master sent?
3. Who did the owner at last send to his vineyard?
4. What did the men do to the owner's son?
5. Did the Jews kill God's Son?
6. Who are now God's chosen people?

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Part 15

April 10

THE LOST SHEEP

Luke 15:1-10

One day Jesus was preaching to the people. A lot of religious people were gathered around. Soon some sinners came up and Jesus began to talk to them. The religious people were upset. They did not think Jesus should talk to sinners.

Jesus said, "I came to help the sinners, not the righteous. Suppose you have one hundred sheep and one of them strayed away. Would you not leave the ninety-nine sheep in the safe pasture and go out to search for the lost sheep? Yes, that is what you would do. When you had found the lost sheep you would be happy and bring it back to the fold and tell all your friends and neighbors you had found your lost sheep.

"Or suppose a woman has ten pieces of silver and loses one. She will look all over the house—under things, behind things, and perhaps sweep the house; she will search till she finds it."

Jesus is like the shepherd and we are like the sheep. If we stray away from the Lord, He will come to look for us. He wants us to be saved and safely in His fold.

Memory Verse: For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. Mat. 18:11.

Who Cares About Others?

It was just one week until time for the camp meeting to start. Some of the children were helping to clean up the camp ground.

"We have just about picked up all the paper and sticks on the ground," Jeff said, wiping his forehead.

"Yeah, look at these big trash bags we've filled," said Billy, pointing to the three stuffed bags.

"Since we've finished, why don't we play ball?" Allen suggested.

"Yeah, let's!" the other boys cried.

"What's the matter; don't you want to play, Brent?" asked Billy, noting that Brent had not said he wanted to play ball.

"No, I don't think I'll play," Brent replied. "I'm going with Daddy and Bro. Lee to invite people in the neighborhood to meeting."

"That sounds dreary," Jeff said. "Why don't you let the grown ups do that?"

"I thought I would ask some of the children to come to our afternoon children's meetings," Brent said. "I especially want to ask Mike Brown and Tim Hicks."

"Those boys?" exclaimed Billy. "Who cares about them? Why, they never go to church! I've heard that Mr. Hicks doesn't believe there's even a God, and that Mike's dad thinks people who go to church are all hypocrites."

"I wouldn't want somebody to see me at their house," said Jeff. "They might think they were my friends, and I'd get a bad name."

"I'll be with my dad, so there won't be much time for play," Brent explained. "If people are going to dislike me just because I invite Mike

and Tim to church, they can just dislike me. Who knows? If they come to church they might get saved when they learn about God."

"Would your dad mind if I went, too?" Bobby asked. "I know of some people I'd like to invite."

"Come on, fella's," said Jeff. "Let's go play ball and let Brent and Bobby do what they want to. Maybe they like that type of friends better than us."

"I think Jesus would invite others to church," Brent said to Bobby as they left the other boys.—Sandra Whitson

LESSON ILLUSTRATION

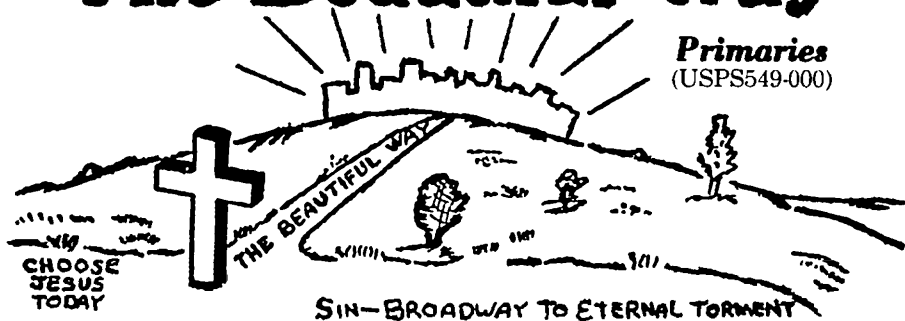


Questions:

1. Did the religious people want Jesus to talk to sinners?
2. What happened to one of the sheep in our lesson?
3. Did the shepherd go out to look for it?
4. Does Jesus go out to look for sinners?
5. Does Jesus want us to tell sinners the way to Christ?

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Part 16

April 17

THE TWO BUILDERS

Matt. 7:24-27

Jesus told about two men who set about to build houses. One man chose to build his house on the rock. He wanted his house built on something solid, so it would not fall in a storm. The second man did not think much about where he would build his house. He thought the sandy ground looked like a good easy place to build upon. He did not think about what might happen in a storm.

One day it began to rain. The wind blew gustily. It rained so much that the ground began to flood. The man who had built on the rock was safe. The water could not reach his house upon the rock. The winds could not blow it down because it was anchored on solid ground. The house that was built on sand began to slant to one side. The flood washed some of the sand away. Soon the wind and water caused the house to fall.

Our lives are like houses. We want to build them on something that will not fall when bad times come along. Jesus is solid like a rock. He never changes. He is the Rock we should build upon.

Memory Verse: . . . Thou art my rock. . . . **Psa. 31:3a.**

The Rock Bluff

Eddie was on a trip down South with his dad. It was exciting going down the river in the boat. Sometimes the banks were wooded and sometimes there were lots of cottages and boat houses.

Dad cut the motor off and just let the boat drift toward a rocky cliff.

"You know, I wouldn't believe this was the same river I fished on as a boy, if it were not for that rocky cliff," Dad said with a far away look in his eyes. "There didn't used to be any houses along here. There were a lot of pines over there, but it looks like a forest fire got them."

Dad tied the boat to shore and they both got out.

"My cousins and I used to camp here sometimes," Dad said.

"Where did you put your tent?" Eddie asked. "It doesn't look like a good place around here."

"We put the tent somewhere over there," Dad said, pointing to a place that was all barren. "It was prettier then. It looks like some company has come in and cut down trees and hauled out sand."

As they walked about, Dad kept commenting on how things had changed from when he was a boy.

"Hey, Daddy, look!" Here are some initials carved in the rock," Eddie exclaimed.

Dad came over to where Eddie was sitting on the rock bluff.

"E. W.—why that's my initials!" Dad said surprised. "And here's R. W. Yes, I remember when Roy and I sat here most all afternoon once carving those initials. We tried to see who could do the best job. Your Uncle Charles

thought it would do just as well and would be easier to carve his initials in a tree over there. But it looks like the tree has been long gone."

As they headed back down the river, Eddie took his last look at the rock bluff.

"I see now why our Sunday School teacher said Jesus is like a rock," he said. "A rock stays the same for years even when other things around it change." —Sandra Whitson

Ready for Jesus

Are you willing, are you ready
With a consecrated heart
To lay down your life for Jesus
From all self and sin to part?

Can you say that knowing Jesus
Is the pearl of greatest price
That with Him there's life in dying,
That there's gain in sacrifice?

What a Friend we have in Jesus
What a treasure we can own
Ready for His blessed coming
Loving Him and Him alone.

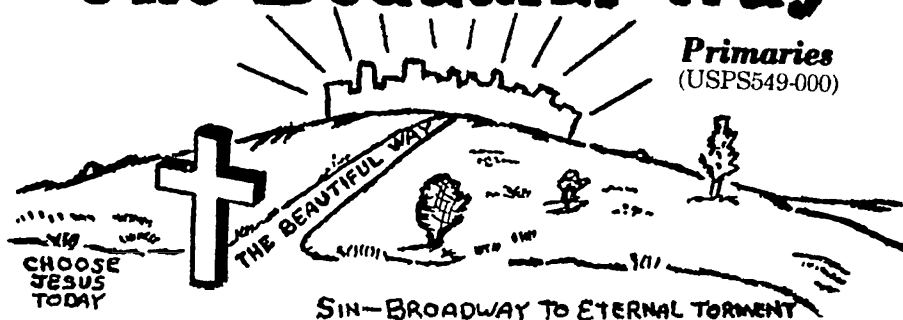
—Leslie Busbee

Questions:

1. On what did the first man build his house?
2. On what did the second man build his house?
3. What happened to the house on the rock when the storms came?
4. What happened to the house on the sand?
5. Who is the Rock on whom we should build our lives?

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April, May, June, 1983

Part 17

April 24

THE FIG TREE

Luke 13:6-9; Matt 21:17-20

One morning Jesus was going to the city of Bethany. He was hungry. As he went along He saw a fig tree. Ah! He thought He would eat some figs, but when he looked at the tree, there were only leaves. He said, "Let no figs grow on thee hereafter." Soon the fig tree withered away.

Later Jesus told His disciples this story. There was a man who had a vineyard. In this vineyard was a fig tree. Each year when it was time for figs the man went to his fig tree and looked for figs. He found none! He told the servant who kept the orchard, "For three years I have looked for fruit on this tree, and have found none. Cut it down! Why should it take up space in my vineyard?" The servant answered, "Lord, give it one more year. I will dig around it and fertilize it. If it does not bear fruit after that, then I will cut it down."

Our lives are like trees. Jesus wants us to bear fruit for Him. We know a tree is an apple tree if it has apples on it. People know we are Christians if we bear fruit, or have traits, that are Christlike.

Memory Verse: Ye shall know them by their fruits. Mt. 7:16a.

Jerry Loses His Temper

It was a great day to be out playing ball! So many of the days lately had been rainy and cool. Now the sun was shining and the ground was drying out.

Doug liked to play first base. He could not run fast, but he was good at catching and throwing the ball.

Now Jerry was at bat. He was a good batter. Sometimes he could hit home runs. Wham! The ball went slithering along the ground at a fast speed. Brad ran and scooped it up in his glove. Quickly he threw the ball to Doug. Just in time! "Out!" yelled one of the boys as Jerry touched base.

"I was not out!" yelled Jerry.

"Yes, you were," said Doug. "I caught the ball just before you touched base."

"You did not!" protested Jerry, as he gave Doug a shove which sent him sprawling on the ground.

Brad came running over. "You are too out, Jerry," he said.

"That's a lie!"

By this time most of the other boys were agreeing that Jerry was out, although a couple of boys on Jerry's team said he was safe, and some had no comment.

"Jerry, I think you were out," said one of his team mates. "It's nothing to get upset over, anyway."

"Who's upset?" yelled Jerry. Everybody's calling me a cheat, just because I can play ball better than anyone else. Well, y'all are the ones cheating and I'll not play with a bunch of sorry sports." With that Jerry clenched his fist and stamped away.

"He surely has a temper!" one of the boys said.

"Yes, and in Sunday School he said

he was a Christian," Brad commented. "He surely doesn't act like a Christian to me."

A boy's or girl's actions prove if they are really Christians.

—Sandra Whitson

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Joe was selling his papers on a busy corner of a city street. A man stopped to buy a paper. While he searched for a dime in his pocket, he asked, "Where do you live, my boy?"

Joe answered, "In a little shack on the bank of the river."

The man was surprised. He asked, "Who lives with you?"

Joe said, "Jim. Jim is my pal. He is a cripple and he can't work. So I sell papers and take care of both of us."

The man said, "You would be better off if you didn't have Jim."

Joe said, "Oh, no, I wouldn't. I couldn't get along without Jim. If he wasn't there, I wouldn't have anyone to go home to. Mister, I wouldn't want to live if I didn't have someone to share with."

Do you like to share with others? God wants us to share. He wants us to always be kind and helpful.

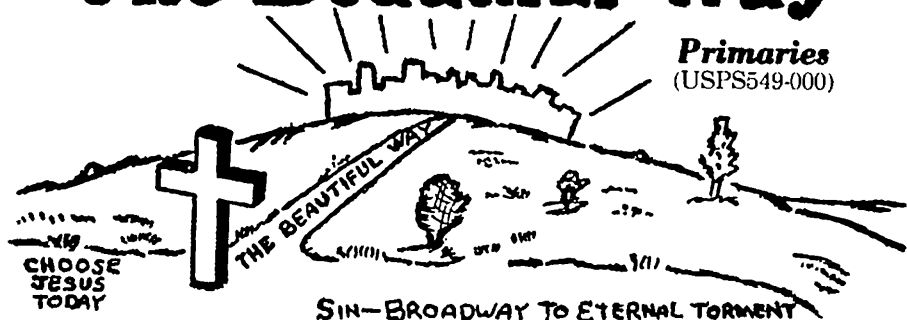
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Questions:

1. Did Jesus find figs on the tree?
2. What did he say to the tree?
3. What did the man say to his servant when he could not find figs on his tree after three years?
4. What did the servant say he would do to the tree?
5. What are some "fruits" in a Christian's life?

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Part 18

May 1

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Luke 10:25-37

Jesus told this story: One day a man was going to Jericho. As he went along the road a group of thieves fell upon him. They beat him and took all his belongings. They left him lying helpless in the road. Will someone come along to help the man? Yes, along comes a priest. But, look! The priest sees the injured man and passes as far from him as possible! Before long a Levite comes. Levites help the priests in the temple. The Levite comes over to the man. Surely *he* will help him. But no! The Levite looks at the man, then passes on his way. Will no one help the man left in such a pitiful condition? Now a Samaritan comes down the road. The Jews do not like the Samaritans. The Jews feel the Samaritans are not as close to God as they are. The Samaritan stops beside the wounded man. He kneels down beside him and washes and dresses the man's wounds. He then puts the man on his donkey and takes him to an inn. The Samaritan pays the innkeeper money to take care of the injured man.

Jesus wants us to be like the Samaritan and help people.

Memory Verse: Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Luke 6:36.

Sharing With An Enemy

Brian and Terry never seemed to get along. Terry teased Brian unmercifully, so Brian did not even like to be around him.

Brian loved God, but it seemed that he just could not love Terry. Brian prayed and asked God to help Terry to be better to him. He also asked God to take away his bad feelings for Terry.

One sunny day, Terry and Brian were having a picnic with the other second graders. The girls were playing jump rope and the boys were playing softball. It was fun to play out in the park.

Soon it was time to stop and eat lunch. Terry took his lunch and sat down beside a tree. He had forgotten to get a drink. Leaving his lunch, he walked back to the table.

"Oh, Terry," one of the girls cried, "that dog is getting your lunch!"

Terry picked up a stick and ran at the dog. The dog ran away, carrying Terry's lunch in his mouth. Now Terry did not have a lunch. Everyone felt sorry for Terry, but no one wanted to share his lunch.

Terry's best friend, Kevin, said, "It's too bad about your lunch, Terry. I would give you some of mine, but I only have one sandwich and I'm terribly hungry."

"If I don't eat all my sandwich, Terry, you can have what's left," said Joey, feeling that he was doing better than Kevin.

Terry looked sad as he sat down in the pine straw by himself.

Brian walked over to Terry and held out half his sandwich. "Here, Terry," Brian said, "you may have half of my peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

You may also have some of my chocolate chip cookies my mother made."

Terry was surprised that Brian was willing to share his food. He took the sandwich. Terry felt bad for the ugly things he had said to Brian. He knew now that Brian was a better friend than some of the ones he had thought were his true friends.

Brian was happy to know that he could show love to Terry.

—Sandra Whitson

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You are rich indeed, if square dealing has brought you that priceless thing, a clear conscience, if good health is your portion, if your measure of cheerfulness, generosity, and forgiveness is enough to overflow for the benefit of others—if you have earned friendship by showing yourself friendly

These things money cannot buy, but they make character, and constitute wealth untold—the riches that cannot pass away. —Sel.

LESSON ILLUSTRATION

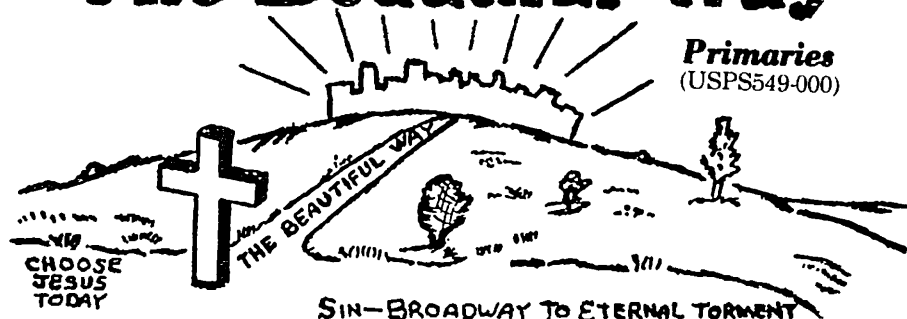


Questions:

1. What happened to the man on his way to Jericho?
2. Did the priest stop to help the man?
3. Did the Levite help the man?
4. Who did stop to help the wounded man?
5. Who are we supposed to help?

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Part 19

May 8

LAZARUS AND THE RICH MAN

Luke 16:19-31

There was a rich man who dressed in fine clothes. He had the most delicious foods to eat that one could imagine. There was also a poor beggar named Lazarus. Lazarus lay down beside the gate of the rich man to beg for food. He only desired the scraps from the rich man's table. But the rich man thought only of himself and did not pay any attention to the poor beggar.

In time Lazarus died and was carried to heaven. No longer was he a beggar, but in heaven he was happy and in peace. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell he lifted up his eyes and could see Lazarus afar off. He cried out, "Please let Lazarus dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue. I am in torture in this flame!" But the rich man was told that he had received good things in his lifetime and that now he was tormented. Lazarus had received bad things but now he was comforted. He was also told that there was a great gulf, or divide, between him and Lazarus, over which no man could pass.

Let us live for God so we will go to heaven and be in peace.

Memory Verse: . . . How hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! Mark 10:24b.

Who Loved Best

It was Mother's Day. Willie was very excited. He had a gift for Mother and could hardly wait for her to open it.

"I will open it after breakfast," Mother said with a smile, as she looked at the beautiful red and white package Willie held out to her. She was making biscuits for breakfast.

"No, open it now!" insisted Willie.

"Don't you want me to wait till I can sit down and really enjoy it?" Mother asked.

"No. If you don't open it now you can't have it," Willie said with a scowl on his face.

Mother wiped the biscuit dough from her hands and opened the gift.

"Oh! It's lovely!" she exclaimed, holding up a beautiful vase that had the words, "I love you," inscribed on the front. Also, in the box were three beautiful red roses.

When they sat down to eat breakfast, Willie complained that his eggs were not the way he liked them, and that his mother could not cook biscuits. Later, when Mother was going to knit in her favorite chair, Willie refused to sit in another chair to read. When Mother wanted him to clean up his room, he ran out the door to play ball.

Corrie was sad because it was Mother's Day and she did not have a gift for her mother. She had not even had the money to buy her a card, so Corrie had made one for her mother.

She gave Mother the homemade card, with a big hug and kiss. "I'm sorry I don't have a gift for you, but I do love you, Mother."

Mother smiled. She knew her little girl loved her.

At breakfast, Corrie said, "You are

the best cook I know, Mother." Corrie helped her mother clear the table before going to her room to pick up her things. When Mother sat down to do some mending she noticed that she had forgotten her thimble. "I will get it for you, Mother," said Corrie, as she left her puzzle to get the thimble. Corrie always obeyed Mother.

Which loved best: Willie or Corrie?

—Sandra Whitson

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I thank Thee, Father in Heaven,
For my dear home so warm and
bright;

I thank Thee, for my mother's love
Which helps and points me to the
right.

I thank Thee, for my mother's arms,
Which are so soft to hold me near;
Help me to prove a blessing, Lord,
Unto my mother dear!

I'll be my mother's sunbeam,
And happily I'll play;
I'll sing and smile and help her, too,
And make a happy day.

I also will prove my love,
And thank her for her care,
By being kind and helpful
Each day throughout the year.

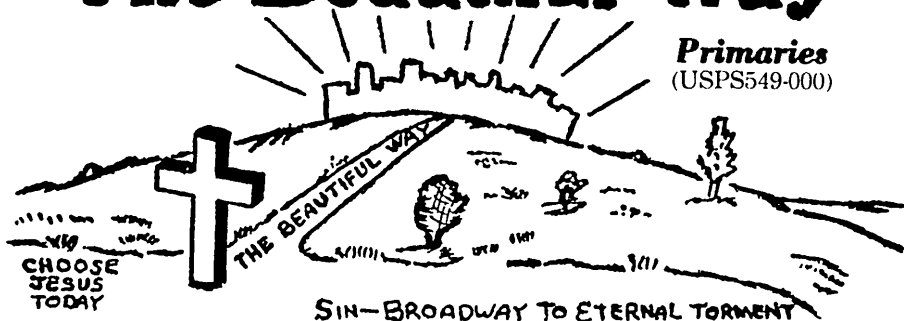
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Questions:

1. Who lay down beside the rich man's gate?
2. What did the beggar want the rich man to give him?
3. Did the rich man help the beggar?
4. Where did the poor man go when he died? Where did the rich man go?
5. Why could the poor man not give water to the rich man when the rich man was in hell?

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Part 20

May 15

JESUS IS FORGIVING

John 8:3-11; Luke 23:33, 34

Peter came to Jesus and asked Him, "Lord, how often shall I forgive my brother? If he sins against me seven times in a day, should I forgive him seven times?" Jesus answered, "Not just seven times, but if he should sin against you seventy times seven, you should forgive him."

One day a woman had been caught in a bad sin. Some of the people wanted to stone her. That is what the law said to do. But Jesus had more mercy than the law. He said, "If any of you do not have sin in your heart, throw a stone at her." The people all turned and walked away. Jesus told the woman that He did not condemn her, but that she should not sin any more. Just as Jesus forgave this woman of her sins, He will forgive us of our sins when we come to Him. But He wants us to "Go and sin no more."

Even when He was dying on the cross, Jesus had forgiveness for the ones who nailed Him there. He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they're doing."

Memory Verse: . . . Forgive and ye shall be forgiven. Luke 6:37b.

The Broken Light

One day Roger went to Billy's house to play, but no one was at home. He saw Billy's red bicycle beside the garage. Now, Roger's mother had told him never to play with Billy's toys when he was not at home. But Roger thought that one ride around the block wouldn't matter. Besides, Mother had company and would probably never see him.

Roger rode the shiny bicycle around the block. How he wished he had a bicycle! A dog ran out and began to bark at Roger. He was scared. He turned his head to see where the dog was. The bicycle began to weave, and ... crash! Right into a tree went Roger and the bicycle. Roger was not hurt, but the light on Billy's bicycle was broken. Roger felt badly as he put the bicycle back where he had taken it from. He felt all sick inside.

The next day Billy came over to play. Roger said he did not feel like playing.

Billy said, "A terrible thing happened while I was gone yesterday. My bicycle light got broken. I guess a limb fell out of the tree and hit it. There was a limb lying beside my bike."

Roger breathed in freely. Billy thought a limb had broken his light, and he would never have to know it was Roger.

Roger suddenly felt better, so the boys played together that day, but each time Roger looked at the bicycle he felt sick inside.

That evening Roger told his mother what he had done. His mother said that he should go to Billy and tell him the truth.

"Billy," Roger confessed to his

friend that night, "I rode your bicycle and ran into a tree. Please forgive me for breaking the light. I am sorry. I will never ride your bike without permission again."

At first, Billy was upset. He thought he could never forgive Roger. But his mother said, "Billy, if you had done the same thing to Roger, you would want him to forgive you." Billy forgave Roger and they remained good friends.

—Sandra Whitson

Whose Money was Lost?

Tommy started to Sunday school with two nickels. Mother had given them to him. One was for the Lord. One was for himself.

On the way, Tommy lost one nickel. He said, "There goes the Lord's nickel!" He should have said, "There goes my nickel."

When Tommy got to Sunday school, he did not put any money in the offering. He kept *his* nickel in his pocket. Tommy did wrong.

We should be glad to give God the *best* that we have. We should be glad to give God *all* that we have. We should never rob God of what belongs to Him.

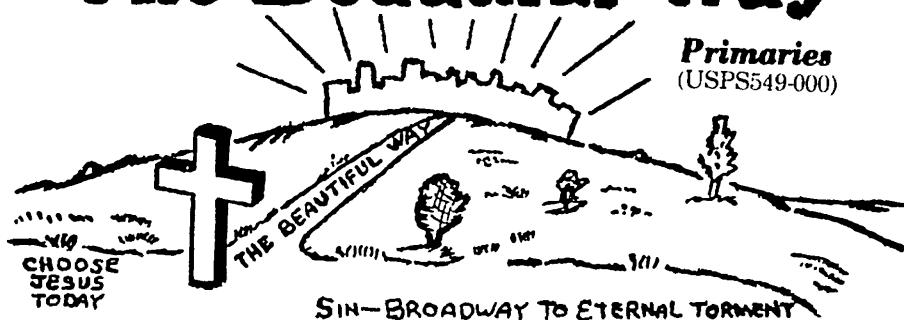
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Questions:

1. If someone asks us to forgive him, should we? How many times in a day did Jesus say to forgive someone?
2. What did the people want to do to the woman who had sinned?
3. Did Jesus forgive her? What did He tell her to do?
4. Who did Jesus forgive when He was on the cross?

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Part 21

May 22

JESUS, THE OBEDIENT SON

Luke 2:42-52

Mary and Joseph had left Jerusalem with a caravan of people. They began to look for Jesus. They could not find Him anywhere. "Could He still be in Jerusalem?" they asked. They must return to find Him, for Jesus was only a twelve-year-old boy at the time.

In Jerusalem they looked and looked for Jesus. At last they found Him in the temple. He was talking with a group of doctors. "Son, your father and I have been looking for you. Why did you cause us this worry?" His mother asked. "Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" Jesus asked. Mary and Joseph did not understand that Jesus meant He must talk with others about God. But Jesus knew He was just a boy. He went home with His mother and father and obeyed them. He lived with His parents for many years and learned many things from them.

God gave us parents to teach us how to grow up and be good men and women. Just as Jesus obeyed His mother and father, we should obey our mother and father. If we learn to obey our parents, it will be easier for us to obey God.

Memory Verse: Children, obey your parents. . . . Eph. 6:1a.

Disobedience

Eric and Alice loved to visit on the farm with Grandma and Grandpa. Eric went with Grandpa to milk the cows. Grandpa even let Eric help milk. But Eric could not do it very well. Alice watched Grandma churn butter. She even let Alice churn some. None of Alice's friends even knew what churning was.

In the afternoon Alice and Eric rambled through the pasture and woods. They enjoyed the outdoors.

"I think this is the prettiest pond there ever was," said Alice as she and Eric stood looking over the shimmering water. The pond was in the middle of Grandpa's woods.

"Yes, and I think it would be great fun going out in the boat," Eric said as he walked over to the old green boat lying upside down on the bank.

"But Grandpa told us never to bother that boat."

"I know, but I don't see why he cares," replied Eric trying to turn the boat rightside up. "We won't hurt it. And besides, Grandpa will never know. Help me with it, Alice."

Alice still said she thought they ought to leave the boat alone, but Eric finally persuaded her to help him.

"See, isn't this fun?!" exclaimed Eric when they were out on the lake.

"I don't know why Grandpa didn't want us to take a boat ride," said Alice.

"Look, Eric, water is all in the bottom!" exclaimed Alice.

The children had not noticed the leak in the bottom of the boat.

Alice stood up frightened. "What will we do?" she asked, putting her hands to her face.

Eric was scared, too. In the excitement,

the boat began to rock. Alice stepped on the seat to get out of the water and tipped the boat. Splash!! Over went the boat and both children were plunged into the water.

"Help! Help!" cried Eric, as he and Alice both held to the capsized boat.

Just then Grandpa came running. He swam out to the boat and brought the children safely to shore.

Eric and Alice learned that it is best to obey even when they don't understand the reason why.

Sandra Whitson

For The Gospel's Sake



Many things along life's pathway
Christians oft are called to do
That the gospel might be better
Held aloft in mortal's view.

Loving those who live about us
Makes us let our light to shine
Peradventure God in heaven
Will reach forth His hand divine.

Of this blessed truth and gospel
Let us never be ashamed
That salvation will be shining
Where the Christ of God is named.

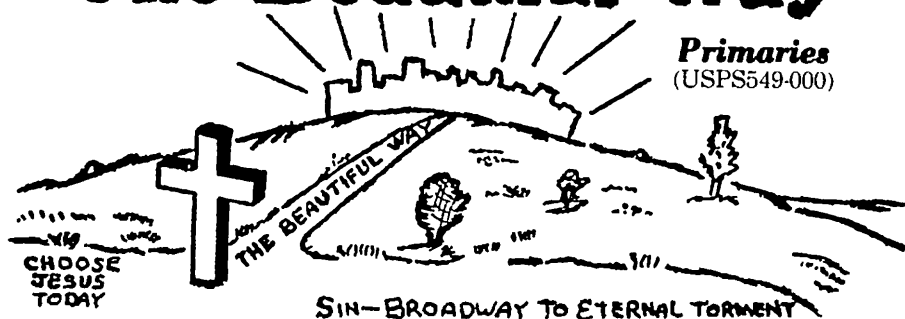
—Leslie Busbee

Questions:

1. Who did Mary and Joseph look for in Jerusalem?
2. Where did they find Jesus?
3. Did Jesus go home with His parents then?
4. Did Jesus obey His parents?
5. Whom are we to obey?

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Part 22

May 29

JESUS SHOWS MEEKNESS

Matt. 18:1-6; Mark 15:2-5

Jesus' disciples wanted to know what it took to be great. They asked Jesus, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus called a little child to Him. He had the child stand before the disciples. Jesus said, "Except you become as this child, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Become as a child to be great!? Yes, Jesus wants us to trust Him as children trust their parents. He wants us to feel ourselves as knowing as little as a child and willing to learn. Jesus wants us to know we are nothing except what He has made us. He wants us to be humble.

Later an angry mob wanted to kill Jesus. They took Him to Pilate. Pilate was His judge. The people cried out false accusations against Jesus. Jesus stood there quietly. He did not defend Himself against the untrue statements. Sometimes it is hard to bear the untrue things people say about us. Jesus wants us to be meek and learn how to take things quietly. Jesus wants us to be like Him and follow His example.

Memory Verse: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Matt. 5:5.

The Best Drawing

Mrs. Gleason's first grade class had all drawn pictures. Tonight the parents were to visit the classroom. Mrs. Gleason hung the children's pictures on the wall so the parents could see them. All the children were excited.

"Lance, did you draw this turkey?" his mother asked that night as she looked at the drawings on the wall.

"Well, I traced part of it. But I drew the tree," he said.

"Your picture is the best one here," she said.

Lance beamed with pride. "It's better than Corey's there, isn't it?"

"Oh, yes, much better," his mother said. "His shouldn't even be on the same wall as yours."

Lance and his mother walked on to the back of the room. Mr. Tibbs, an artist, and his wife were now looking at the pictures.

As Mr. Tibbs looked carefully at the drawings, he said, "You know, this drawing shows real talent. It is remarkably good. Let's see—Corey Calvert drew it. I wonder who he is."

Corey was standing near by and heard Mr. Tibbs' words. Corey did not say anything, but he felt good inside.

Later, as some of the children were eating cookies and drinking punch, Lance said, "My mother thinks my picture is the best in the room. She thinks it's lots better than yours, Corey."

Corey turned red. He was afraid the other children would think Lance's mother was right. Then he remembered what Mr. Tibbs had said about his drawing. Mr. Tibbs was an artist, so he knew more about drawings than Lance's mother. Corey knew that if he

told the other children what Mr. Tibbs had said, they might feel badly. So Corey kept quiet.

Corey showed a spirit of meekness. He kept quiet although something unjust had been said about him. Lance was not meek. He wanted the other children to think that he could draw well, even if he hurt someone else to do it. Let us not be like Lance.

—Sandra Whitson

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LOOK OUT FOR YOUR FACE

"My boy," said a wise father, who knew how to play and be a chum with his son, "You do not own your face."

The boy looked puzzled. He had come to the breakfast table with a frown on his face and had started to eat his food. Everybody felt the shadow of his ill spirits in his looks. His father's words brought him back to life, and he looked with a guilty expression, but did not understand his father.

"You do not own your own face," his father repeated. "Do not forget that. It belongs to other people. They, not you, have to look at it."

The boy had never thought of that, but he understood, and did not forget.

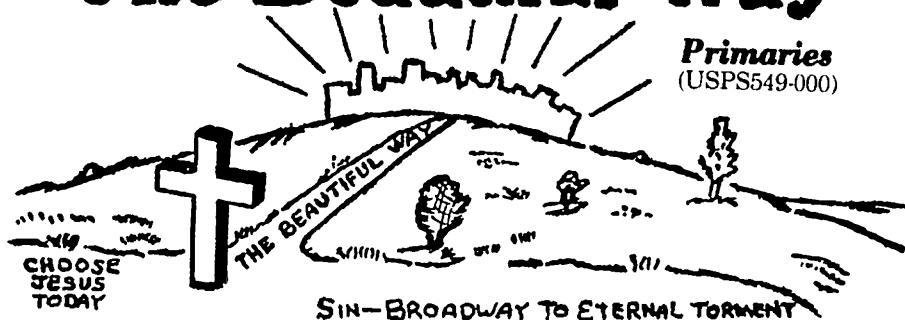
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Questions:

1. Who did Jesus say we must become like to enter into His kingdom?
2. Does a child trust his parents? Should we trust God like that?
3. Was Jesus humble? Are we to be humble?
4. Who was Jesus' judge?
5. Did Jesus defend Himself and prove He was the Son of God?

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Part 23

June 5

JESUS IS COMPASSIONATE

Matt. 20:30-34; Luke 7:11-15

Did you know Jesus was compassionate? Do you know what *compassionate* means? It means to see someone in need and have pity on them and desire to help them.

One day Jesus was walking along a road. Two blind men heard Him coming. They cried out, "O Lord, have mercy on us!" Jesus saw the blind men who called to Him. He felt sorry for them because they could not see. He said, "What do you want of me?" They said, "Lord, please open our eyes." Jesus touched their eyes and they could see.

Another time Jesus was walking along and saw a group of people coming down the road. The people looked sad. They were carrying a casket. Nearby walked a poor woman. She was weeping. Her only son had died and they were taking his body to bury it. Jesus' heart was touched at the sorrow of this poor woman. He walked over to the casket and said, "Young man, arise." The woman's son became alive again. We should show compassion as Jesus did.

Memory Verse: But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion. Psa. 86:15a.

Ben Cheers Mrs. Higgins

Ben was riding his bicycle along the country road. His dog, Jigs, ran along beside him.

"Hi!" Ben called as he waved at Mrs. Higgins. She was an old lady who lived all alone. She was sitting in a rocking chair on her front porch. Mrs. Higgins always sat in that chair on Sunday afternoons. She looked lonely. She waved and smiled at Ben. Ben decided to stop and talk to her.

"Hello, Mrs. Higgins," he said as he got off his bike and walked to the steps and sat down. "I was out riding my bike and thought I'd just see how you're doing."

"I'm doing pretty good, Son," she said with a warm smile. It's a pretty day to be out. I used to enjoy riding a bicycle myself when I was young, but that was many years ago. This old rock-in' chair is about the fastest thing I can take these days."

Ben thought her face looked sweet, although it was very wrinkled.

"Well, you can see a lot of pretty things from your porch anyway," he said, trying to cheer her. "That field across the road is beautiful with all those golden flowers."

"It is very pretty," she replied. "And it's nice to share the beauties of nature with someone." Here she slowly got up from her chair and stepped into the house. She returned with a platter of homemade cookies. "It's better to share cookies with someone, too!"

"Oh, boy! Chocolate chip cookies!" exclaimed Ben, as he took one. "But maybe you cooked these for someone special?" he asked as he hesitated on biting into the cookie. "Were your children coming to see you today?"

"No," Mrs. Higgins said with a sigh, as she sat down again in the old rocker. "Every Sunday I hope one of them will come. I sit here and watch down the road for them to come, but they haven't come for months." She wiped a tear from the corner of her eyes.

Ben felt sorry for Mrs. Higgins. He decided that he would help her not to feel so lonely. Each Sunday afternoon he rode his bike over to see her. He sometimes took her flowers he picked along the road, or fruit that his mother sent to her. Ben brightened up Mrs. Higgins' Sunday afternoons.

—Sandra Whitson

Effects of Habits

A father, wishing to show his son the effect of habit in his life sent him for a hammer and a nail. This he deliberately drove into the parlor table. It went in with comparative ease. Then handing the hammer to the boy he said:

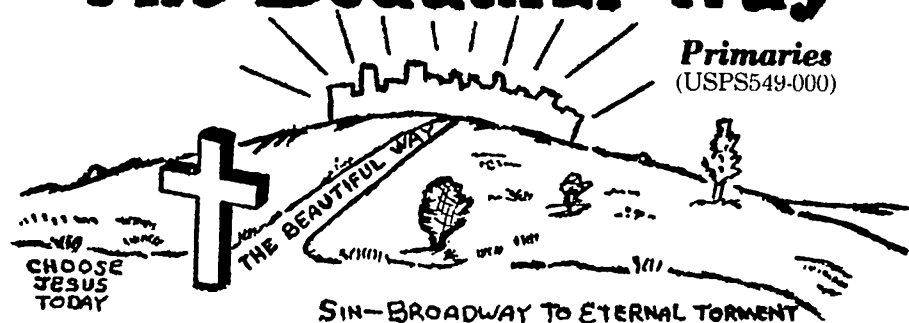
"Now, my son, pull it out." After a great deal of effort and much marring of the splendid table the nail was removed. Then the father said to the boy, "Now, my son, pull out the hole" adding, "Habits can be pulled out, but their effects never."

Questions:

1. What does *compassionate* mean?
2. What did the blind men want Jesus to do? Did He give them sight?
3. Who had died?
4. Why was Jesus sorry for the woman? Did He bring her son back to life?

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Part 24

June 12

JESUS IS UNWAVERING

Matt. 4:1-11

Jesus had been all alone fasting (not eating food) for forty days. At the end of the forty days He was hungry. The devil came to Him and said, "If you are really the Son of God, turn these rocks to bread." Jesus said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word of God." The devil took Jesus to the temple of Jerusalem. From the top of the temple, he said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off the temple. For it is written that God will send angels to lift you up." Jesus said, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt God." The devil then took Jesus to a high mountain and showed Him the kingdoms of the world. "I will give you all these kingdoms and their glory if you will worship me." Jesus said, "Get away, Satan. It is written, Thou shalt worship God, and Him only." The devil could not get Jesus to do wrong. Jesus stood firm and did not yield to temptation.

When we are tempted to do wrong, we can tell the devil to get away. We can be strong like Jesus. Be determined to do right and do not even think about doing wrong.

Memory Verse: Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Eph. 6:10b.

Tempted to Disobey

"Hi, Stephen!" called Gregory and Michael as they opened the gate to Stephen's backyard.

Stephen was playing with some cars in a sandbox. On seeing the boys he got up and shook the sand from his pants.

"Hi!" he said, smiling. "Did you come to play?"

"Not really," said Gregory. "We came to find out if you can go to Mike's house. He has some new puppies. They're really furry and fun to play with!"

"Yes, and they're just two weeks old," said Michael. "We are keeping them for Uncle George while he is out of town."

"Go ask your mom if you can come over," said Gregory.

"Okay," said Stephen as he ran to the back door. He loved dogs, especially puppies.

"Gregory and Michael played in the sandbox while waiting for Stephen. In a few minutes Stephen returned looking downcast.

"Mother says I cannot go," said Stephen.

"Why not," asked the boys.

"She says I have been to Michael's house enough this week."

"But did you tell her about the puppies?" Michael asked.

"Yes," said Stephen.

The boys were all silent a few moments. Then Gregory said, "Stephen, you could climb over the back fence here. Your mother would never know you were not in the sandbox because of those tree limbs blocking the window."

Stephen thought for a moment of Gregory's suggestion. Then he said, "No, I would be disobeying Mother."

"But she would never know," Gregory said.

"But God would know, and the Bible says, 'Children, obey your parents.'"

Stephen wanted to see the puppies, was right. —Sandra Whitson

A Warning About Fire

One day two boys found a hole in the ground where a groundhog lived. They wanted to run him out of the hole. One of the boys poured gasoline into the hole and struck a match. In a flash the gas started burning. A short distance from the burning hole, he saw another hole. The boy walked over and poured gasoline down this hole, too. Immediately it flamed up without even striking a match. This hole led to the other one, and the gasoline seeped through the hole underground and reached the fire. The boy jumped back as the flame swept up toward his face. Only a second more and his face would have been in the burning flame. He did not know the danger of gasoline and fires. His dad had warned him many times to be careful with fire.

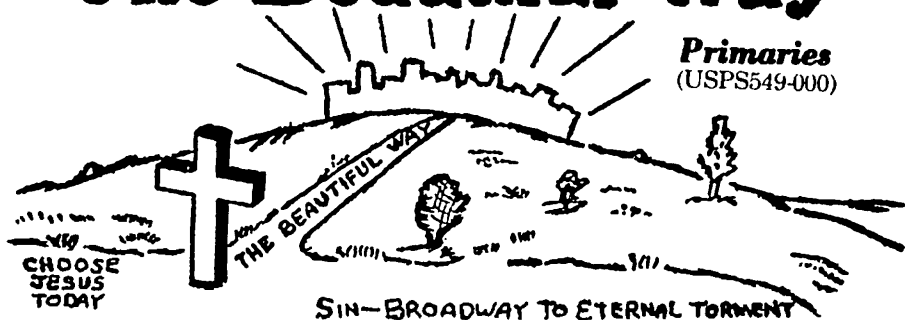
Just so, God warns us to follow His ways, or when we die we will be punished by fire. We need to obey the Word of God. —Sandra Whitson

Questions:

1. What did Jesus do for 40 days?
2. When Jesus was hungry, what did the devil tell Him to do?
3. What did the devil want Jesus to do when they were atop the temple?
4. Satan said he would give Jesus the kingdoms of the world and their glory if Jesus would do what?
5. Did Jesus do anything the devil suggested?

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June 19

JESUS IS THOUGHTFUL OF OTHERS

Mark 6:30-32; John 19:25-27

One day Jesus' disciples had been out teaching others about the way to know God. They were very busy and there were many people to talk to. They had not even had time to eat. Jesus saw that they were weary and needed to rest. "Come to a quiet place to rest," He told His disciples. Jesus was thoughtful of the needs of His friends.

Jesus was always thoughtful of others. When He was dying on the cross, He was in almost unbearable pain. His eyes dropped down to look at the people near the cross. There He saw His dear mother. He knew that after His death, she would need someone to care for her. Although Jesus was in great pain, He still was concerned with the needs of His mother. He saw one of His disciples standing near by. Jesus asked that disciple to take His mother and care for her after He died. Jesus wanted His mother's life to be as pleasant as He could make it.

Jesus wants us to be thoughtful of others, too. We should not think only of ourselves, but we should think of others.

Memory Verse: And to godliness [add] brotherly kindness;
. . . . James 1:8a.

Sara is Thoughtful

Sara was having a tea party with her dolls. She pretended that one of her dolls was her own little girl. The other doll was a friend. It was so delightful to pretend!

The door opened and Daddy came into the room. He dropped down into an easy chair with a groan. He had been out working on the water pipes most of the day. There was a leak somewhere and Daddy had to dig up a lot of the pipe to find the leak. At last he had found the leak and now had it repaired.

"Oh, he looks so tired," thought Sara.

She left her dolls and went over to the corner of the room and got a footstool. Bringing it to Daddy's chair, she set it down. She stooped down and untied Daddy's shoes and slipped them off his feet. She then raised his feet and slid the stool under them.

Daddy sat smiling as he watched his dear little girl. "That feels much better now," Daddy said.

"I know you're tired, and I like to take off my shoes when I'm tired," Sara said. "Are you thirsty, Daddy?"

"Well, I guess I am," he said. "That sun and work sort of dries a man's throat out."

Sara left the room and returned with a sparkling glass of fresh, cool water. She gave it to Daddy and watched him as he drank. She wanted to do what she could to help him relax. He worked so hard for his family.

"That, my dear, was just what I needed," Daddy said, handing the glass back to Sara. "Thank you for your thoughtfulness."

"Do you need anything else?" Sara asked.

"No," said Daddy. "I think I'll just sit here and rest awhile."

Sara returned the empty glass to the kitchen and sat down with her dolls again.

"Pardon me for leaving you," she said to her dolls. "I had to take care of my father just now. He works so hard for me, that I like to do what I can to please him." —Sandra Whitson

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Honoring Our Fathers

"Chad, did you lock the pasture gate?" Dad asked.

"Oh, I forgot to do it," replied Chad.

"Then go lock the gate before you forget it again," his dad said starting to go inside the house.

"I don't want to. Why don't you do it?" Chad asked in an ugly tone.

"Chad, come here, Son," his dad said reaching out and pulling his child close to him. "God tells children to obey their parents. That means when I tell you to do something, you are to do it. The Bible also says we should honor our fathers, which means not to speak unkindly or talk back to them."

"I'm sorry I talked ugly to you, Daddy," Chad said putting his arms around his dad's neck. "I want to honor and obey you and my Father in heaven."—S. W.

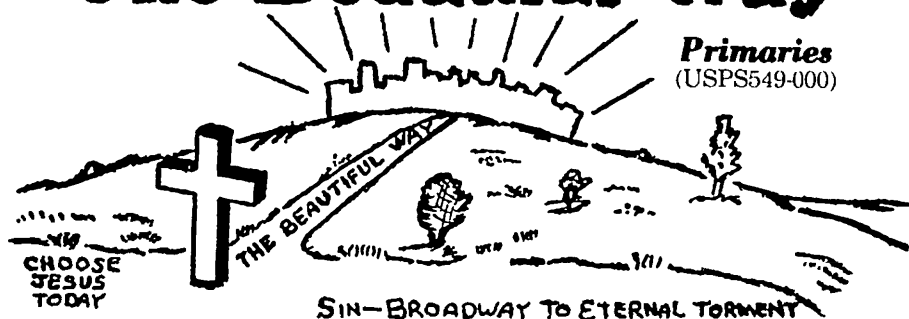
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Questions:

1. Did Jesus' disciples get tired when they were telling others about Him?
2. What did Jesus tell them to do?
3. When Jesus was on the cross, whom did He see standing by?
4. Was Jesus concerned with the needs of His mother? What did He tell His disciple concerning her?
5. Does He want us to be thoughtful of others?

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Part 26

June 26

JESUS SHOWS BOLDNESS

Matt. 21:12-13

Jesus was in Jerusalem. He went to the temple. What did He find there? There were men buying and selling animals right in the temple. "These things should not be carried on in God's house," He thought, "This is a house of prayer." He turned over the tables, and cast the men out of the temple. He drove the sheep and oxen from the temple. God gave Jesus boldness. He would not let other men mistreat God's house.

Jesus was not afraid of people. One day He went to the synagogue. There He saw a poor man with a withered hand. The other men who stood round about wondered if Jesus would heal the man. They felt it wrong to heal on the Sabbath day. They felt Jesus could wait until the next day to heal the man. Would Jesus go ahead and heal the man, or was He afraid of the crowd? "Reach out your hand," Jesus said to the man. The man held out his hand and Jesus completely restored it. This made the crowd angry at Jesus. Jesus knew that He had done right and was not afraid of the men.

Memory Verse: . . . But the righteous are bold as a lion.
Prov. 28:1b.

Philip's Knife

It was camp meeting time again. Daryl always looked forward to camp meeting. He enjoyed being in the children's meetings in the afternoons. Here he learned new songs and the teachers made the class so interesting. He really felt that God cared about children and Daryl wanted to live to please God. Daryl also enjoyed seeing his friends that he had not seen for a long time.

Right now service had dismissed and Daryl, Philip, and Owen were walking over the grounds.

"Look at this new knife I got for my birthday," said Philip, as he pulled a beautiful pearl handled knife from his pocket.

The other two boys stopped to admire the beautiful knife. "It would be great to have a knife," said Owen, "But my mother thinks I'm too little to have one of my own."

"I have two other knives," said Philip, as he reached back into his pants' pocket. "They are old, but they're still good. You and Daryl may use these knives."

Daryl and Owen felt big to use a knife. The boys whittled on some sticks they had picked up from the ground. Then they closed the knives and gave them back to Philip. A little while later a group of boys gathered round talking. Philip got out his knife and showed it to the boys.

"Is it very sharp?" one of the boys asked.

"Sure," said Philip, looking around for something to carve or whittle on.

"Here," said another boy. "Carve your initials on the back of this bench."

Now Philip knew it was wrong to carve on the church bench. But he saw

that the other boys thought it was a good idea. He touched the point of the knife to the bench.

"Don't, Philip," said Daryl quickly. "Don't carve on the bench." He looked at the other boys. "It is wrong to carve or write on other people's property; especially on church property. Daddy says we should respect the house of God and take care of the things there better than we would our own things."

Some of the boys laughed. Philip felt ashamed.

Philip's dad came walking up. He had heard the last part of the conversation. "Give me the knife, Philip," he said as he held out his hand. Philip put his knife into his dad's hand. "I did not know you brought your knife to camp meeting with you. This is no place for a knife. And Daryl, I'm glad you spoke out for what was right."

—Sandra Whitson

As a man was stooping to steal a watermelon, his son said: "Daddy, someone is watching you!" In surprise the man ran quickly to the car, whereupon he asked: "Who? Where? I don't see anyone!" "You forgot to look toward the sky. God is the one who saw you."

Questions:

1. What did Jesus find men doing at the temple?
2. Was He afraid of the men? What did Jesus do?
3. When Jesus was in the synagogue, what was wrong with the man's hand?
4. Why did the others think Jesus should not heal the man?
5. Did Jesus restore the man's hand?
6. How can we be bold for Jesus?