

Treasures of the Kingdom

Casting Up a Highway for the Children of This Generation

GOOD GRACE — & BAD BETTY



Think About It: Lifted Up

We all want to be known as “good” people, don’t we? If we are praised and trusted, we feel lifted up inside. Sometimes we try to lift ourselves up by telling about the good things we do. But there is a secret to this. The Bible says, “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up.” (James 4:10) What is our part? Not to praise ourselves, but to humble ourselves. It sounds like the opposite, doesn’t it?

Find the Bible reference hidden in this picture.



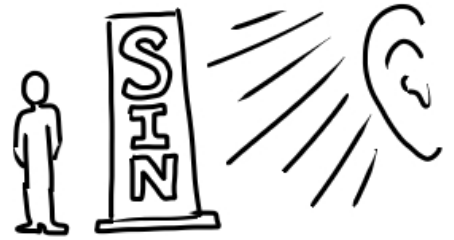
"Except a corn of wheat..."

Humbling ourselves is not just admitting our faults and asking for help, like Betty did in the story. It is also letting go of our reputation. Betty had a bad reputation and Grace had a good one, but it didn't really matter in the end, did it? Jesus “made himself of no reputation” when He came to this earth. (Phil. 2:7) He didn't seek praise or try to prove how good He was. The devil tempted Him by saying, “If you are the Son of God...” but Jesus didn't take the bait. He knew that His obedience and love to His Father would prove Who He really was. And that is the same with us. If you really want to be a good person, ask God to help you to listen and obey. It doesn't matter what other people think of you right now. If you humble yourselves before God, He will lift you up.



Why would God want to forgive us? How can we know we are forgiven? - Molly, age 13

Your question about forgiveness is important and I want to think about what the Bible says about it. First, why do we need to be forgiven? Some people think that since God loves everyone, He is not bothered by what we do – He just loves us anyway. But that isn't how God looks at our sins. Isaiah 59:2 says: "your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear." God counts sin as a serious problem. He doesn't do anything wrong and made us to be people that love and obey Him. So when we sin – do something we know is wrong – we know God is not pleased. He still loves us and wants to do good to us, but our attitude and actions separate us from Him. Our sins



control us and make us a slave. Romans 6:20-21 tells us about this: "When you were the slaves of sin, you were free from the control of righteousness (that means, you didn't think or want to do what is right). What benefit did you reap at that time...? (Doing wrong didn't really make you happy – it just brought shame and trouble to you). The result of those things is death!" Just like a bird in a cage or a criminal in handcuffs, we can't free ourselves. We need someone strong enough and loving enough to set us free from sin. But if our sins separate us from

God, who can help us? This is why Jesus came. Ephesians 1:7 says "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Our sins have to be punished by death, but Jesus willingly paid that price for us. Why? Because God wants us to know and love Him, so He made a way to save us from sin. Read John 1:9 – "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This is wonderful, but it can only be true if we do our part. We must confess that we have sinned and need forgiveness. We also must turn from all that is wrong (Acts 20:18) and be willing to forgive those that have hurt us (see Matt. 11:25).



Now let's think about how we can know we are forgiven. If you really believe that God is not pleased with sin and you have confessed and turned away from it, then you also must believe that God wants to forgive you. Psalm 86:5 says that God is "good, and ready to forgive..." Sometimes we think God doesn't want to forgive us because of all the wrong things we've done. If a person kept doing wrong to us, we would have a hard time being kind to them. But God isn't like that. He never holds grudges or gets bitter, because those attitudes are wrong. God is good and always desires to do good to you, because He created you to have a relationship with Him. The more sins you have, the more He desires to



save you. Imagine a small child falling into a pit and calling for help. Wouldn't his father hurry to get him out? If the pit was very deep, the child would seem very far away, but wouldn't the father be even more eager to rescue him? That is how God looks at sin and forgiveness. God created you and loves you even more than any parents can. Sin dragged you away from Him and caused you lots of trouble. God wants to deliver you and bring you close to His heart again. Do you believe that He will forgive you just as soon as you turn from your sin and ask Him? When you believe Him, then you will know you are forgiven because of the peace and joy He will give you.



When I was your age I thought I was a Christian and I tried to do right, but I still had guilt in my heart. Then Jesus talked to my heart one night about my sin and how He would save me if I would confess and turn from it. It was scary to think of confessing and admitting that my heart wasn't right, but I wanted forgiveness and peace enough to give up my pride and say "yes" to Jesus. I'm so glad I did! He took away my sin and has helped me to love what is right and hate evil. He has helped me to please God and love others. Now I live with joy and peace, because Jesus is King in my heart – not selfishness and wrong. I've written a story about it called "Mariann's Heart," which was printed in issues #58 and 59 (available on the website). It is wonderful to love Jesus and know Him as your Savior and Friend!

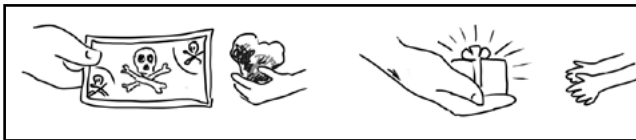


Activity – match the picture symbols to the verse

Micah 7:18 – *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity...? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.*



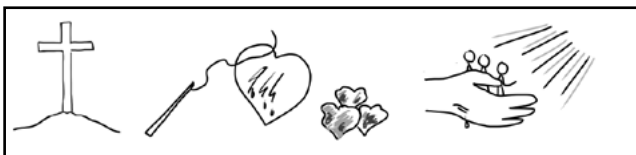
1 Peter 3:18 – *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God...*



Romans 6:23 – *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*



1 John 1:9 – *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*



Little One Adventures

Love
Courage
Gentleness
Trust
Kindness
Faith

One day we were making an Indian longhouse, and I want to share how God gave me grace with the little ones. We had built an Indian longhouse with cardboard and an oatmeal container. Now we were covering it up with brown paper. Then we put something called burlap all around it. At first we had to do a lot of gluing. We called the glue "corn paste." And then the little ones came along. I didn't feel like sharing with them, but instead I actually did! When I was cutting the tape, Emily grabbed the scissors out of my hand. It was hard for me not to yell, but instead I said, "Please let me have them." To keep Andre happy I gave him some burlap to cut and play with. But then he started pitching a fit, saying "I can't do it!" Instead of giving up on him, we gave him some paper to tear to help put on the longhouse. The little ones felt they had something to do when I included them. We were all so excited when it was almost done. And that is how God gave me grace with the little ones.



- Ellianna,
age 7



Do you have an experience to tell?
I will send an email notice* before the next issue. I hope to hear from you!

Buried Treasures

What kind of adventures do you enjoy? Sometimes the ones that start out the worst can end up the best - when we listen to God and ask Him for help. What will your next adventure be?



*email us if you aren't included

Patience
Meekness
Truth
Goodness
Peace
Joy

My name is Elizabeth and I am married to Ralf Everding from Germany. I come originally from the Philippines and I have lived here since 1983. We have three children.

The best story I like to share is how I became saved. Although I had “known” Jesus already, I had no personal relationship with Him. I prayed to Him and read His Word and let other people know about Him, but I was still not saved. I did everything in a religious way. I grew up as a Catholic and I was not free from some lies that made me depressed. Many people did a good job of planting the Word of God into my heart, but my eyes were still dim and I had many doubts about God.

In August 2012 we met people from the Bible Baptist Church here in Hamburg. I realized my spiritual starvation and that I had a need of becoming free. Mothers and women who loved the Lord shared with me how to understand the Word of God. My husband was changed and was eager to read God’s Word more and more. Also the preaching of the Pastor was like eating a very solid and healthy meal. During October they had a Children’s Bible Week. When I was listening to the story of Jesus with my children, the Pastor and other teachers were teaching the kids how to come to heaven, and I began longing to be saved and became alive in my spirit.

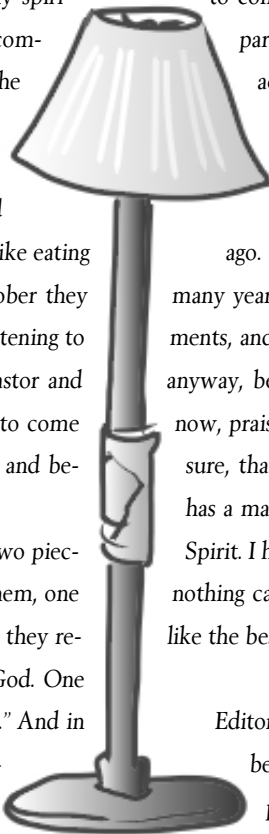
One day my lampstand got broken in two pieces in my livingroom. When I was holding them, one on my left and the other on my right hand, they reminded me suddenly about mankind and God. One part was “me” and the other part was “God.” And in the middle it was broken. To fix my lampstand again I needed something that would

Lesson From a Lampstand

hold these two bars together. I sent my 5-year-old daughter, Hannah, to get a roll of packaging tape. All of my children watched what I was doing. At first it wasn’t easy to hold the bars straight together, so they had to help me. But the more I taped around the broken place, the

thicker the tape got and the firmer my lampstand got in the middle. I put a lot of tape around it, until the roll was almost empty. And suddenly I understood that in this illustration God was showing me something, something that I hadn’t understood before. When Jesus gave His life, He gave all of Himself to bind me forever with God. Just like I had to take all of the roll of tape so that the lampstand could have a good hold. There is nothing I could do

to come to God, because I am a sinner, the broken part. The only thing to have peace with God was accepting what Jesus has done for my life. Doing good works or being religious would not bring me nearer to God. Jesus had done it already for me, and for all of us, around 2000 years ago. For many years I hadn’t understood that. For many years I was following the law, the ten commandments, and I was doubting if God ever heard my prayers anyway, because I was separated from Him before. But now, praise Jesus, He opened my eyes! Now I know, for sure, that I am saved. Like my new lampstand, which has a mark in the middle, I have the mark of the Holy Spirit. I have a new design and I am a new creation. And nothing can separate me from the Love of God. Jesus is like the best “packaging tape” between me and God.



Editor’s note: Thank you for sharing your story, Elizabeth. As the Lord has showed you, salvation is possible because Jesus gave up His life for us.

This is a wonderful truth, since nothing we can do will reconcile us to God - only by forsaking our own ways and trusting Jesus can we be saved from sin. The Bible teaches us, "as ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him" (Col. 2:6) and "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for He is faithful that promised)." (Heb. 10:23) These, and other Scriptures, show us that just as we are saved by faith and not our own efforts, so we must live for the Lord by faith and not our

own efforts. Jesus alone will give us power to be "new creatures" that bear good fruit. Jesus has promised that He will never forsake us, but we can stop abiding (trusting) in Him and go our own way, or trust in something else. If we do, we will be separated once more from God (John 15:6; Heb. 10:26, 38; 2 Pet. 2:20). Our safety, then, is to give ourselves fully to God in everything - just as Jesus gave Himself fully for us. Then His Holy Spirit can fill us and keep us from falling (Jude 1:20-25).



God Listens

Lately I've been experiencing how near God is to me and how closely He hears my pleas for help, protection, etc. Just recently I was laying in bed at night and thinking I was sleeping. I suddenly realized that I hadn't fallen asleep yet and it was already really late. I knew that I would be too tired to do much if I didn't sleep well. I asked God to help me fall asleep because Momma would need my help in the morning. And before I knew it, I was asleep. This has happened to me more than once. The power of prayer is so great! - Isabella, age 13



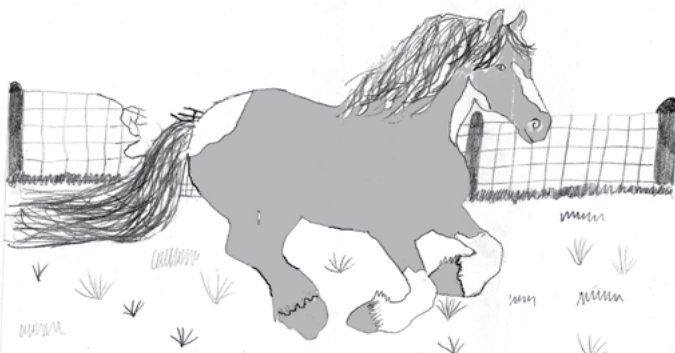
- Deliverance -

A couple days ago one of our neighbor's horses got out and broke into our field. As I went out to take care of the problem, it brought back hard memories of when my horse died back in November. I started thinking about other people who had horses. A spirit of covetousness started coming over me. I was feeling very left out and sorry for myself. The rest of the afternoon I felt miserable. That evening our pastor came over, and I asked him

to pray with me. After we prayed God took the spirit right out. I am so thankful that God can deliver us from our adversary, Satan. Please pray that God will help me not be covetous and to wait patiently for the right horse.



- AutumnGrace, age 13



Love
Courage
Gentleness
Trust
Kindness
Faith

Patience
Meekness
Truth
Goodness
Peace
Joy

Do you know that God cares?

Whether our needs are big or small, God wants us to talk to Him and ask for His help. When good things happen, it pleases God that we are thankful. Let's remember to pray for each other!

REQUESTS AND THANKSGIVINGS

☺ Please pray that I would be a good example to my younger siblings, a blessing to my family, and have a cheerful attitude. Also I would like prayer that I would be sober and bold for Christ.

I'm very thankful for warmth during this cold winter. :) - Isabella, age 13

I am thankful for a lamb. Can you please pray that I will be content if it doesn't snow this year? - Elijah, age 9



I am thankful that the Lord has been helping me to be more watchful and sober. Please pray that I will be more bold for Christ! - Niki, age 15½



I am thankful that Mama and Papa did actually want to adopt me. - Ellianna, age 7

for Prayer

How God Answered Prayer

It was January 2013 when I came to foster care. I was kind of scared at first, but after a little while I got use to it.

The first time I heard about foster sister's adoption birthday, I starting hoping to get adopted soon (I was kind of envious). I felt like having something special like that. I had to wait a long time. I kept asking Mama, "Do you think I'm going to get adopted?" She said, "I don't know."

Mama had to go to counseling and court meetings a lot of the time. Wow! That was a lot of work! I was sad that it took so long. I thought maybe Mama and Papa just didn't feel like adopting me. I felt very worried and concerned. Sometimes I couldn't sleep.

Mama and Papa explained that they really did want to adopt me and my little sister, Emily. That made me feel excited. In fact, I was so excited that I wanted it to happen that day! But I had to wait some more. I actually had to wait 22 months all together.

And then finally we were praying that the Lord would send the adoption packet to the attorney's office (I was afraid it would get lost at DHS and then I would never get adopted). One day, Emily and I were having an argument about this Raggedy Ann doll. Mama said, "Girls, I have a surprise for you." I was like "What??" Mama said, "The adoption packet came in." Emily and I started jumping up and down with glee!!

And that's the story of how I got adopted and God answered my prayer.

- Ellianna, age 7



WAVE WARNING

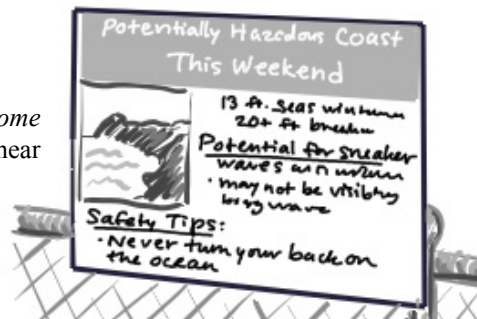
It is a beautiful sunny day to drive to the coast. Do you want to come along? As we climb out of the car, we feel the fresh ocean air and hear the sea gulls crying. We hear another sound from the shore – the low roar of crashing waves.

“Let’s go down to the beach!” you say. *Wait – look at this sign.* We stop and read the warning on the orange board: Potentially Hazardous Coast This Weekend. “What does that mean?” you ask. It says that the surf will be extra high, with breakers up to 20 feet! And “sneaker waves” may come up the beach when you don’t expect them. “Safety Tips,” you read aloud. “Never turn your back on the ocean.”

We are still looking at the sign when a sudden crash surprises us. Nearby a giant wave sprays water high into the air. *Wow, that was a big one!* We lean over the railing to watch the sloshing ocean water below. Farther along the shore people are standing on the sandy beach. “Can we go down?” you ask. “We can be careful, like the sign said.” But as we walk toward the steps, we see more signs: Beach Closed – Dangerous Waves. *I’m sorry. I guess it is too dangerous today. We’ll have to stay up here and watch.* “But those people are on the beach!” you point out. *It doesn’t matter – we’d better obey and be safe. Besides, we can still enjoy watching the waves!*

Standing at the railing gives us a good view of the tossing ocean. “Wow!” you say, as another giant wave hits the rocks and sprays high into the air. “That was probably two stories high!” We laugh as the wet mist floats over us. Excited shrieks from down on the beach tell us that others felt the wave, too. A mother is pulling her crying children back to the steps. “It’s not safe down there,” she says. “That wave nearly washed us out to sea!”

But two people on the beach seem to think the danger is fun. They climb onto a giant log and begin dancing around as the waves tumble in closer and closer. *That is so foolish. They are just asking for trouble!* Suddenly, when their backs are turned, a sneaker wave rushes up the beach and tosses the log into the air. We fearfully watch as the dare-devils fly off into the



Read the three answers for each command.
Black out the squares that show disobedience.

"Don't touch."	Sue wants to help, but pulls her hand away from the knife and smiles.	The candy looks good, but Bill puts his hands into his pockets.	Tom grins and pokes the nail into the outlet.
"Time to go."	Bob gets his shoes and heads for the door.	Jane smiles and keeps talking with her friend.	Pete takes one more turn with the electric train.
"Come right now."	John leaves his truck and says cheerfully, "Here I am!"	Greg closes his book at the interesting point and obeys.	Rose finishes putting a ponytail in her doll's hair.
"Stay right there."	"Okay," Meg says with a smile. Her kitten is across the street, but she doesn't move.	"Why?" Fred asks. "I'm old enough to take care of myself."	When no one is watching, Becky gets off her bed and looks out the door.
"Ask nicely."	Carl holds out his hand with a smile. "Please, may I have some?"	"I would like my book back," Kay says in a calm voice.	"But she wasn't being nice!" Amy argues.

What letter is shown by the remaining white squares? ____
Which children had a cheerful attitude as they obeyed? Color their squares yellow. What letter is shown? ____
Use these two letters to fill in the blanks in the verse below. Can you find it in your Bible? (Hint – look in Proverbs 3)

B ____ not w ____ s ____ n th ____ n ____ own ____ y ____ s:
f ____ ar the Lord, and d ____ part from ____ v ____ l



cold ocean water. As the great log is dragged back by the waves, it barely misses rolling over one of them! When both of them scramble back to shore and leave the beach, we sigh with relief.

“That was scary!” you say, clinging to my hand. “I’m afraid of those waves now!” *We don’t have to be afraid when we are up here where it is safe. That’s why those signs were put up – to warn us of the dangers.* “I’m glad we obeyed them!” you say. “Those people were disobeying, so that’s why they almost got killed.” *Yes, and that is just the lesson I believe God wants us to remember. When He warns us about something, we need to take it seriously. Just like the waves, God is mighty and powerful. When we obey Him, we can delight in what He does. But if we don’t, and just fool around, trying to get away with things, what happens?* “We can get hurt,” you say. *Yes, and there is good reason to be afraid. The Bible says, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” which means when we learn to respect God and obey Him, we will begin to be wise.* “And not foolish, like those people on the log,” you say. “Maybe they will learn to obey next time!”



The Big Disappointment

Laura picked up the typed adventure stories that Omah had given her and read the first title: “The Raccoon Raider.” It would be so fun to draw pictures to illustrate it! Ever since she was little Laura had been “the artist” of the family. Now that she was fourteen, God had been teaching her the importance of using her talents for Him. So when Omah had asked her about illustrating the stories that she was writing, Laura planned to do her very best.



After reading about the mysterious animal that stole corn from Grandpa’s swan feeder, Laura smiled. She remembered many adventures on Grandpa’s farm, and she could already imagine the perfect picture for the story.

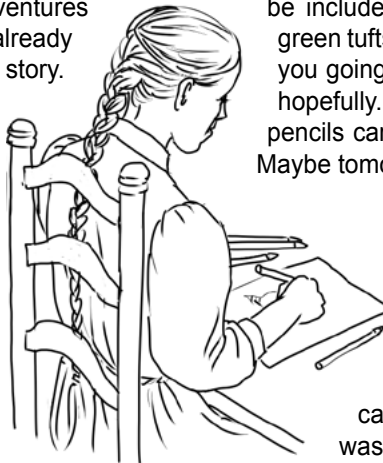


First she went to the bookshelf to find a book on raccoons. One of the pages showed just the right pose – a big raccoon sitting by a stream. When Mom came into the room a few minutes later, Laura was seated at the table sketching. “How’s it going?” she asked. “Good,” Laura replied. “What do you think?” “It looks like a raccoon by one of Grandpa’s feeders,” Mom said, with an encouraging



smile. “Are you planning to color it?” “Oh, yes,” Laura said. “I’m going to use the Prismacolor set you gave me.” “You’ll do a great job,” Mom agreed.

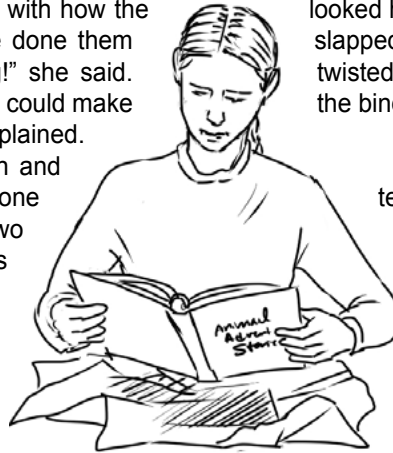
Laura felt quite professional as she laid out the artist-quality pencils beside her paper. Beginning with the black, she began coloring in the mask and nose on the raccoon’s face. The fur was a mix of brown and gray, with black stripes on the tail. “It looks almost real,” breathed her younger sister, Kara, as she came by to watch. “Thanks,” Laura replied. “Do you think I should make the feeder blue or red?” “I like red,” Kara said, pleased to be included. Yellow corn, gray stones, and green tufts of grass finished the picture. “Are you going to do another one?” Kara asked, hopefully. “Not now,” Laura said, putting her pencils carefully away. “I have chores to do. Maybe tomorrow I’ll work on the next picture.”



During the following weeks of that spring and summer, Laura often worked on Omah’s pictures. She would pull out her paper and pencils and an hour or two would disappear as she carefully illustrated the stories. There was a dog barking at an owl wrapped

in a coat. Another page showed a newborn fawn. The spotty fur took extra time, but Laura was careful to do her best. She remembered the day she had discovered a fawn in Grandpa's pasture, hidden in the tall grass. Now she could create beautiful pictures to show others how amazing and interesting these animals were! Each finished picture was slid into a manilla envelope for safe keeping.

The next time Laura went to visit at Omah and Grandpa's home, she took along the manilla envelope. Omah seemed very pleased with how the pictures were turning out. "You've done them even better than I was expecting!" she said. "Thank you. I looked at photos so I could make them look realistic," Laura explained. Then she remembered that Omah and Grandpa's cats were included in one of the stories. Laura studied the two pets sitting on the couch - one was fluffy and lazy, the other sleek and alert. "Do you have any pictures of them?" she asked. Omah hunted through her photo drawer. "Here are a couple," she said, handing them to Laura.



It was fall when at last all the illustrations were finished. With a sense of satisfaction, Laura gave Omah the manilla envelope the next time they visited. "Wonderful," Omah said. "Now I will take them to a publisher and make them into story books for children!" Laura could already see the beautiful books with amazing animal stories and colorful pictures. She was glad she had done her best.

Winter came and soon it was Christmas time. "Grandpa and Omah have arrived!" Kara called from the front window. Laura was helping set out food for the meal, but she joined the rest of her family as they greeted the grandparents at the door. Uncles, aunts, and cousins soon filled the house with laughter and noise. After the meal and a few games, Omah called Laura and the other children over to the couch. "I have a surprise for all of you," she said, handing Laura a package. Inside was a green plastic binder with the words "Animal Adventure Stories" written on front. It didn't look

like the story book Laura had imagined. Slowly she flipped it open. A black and white raccoon picture stared back at her. It wasn't in color at all! Laura didn't say anything, but her face flushed pink with disappointment.

"It didn't work to publish the books after all, so I decided to get them photocopied instead," Omah was explaining, but Laura didn't understand. Why did Omah have to do cheap black-and-white copies of her beautiful pictures? They looked horrible! She felt like she had been slapped in the face. Anger and frustration twisted around inside of her. She handed the binder to Kara and left the room.

It was evening when Laura could tell God all about her disappointment. "It doesn't seem fair," she prayed. "I gave Omah my best work, and she just ruined it all!

Can't I ask her for my pictures back? I mean, maybe she doesn't care - but I do!" As her pent-up feelings spilled out, Laura felt a quietness coming over her. Then a verse came to mind.

Something about giving... Laura opened her Bible and searched for the spot. Here it was, in Luke 6. The words she read spoke to her heart. "And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek...." That was certainly how it had felt to receive the cheap black-and-white pictures. What had Jesus said to do? "Offer also the other." What did that mean? Laura read on, humbling her heart to understand what her beloved Master wanted her to do. There it was in verse 30 - just exactly the answer she needed. "Give... and ask them not again."

Laura stared at the words and then shut her eyes. "Lord Jesus, please help me. I wanted to give my best, and it really hurts to see it all wasted. But if You don't want me to ask her for the pictures back, I won't. I want to please You." A calm sweetness filled Laura's heart as she laid down her Bible. Jesus knew all about giving to those who didn't appreciate it. He understood. And He was glad that she had given her best. That was what really mattered. It wasn't wasted after all.



Dear Reader,

The new year came before we realized it, so we've decided to shorten this issue to get it to you sooner. May the Lord bless you as you seek Him first!

Do you have something to share or questions to ask?

We are glad to receive your letters and emails. You can also call 503-769-7567 and ask to talk to "Aunt Laura."

For older ones who want to be challenged and encouraged in Christian living, *Foundation Truth* is published for youths and adults. Online issues and other literature are available at **timelesstruths.org**.

We are a God-fearing family that includes Rick and Krista Erickson, and their daughters: Laura, Kara, and Amanda. The publishing of *Treasures of the Kingdom* is mainly done by Laura and Amanda, as we look to the Lord to provide content and direction.

The paper is freely sent to those that request it. You will be kept on our mailing list unless you request otherwise. If the Lord leads you to send anything, please note that since we are not a business we cannot cash checks made out to *Treasures of the Kingdom*.



In the King's service,
The Editors

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Treasures of the Kingdom

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*How many pigs can you find?
There should be 51 including this one:*



SEND TO: