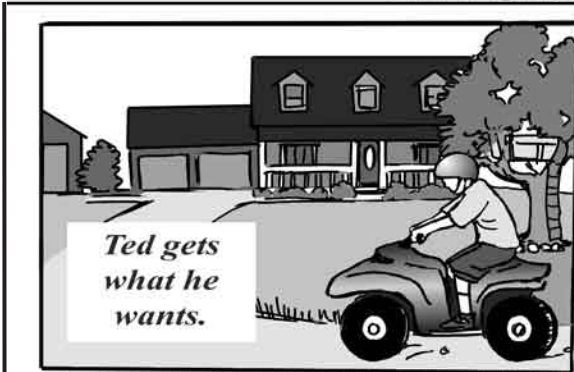


Treasures of the Kingdom

Casting Up a Highway for the Children of This Generation

Rich or Poor



Think About It: Real Riches



It is fun to play with pretend money. You can take out your toys and play store. But when you really need to buy something, play money is worthless. It would be silly to carry a bag of it to the store and try to buy food or clothes with it. It is just pretend! And that's just the same with collecting a lot of earthly riches.

Having a nice house and lots of money might seem like a good idea. But our lives aren't just about *what we have*. Most important of all is *who we are* – the person inside us, called our soul.

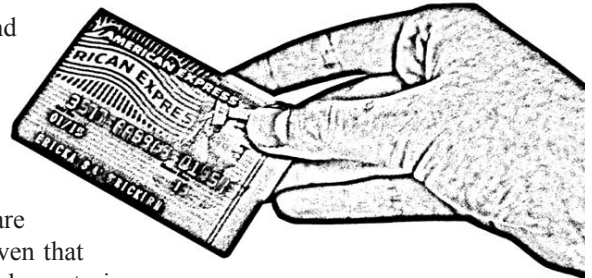
Is your soul rich? When you need something in your soul, money and things can't help you. You might think that a bag full of money makes you rich, but in times of trouble you will find that it is all worthless. That's what happened to one man. He got so much stuff that he decided it was time to build big storerooms to keep it in. "Now I can take life easy and enjoy myself," he thought. "I don't have to work hard any more, because I have everything I need." He thought he was very smart, but he was fooling himself. That night it was time for him to die, and when he looked at all his riches he suddenly realized that they were worthless. You see, he had been living to please himself and hadn't made peace with God. All his earthly stuff couldn't buy him what he needed most! He had never stored any treasures in the heavenly bank, and so now he had nothing at all!

Jesus said that it will happen to us just like that, if we try to get riches for ourselves instead of being "rich toward God." In the end all this earth and the things in it will be burnt up. Only the treasures in heaven and the things that God has done will last. Do you want to learn about the true heavenly riches, and how to live so you won't die bankrupt?

The Heavenly Bank

What if your family had a bank full of money, and you could take some any time you needed it? Every time something broke, or you needed groceries, or you wanted to go somewhere, there would be plenty of money!

That is how it works with God's riches. If we are children of God, then we get a bank account in heaven that never runs out. Instead of hoping we will have a good day or trying really hard to have a good attitude, we just go to the bank! God's promises in the Bible are like a checkbook or credit card. Whenever you need something, the riches are there for you to use.



So this is how it works. I wake up in the morning and I remember my friends are coming over today. How exciting! Right when I'm planning for all the fun, they call to cancel. It suddenly seems like someone stole all my happiness. I feel really, really poor. What can I do? I remember that there is plenty of happiness in the heavenly bank. How do I get it? By taking out one of my promise cards and asking for the exact amount I need - "Please help me to rejoice in the Lord always. I feel all gloomy and I need a lot of cheerfulness and thankfulness. Thank you so much!" If you have an account with the heavenly bank, it will really work. Instead of living like a poor penny-pincher, you can have a day overflowing with blessings! I know it is true, because I've tried it.



Jesus' Example: Living Rich

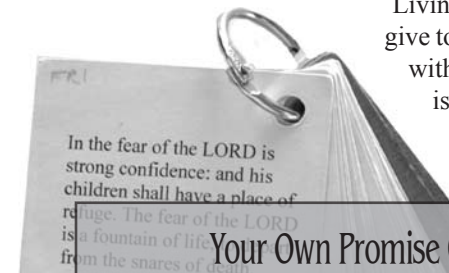
Was Jesus rich? He didn't have a big house or a wallet full of money. He told one man that he didn't even have a bed to sleep on. But he was the richest man that walked on earth. How do I know that? Because of how Jesus lived.



Jesus could feed thousands of people in the middle of the desert – and it didn't even make a dent in his bank account! Jesus never worried about what he would eat or wear. That's because he knew that the God who owns the whole world was his Father. If He cared for the birds and flowers, He surely would care for him. And when Jesus was threatened by mobs, he didn't call the police. Instead he walked away confidently. Jesus said that legions of angels would come to help him if he just asked. That's better than having a body-guard of secret police, don't you think?

Best of all, Jesus' riches made him happy. He didn't worry that they would be used up or stolen. Not at all! He came to share his treasure with us. When people asked for things, he was glad to give them what they really needed. He knew his Father had more heavenly riches to give him whenever he asked. That's because Jesus lived to please God and not himself.

Living rich means having a heart so full of God's goodness, that we can freely give to the needy people around us. Living rich means we are content and happy with what we have. We are confident that God loves us and will give us what is best. Living rich means we don't worry about the future or how others treat us, because we know that God is in control of it all. That is how Jesus lived. And that's what its like to live in the kingdom of heaven.



Your Own Promise Cards

If you want to love and serve Jesus, don't forget the power of God's promises! Each one links you to the treasures in heaven, if you will just pull it out and use it. Start a collection of "promise cards" now. If you memorize them, they will be ready when you need them! (here is a memory system that has worked well for us: www.fast.st/1034)

God's power is real, but we have to do our part to trust and obey Him. On each promise card it might help to highlight the promise, and then underline the part that you are suppose to do.

Psalm 34:6

Peace to keep our hearts and minds

Help in trouble

Psalm 37:4

Supplying all our needs

Psalm 46:1

The desires of our heart

Strength

Isaiah 40:31

Matthew 5:4

Mercy

Grace for every good work

Matthew 5:7

Philippians 4:7-8

saved from trouble

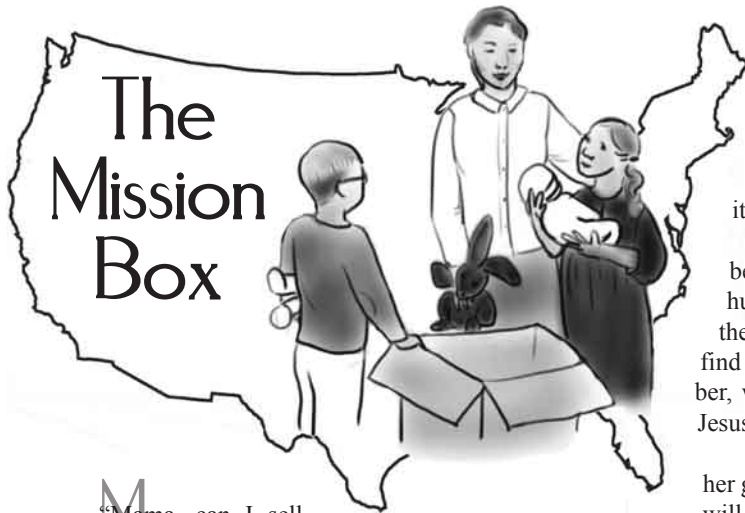
Comfort

Philippians 4:19

2 Corinthians 9:8

Can you match these promises with the right verses?





The Mission Box

Mama, can I sell my ponies at the garage sale?" Jenny asked, looking at her shelf full of plastic animals. "I don't play with them any more, and they are just taking up space."

"That's a good idea." Mrs. Rich came into the room where Jenny and her brother were sorting through their toys. It was "de-clutter" day at the Rich's house and stuff was scattered everywhere. "Put anything you want to sell in this box," she suggested. "It is really a good time to get rid of things, since the neighbors are having a sale."

"How about my stuffed animals?" Michael asked, dumping an armload on the floor. "I want to keep Panda and Crocker, but I can sell the others."

"They are so well-loved that they might have to go in the free box," Mrs. Rich said with a laugh. "I think the dog must have chewed on this one!" She held up a teddy bear with a hole in the back.

Jenny dropped her ponies into the "sell" box and came over to look. "But lots of people would buy these," she said, pulling out a couple of Beanie Babies. "This little zebra is soooo cute! Some little kid will really want it."

"That reminds me!" Mrs. Rich said suddenly. "The Hustlers are taking some boxes of things for the poor children in Kenya. Wouldn't it be nice to send them some of your toys?"

"They can have my ponies!" said Jenny.

"They can have all my stuffed animals!" added Michael. "Except, maybe Panda. He would miss me too much if he went to Kenya."

Mrs. Rich smiled. "I'll have to call Mrs. Hustler and see how much room they have. I'm sure your things will make the poor children so happy!"

"Do they have any dolls in Kenya?" Jenny asked thoughtfully, looking into her dolly crib. Six pairs of eyes stared up at her, but it was the sleeping "reborn" baby that she gently picked up. "I could give them Analise. She is my very favorite," Jenny whispered.

"I'm glad you want to give them your best," Mrs. Rich said, giving her daughter a hug. "That pleases Jesus very much! But if they don't have room for big things, we can find some special little dolls to send. Just remember, whatever we send is going on a mission for Jesus!"

Jenny hugged her baby close and then laid her gently in the box with the ponies. "I guess this will be the mission box now," she said. "I don't need more money anyway, and I want to make some poor kids happy."

"I just wish I could send along some food," Mrs. Rich said, looking at their well-stocked shelves. "We have so much, and they are having such a famine right now. But canned things are so heavy..."

"What about dried fruit?" Jenny suggested, opening a drawer. "It's really light."

"And trail mix is really good," Michael added, pulling out a bag. "Can we have some for lunch?"

Mrs. Rich laughed. "I guess it is about lunch time!" she said. "You each can have a handful while I make some sandwiches and call Mrs. Hustler."

Jenny and Michael had piled the mission box full of toys by the time Mrs. Rich got off the phone. "Come and eat now," she called from the kitchen. "I have something to tell you." Her voice was strangely serious, so the children sat down quietly. "The Hustler's got an email from the minister in Kenya. It sounds like what they need most is clothes, not toys."

"But Mama --" began Jenny.

"Wait and let me explain," Mrs. Rich continued. "It is hard for us here in America to understand how poor they really are over there, because we have so much. She says that they have to use all the money they get for food, so most of the children really don't have anything to wear."

"We have lots of clothes," said Michael.

"Can't we send clothes and some toys, too? Just a few little ones?" Jenny pleaded. "I know children like toys."

"I'm sure they do, but--" Mrs. Rich sighed and looked at her plate. "They need food and clothes more

than anything else. It is hard to imagine only eating one meal of rice and peas a day, or maybe only a piece of banana.”

“I would starve!” Michael said, licking the peanut butter and jelly off his fingers. “Can’t we send them some food, too?”

“Maybe we could send some money to help buy some,” Mrs. Rich agreed. “But let’s think about the clothes right now.”

“I have some dresses that are too small for me,” Jenny said, hopping up. “Maybe we can look through our storage boxes, too.”

“It would be better to give needy children the clothes than to store them,” Mrs. Rich agreed. “Mrs. Hustler sent over some pictures,” she continued, turning on the computer. “They will give us an idea of the sizes they need.”

“Poor little kids,” Jenny said, when Mrs. Rich showed them the email. “Their clothes are all ragged and dirty!”

“They don’t have any shoes either,” Michael said.

“Maybe they don’t need shoes because it is hot there,” Mrs. Rich said. “But some of them can’t go to school or church because they don’t have anything good to wear. That little girl looks like her dress is way too big.”

Dark eyes stared out of a brown face, and the sleeves dangled past the little girl’s hands. Jenny suddenly felt very rich indeed. “Don’t you think one of my dresses would fit her, Mama?” Jenny asked, eagerly. “Are there lots of children that need clothes? I hope we have enough!”

Mrs. Rich smiled. “I don’t think we do, dear, but we’ll send what we can,” she said, following the children down the hall. “Let’s look for things that are sturdy and lightweight, since it is hot in Kenya.”

“And pretty!” Jenny said. “I want to send some nice things for that little girl to wear. If she can’t have Analise, at least I can help her be happy! Don’t you think that is what Jesus would like?”

“Yes, indeed,” Mrs. Rich said. “Let’s begin filling a box right now!”

Far across the sea, on the edge of the hot savannah, a little mud hut stood by a dusty path. Two girls sat in the shade of a tree, watching their brother hop across lines scratched in the dirt. “You stepped on one,” Mary said. “You must start over.”

“It is my turn!” Esther said, hopping up. “I will throw my stone now.”

“Daniel!” Grandma called from the doorway, “Bring me some water so I can cook the ugali. Do not spill any, since we are almost out!”

Daniel stopped hopping and turned quickly to the house. He was glad there would be porridge to eat today, since the kind minister had given them some corn. Sure enough, the water jug only had one scoop left in the bottom, but it was enough.

“Should I go to the reservoir for more water?” Daniel asked Grandma.

“It is a long walk,” she replied, “but we cannot afford to pay the water man to bring us some.” She looked out across the dry fields and shook her head. Poor Grandma looked so tired these days. She hardly ever could go out to work anymore.

“After we eat I can go,” Daniel said, confidently. “It is only three kilometers. My arms are strong and I can carry the water.”

The sun was dipping behind the hills when Daniel returned with the water jugs. They were only half full, but he was glad to set them down and rest. “Let the dirt settle and then you can drink some,” he told his sisters.

After satisfying their thirst, the girls were eager to talk. “Dorcas and James came by,” Mary said.

“They are going to the meeting tonight,” Esther added. “And their daddy said he’d take us along, if we could go.”

“But Grandma said, no,” Mary continued, “’cause our clothes are too dirty.”

“I washed my shirt at the reservoir,” Daniel said hopefully.

“Come let me see you,” Grandma called from the house. She looked her grandson up and down, then slowly shook her head. “That shirt is full of holes,” she said. “I must mend it before school begins.”



Daniel sighed. He missed singing with the other children and listening to the kind minister speak about God. There was always good food to eat, too. If only he could persuade Grandma to change her mind!

But Grandma was firm. "You'll have to do your singing and praying here tonight," she said. "When we have enough money, we'll buy some clothes."

Daniel knew when that would be, but he didn't say anything. There had never been enough money for new clothes in their house.

"I know!" said Esther, "We can pray for new clothes. Remember that we can ask Jesus for everything."

"If it is good for us," Daniel added.

"It is good to have clothes," put in Mary. "And it is good to learn about the Bible."

Daniel smiled. "Let's have our own meeting then," he suggested.

It was more than two weeks later that a bicycle bumped over the rutted roads and stopped in the shade of the tree. "It is the minister!" Mary shouted, running to greet him.

"Did you bring food for us?" Esther asked, looking at the bundle strapped to the back. But there were no maize sacks - only a big bag full of lumps.

"Not this time," he said with a smile. Then he looked at the children thoughtfully. "Are you out of food?" he asked. "I haven't seen you for awhile. How is your grandmother doing?"

"We have some corn still," Daniel said.

"Grandma said we couldn't go to Bible class," said Esther, "because -"

"Shush!" Daniel said, giving her a warning look.

"Welcome, welcome!" said Grandma, coming from the house with her cane. "It has been a long time since we have seen you, dear brother."

"Yes it has," the minister said, shaking her hand warmly. "How is your back doing these days?"

"A bit stiff, but we get along," Grandma said. "The corn has been a great blessing to us. Thank you and all the dear saints that sent it."

"We thank the Lord for providing it," he replied.

"But we have missed seeing the children at Bible class and have come to see if we can help in some way."

"Frankly, they don't have suitable clothes to go anywhere," Grandma said. "If I could get out to work a bit more, maybe we could get..."

"Well, praise the Lord!" the minister interjected. "He surely sent me to the right place today." They all looked at him in surprise, as he untied the bag and reached inside. "Let's see, I have something here that might be the right size," he said, lifting out a blue and white striped shirt.

The children gathered around, and Daniel reached out his hand eagerly. The minister handed it to him with a laugh. "Well, Daniel. Just see if that will satisfy your grandmother!" Daniel wriggled out of his ragged shirt and slipped his arms into the clean new sleeves. Carefully he began buttoning up the front, while his sisters watched in admiration. He had never had a man's shirt with buttons before.

"Quite nice," said Grandma with a chuckle. "Quite nice, indeed!"

But the minister was already holding out several pairs of pants. "Which one will fit better?" he asked. "Yours are almost worn out, aren't they?" Sure enough Daniel's shorts did look very faded and worn with such a wonderful shirt. So Daniel pulled on a pair of sturdy gray slacks to complete his outfit.

"You look like the Bible teacher," Mary said with a giggle.

"Now that's a fine pair of clothes," said Grandma with approval. "You will have to save them for meetings and school, so they won't get worn out."

"Thank you," Daniel finally remembered to say. "They are perfect!"

Mary and Esther were delighted when the minister brought out some colorful dresses next. "This yellow one fits me!" Esther said excitedly. "See, Grandma?"

"I like this one. Isn't it pretty?" Mary added, holding up a blue dress with white and green poka-dots.

"It is wonderful," Grandma said, blinking back the tears. "I didn't know how I would manage - surely the good Lord hasn't forgotten us."

"Now we can go to the meetings again," Daniel said with a grin.

"Well, praise the Lord!" the minister said again. "I am very glad."

"Whoever sent the clothes was very kind," Grandma added. "Please thank them for us."

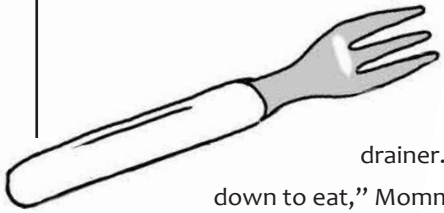
"God sent them!" Esther said. "We prayed for clothes and He sent them."

"He surely knows how to answer prayer," the minister agreed. "And this time He sent them all the way from America, with some dear friends that came to visit us. Praise the Lord!"

"All the way from America?" Mary repeated. She looked at her new dress and smiled. "I like it very much. Thank you for bringing it."

"You are very welcome," the minister said, climbing onto the bicycle. "I must go now, but I'll be looking for you at the meeting!"

"Thank you! Good-bye!" the others said. They waved as he peddled out of sight. "We will see you at Bible class!"



"I want my fork!"

It was time for lunch, but Lillian's fork was stuck in the dish drainer. Mommy couldn't get it out. "Come, Lillian. It is time to sit down to eat," Mommy said. "Here is another fork for you to use."

"I want my fork!" Lillian said.

"I can't get it out," Mommy said. "It is really stuck. You will have to use another for right now."

Lillian didn't want to use another fork. She wanted her special fork. She frowned and didn't move. "Time to smile and say, 'yes, Mommy,'" Mommy said.

Lillian looked at the dish drainer stacked with dishes. She looked at the fork in Mommy's hands. At last Lillian said, "Yes, Mommy." She gave a little smile and sat down to eat.

When it was time for bed, Mommy sat beside Lillian's bed and sang her a song. "Humble yourself, and the Lord will draw near you. Humble yourself and His presence will cheer you," Mommy sang.

"Mommy, what does 'humble' mean?" Lillian asked suddenly.

"Remember when your fork was stuck in the drainer and you weren't happy about it?" Mommy said. "When you took the other fork I gave you, you humbled yourself. You were saying 'yes, Mommy' inside. Then you were happy."

Lillian smiled and snuggled with her bunny. Mommy continued singing softly, "He will not walk with the proud or the scornful; humble yourself to walk with God."

"Mommy," Lillian whispered, "what does 'proud' mean?"

Mommy smiled. "It means that you want your own way, like saying, 'I want my fork!' and not being happy without it."

"Mm-hmm," agreed Lillian.

Mommy kissed her and said, "Nightie-night!"

By Lillian (age 3) and her Mommy



Do you have an experience to tell? Just write, or call me at 503-769-7567 & I will help you write it up! - Miss Laura

Buried Treasures

I HOPE WE CAN PRINT YOUR STORY NEXT!

There are many ways that God shows His care for us. Sometimes He gives us what we ask for, and other times He teaches us to wait and trust. Read about God's riches that others have found!

Love
Courage
Gentleness
Trust
Kindness
Faith



Patience
Meekness
Truth
Goodness
Peace
Joy

THE GLASS IN MY FOOT



I was walking barefoot. I was walking on the bark chips. That is how I got a little piece of glass in the bottom of my foot. It felt like a little bark chip. I told Mommy, "it hurts!" When I was eating, it hurt. So Mommy was looking at it. She thought it wasn't a bark chip. It was so little that we couldn't see it. We could only see the blood. Mommy said, "Just take a nap now."

When I was sleeping God helped get it out. When I woke up, it was better! My foot felt good. - Lillian, age 3



Healing Testimony

When I was 13 years old I was sick with jaundice. I had very strong pains in my liver and was yellow, so the teachers sent me home from school. (I attended public school). Late in the evening I had such strong pains that I could neither lie down or sit up because of them. My mother and my grandmother were sitting in the kitchen, and I went and told them about my pains. My mother proposed to pray. She prayed for me and immediately I was healed. There were no more pains or yellowness. And I did not have any problems with my liver since that time. When I went to school the next day my teachers were very surprised that I was in good health. They asked me how it had happened.

- Natalia, from Russia



One night Elena cried a lot. She kept my mommy and daddy awake all night. She cried for about a week like that. They didn't know what to do with her, except they gave her teething tablets. It was hard for my parents because they were so tired and had three little children to manage. I tried to help during the day and I did my schedule.



Elena's Tooth!

I didn't know how long it would last. But my parents said God could help us. It turned out she had a tooth. We discovered it one night. I put my hand in her mouth and felt a bump, like a mountain! My parents told me that she had a tooth that night. So that was the cause of all her crying! I learned that God can take care of us when we trust Him. - Emma, at age 6



Being Patient



One time my baby sister, Ava, started scooting on her tummy. I liked it. She was cute and my mom said she looked like me, sort of. Me and my mom tried to encourage her to start crawling. “Come on, Ava!” my mom said. “Ava, come to me!” I said. She just looked at us like “I can’t do it while you’re watching.” We just turned our backs

and looked at her from the corner of our eyes. She started scooting again. Then she stopped, because she saw we were looking. It kept up for quite awhile. I had to be patient. I was so eager to get her crawling that I tried to push her along. My mom said, “Leave her alone. She’ll do it soon enough.” Sure enough, she started crawling! I learned I needed to be patient. - Emma, at age 6



We have two ducks in our backyard. One day, after their time swimming in the wheelbarrow, Papa and I tossed them back into their pen. Then we went inside to see what Mama was doing. A few

minutes passed and I looked out the window. One duck was covered in blood! We ran outside to see what was the matter. It looked like it had cut its wing on some chicken

wire. Papa told me to go get rubbing alcohol and cotton balls. He cleaned up the wound, but it wouldn’t stop bleeding. Papa said a little prayer. “Dear God,” he said, “I know its just a duck, but You can stop the bleeding.” Then he told me to go get some medical tape to wrap the wing. When I came back out the bleeding had stopped. We let the duck flap around, and her wing seemed just fine! And now it looked like nothing had happened. I know God healed the duck. - AutumnGrace, age 9

THE DUCK STORY



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 one another, too!

A Place for Prayer

REQUESTS

Please pray for my little foster brother, Mac. He has a bad cold and it hurts him. And for me to have love and patience for him. Also, please pray for my dog. She has an infection in her eye.
- AutumnGrace, almost 10



Pray for me not to aggravate my brother. That I will remember to go tell Mommy and Daddy instead. - Kaden, age 6

THANKSGIVING



Let's remember to give thanks for the everyday abundance that the Lord has given us! We are thankful for the harvest, and that Papa has good work. And for our food, clothes, and beds.
- the Williams

God helped me not to run in the road when I woke up from my nap. - Josiah, age 2

I am thankful that God helped me be strong when I was born, when everyone thought I would be sick and weak. - Judah, age 4



I was wanting some brothers and sisters, and God has placed a 2-year-old and 3-year-old with us. And *maybe* a 5-year-old. It is fun to have little people in our home! - AutumnGrace, almost 10



I'm thankful that my dad didn't get hurt any worse. He was flying a bamboo hang glider and landed sideways. He hurt his knee, but I'm glad he didn't hurt it any worse.

I'm thankful that my little brother helps me with my chores. - Kaden, age 6

Praise the Lord for providing money to roof the Bible Center in Makindu! The Lord has helped with the slow building process, and helped the walls to get completed this summer. The Lawrence family hopes to get the roof up before the fall rains. Please continue to pray for them as they minister to the needy people around them. For updates and photos, see the blog: livingwaterbarrenland.blogspot.com



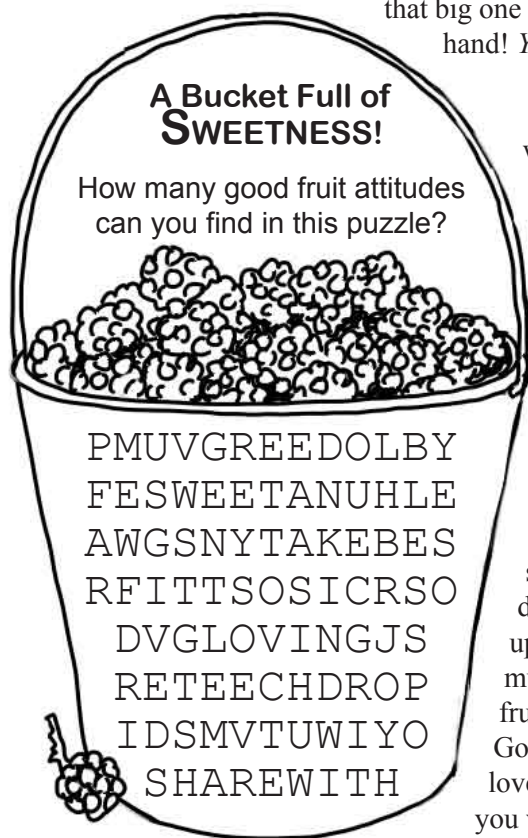
First Ripe Fruit

The blackberries are getting ripe by the railroad tracks. I'm going to pick some for breakfast. Do you want to come along? Make sure you have sturdy shoes and long sleeves – the brambles are prickly!

We take our pail and walk down the lane. Here, I'll help you over the ditch. The blackberries are on the other side. *Here is a good place*, you say. *Look at all the berries!* They are big and juicy, aren't they? You can pick the ones that are easy to reach, and I'll get the higher ones. Make sure to get the black ones.



This one is sour! you say, puckering your mouth. I agree. Not all the black ones are sweet yet. Try to pick the ones that pull off easily – see? Mmm! That one was good! I think the first ripe fruits are always my favorite. *Can you help me find a sweet one?* you ask. *All these are stuck tight!* Try that big one at the end of the bunch. See – it just dropped into your hand! *Yummy!* you say.

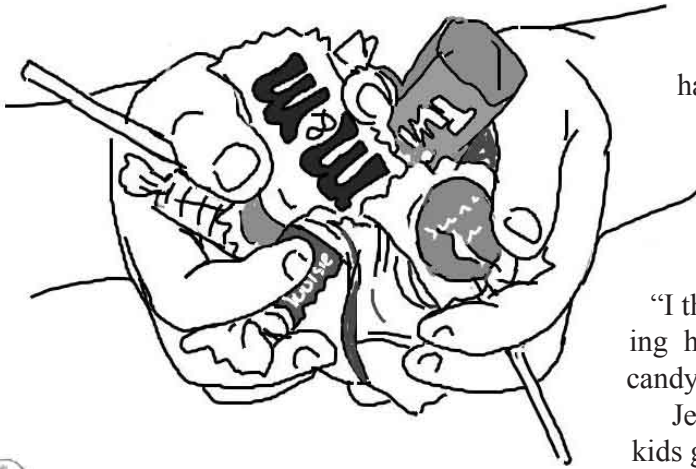


Hunting for the ripe berries takes time, but it is worth it. I think that the blackberries have a special lesson to teach us. Just as the sweet fruits are the ones that let go of the branch, our lives are sweet when we let go of our own way. Maybe it seems better to hold on and do things the way we like, but it really gives a sour taste. *Like the blackberry that I picked first*, you say. *It looked good, but it tasted bad!*

That's right. God is like a berry picker, too. He wants the first ripe fruit in our lives. When we give up our way and give our lives to God, how wonderful that is! Do you think it is worth all the hunting and scratches to get some yummy sweet blackberries? I do! And that is why Jesus suffered and keeps bearing up with people who are mean and selfish. He wants so much to find some that will yield to Him. I think the first fruits give Him special joy – those that give their lives to God when they are young. When we give Him our first love and strength and willingness, how sweet it is! Do you want to be a first ripe fruit for God?



Too Much



“Mom! Mom! See how much candy I got!” Jeffrey said excitedly. His friend’s birthday party had been fun, but the pinata was the best of all. Jeffrey hadn’t ever seen so much candy before! Now both his hands were filled with suckers, gummy bears, M&M bags and who-knows-what-else.

“I think that is too much,” Mom said, shaking her head. “You don’t need that much candy. You already had cake and ice cream.”

Jeffrey’s eyes widened. “But all the other kids got lots more!” he protested.

Mom sighed. “Maybe they did, but I think you’ll be much better off without it,” she said. She smiled at her son’s sad face. “I don’t usually let you have candy, but how about choosing three of your favorites,” she decided. “Then you can share them with the others after supper. It will be a special treat!”

Carefully Jeffrey sorted through his treasures. “I’ll take the M&Ms and gummy bears,” he decided at last. “Then there will be a lot for all of us!”

“Sharing will make you and your tummy much happier!” Mom agreed.

As they drove home together, Jeffrey thought about all the presents and games at the party. “Mom, is it wrong to have parties?” he asked.

“That depends on the kind of party,” Mom said. “What are you thinking about?”

“It seems like it makes people kind of selfish,” Jeffrey said. “When you get a lot of stuff and eat lots of treats, I mean.”

“That is true,” Mom agreed. “Sometimes less is much better, because it makes us more thankful, doesn’t it?”

Jeffrey looked at the candy in his lap and slowly nodded. “I think I like my treats better because there are only three,” he said.

Mom smiled. “That is a great secret that few people learn about,” she said. “It is the secret of true happiness. Do you remember how God has promised the kingdom of heaven to the poor? It is when we don’t have much that we learn how much God has for us!”

Jeffrey thought about that for awhile. “But we have a lot, don’t we, Mom? I guess maybe we are kind of rich. Does that mean we won’t go to heaven?”

“Well,” Mom said slowly, “Jesus said it was dangerous to be rich. And He said that if we hold on to our things, they will keep us from following Him. But God knows how to help us if we have too much. Remember the story of Gideon?”



Jeffrey nodded. "It's in my Bible Story book," he said. "I like the picture of all the men blowing their trumpets and shining their torches!"

"It is a wonderful story," Mom agreed. "Not because of what men did, but what God did. You see, it all started with a boy that was afraid."

"Tell it to me," Jeffrey begged.

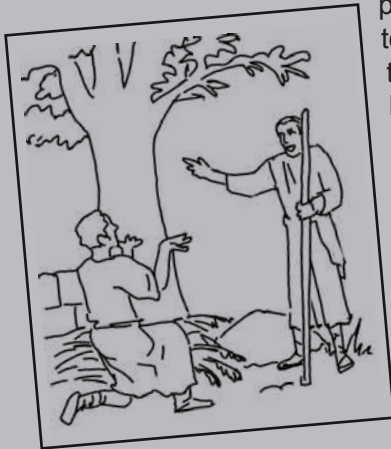
"Well, the land of Israel was in trouble because they had forsaken God," Mom began. "Their enemies, the Midianites, would come and raid and burn their crops, and everyone was afraid of them. Of course, the people still needed to eat, so anytime they had some food to harvest, they would hide it. And that was what Gideon was doing the day an angel met him."



"The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!" the angel said.

Gideon didn't realize it was an angel at first, and he was puzzled. "How can the Lord be with us if all these bad things are happening to us?" he asked. He remembered the stories of how God had freed the slaves in Egypt and made a path through the sea. But where was God now? "He has forsaken us to the Midianites," Gideon said, sadly.

The angel of God looked at him and he saw something better than courage or power. It was Gideon's humility, because he was willing to admit that he needed help. So the angel said, "Go in this might and you will save Israel from the Midianites, because I have sent you."



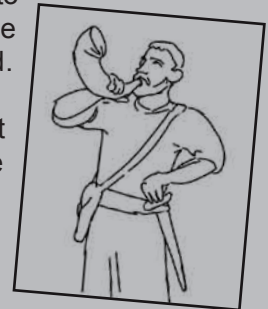
Gideon didn't think he could do it. He felt small and afraid. But God kept encouraging him. "I will be with you," He said, and showed His power by burning up the food Gideon gave him with the touch of a stick. When Gideon realized it was God speaking to him, he was even more afraid! But the Lord said "fear not." He told Gideon that he must break down the altar to Baal that his father had, and build an altar to God instead. Gideon knew that he could get in trouble, but he obeyed.

And when the neighbors got angry, God protected him.

Finally, after several more tests, Gideon was persuaded that God would really help him. And it was just in time, because the Midianites had camped in a nearby valley with all their great army. Gideon blew a trumpet and the Israelites gathered together for a battle. But having courage to fight wasn't enough.

"You have too many people to fight the Midianites," God said.

Too many? The valley was filled with the enemy's tents and camels, and it seemed like they would barely have enough soldiers to win. But God saw there was a danger worse than the Midianites. It was the danger of trusting in themselves. "You have too many," He said, "because the people will think they won the battle themselves. Now go and tell anyone that is afraid to go home."



Afraid? Yes, most of the Israelites were afraid. When Gideon told them that they could go home, less than a third remained. Now there were only brave men left, at least. But God didn't want him to depend on that. "You still have too many," He told Gideon. "Bring them to the water to drink, and I'll show you which ones should go with you."

Again Gideon obeyed. As he watched the soldiers drink out of the stream, most of them got on their knees. A few scooped up the water with their hands. "Those are the ones that will save Israel from the Midianites," God said. "Let the rest go home."

Poor Gideon! How could he win a battle with only three hundred men? But God encouraged him again. "If you are afraid, just go down and listen to what the enemy is saying," He told him. So Gideon crept down into the valley and heard an amazing thing. The Midianites were having dreams about Gideon smashing their tents! "God has delivered us into his hand," they said to one another.

Gideon realized that God was already winning the battle, and he took courage. "Let's go!" he said to the men. "The Lord has delivered the Midianites into our hands!" And sure enough, that night the whole enemy camp was destroyed because of three hundred and one faithful men, blowing trumpets and shining their torches in the night.



When Mom finished, Jeffrey sighed happily. "I like that story," he said.

"What did you like best?" Mom asked.

"The men blowing their trumpets," Jeffrey decided.

"Three hundred wasn't too small, when God was with them," Mom agreed. "Let's always remember that God's way is for us to be little, and Him to be big. He has promised to help us, if we will just trust and obey."



ONLY THREE...

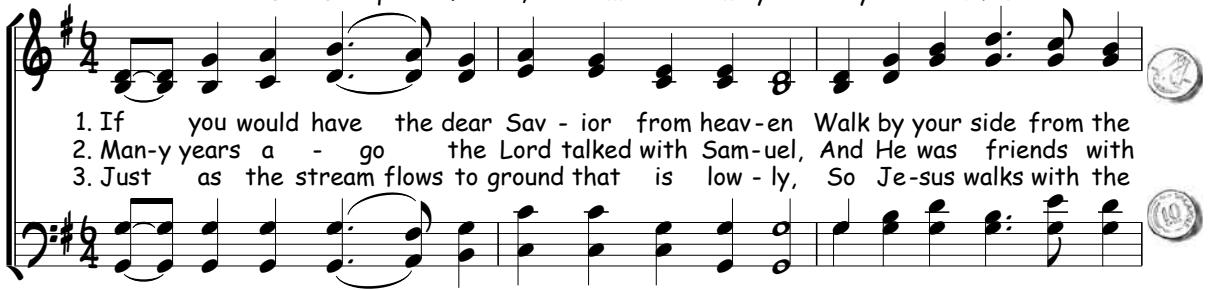
How many items can you find **three** of in this picture? Color them.

Now Dig Deeper

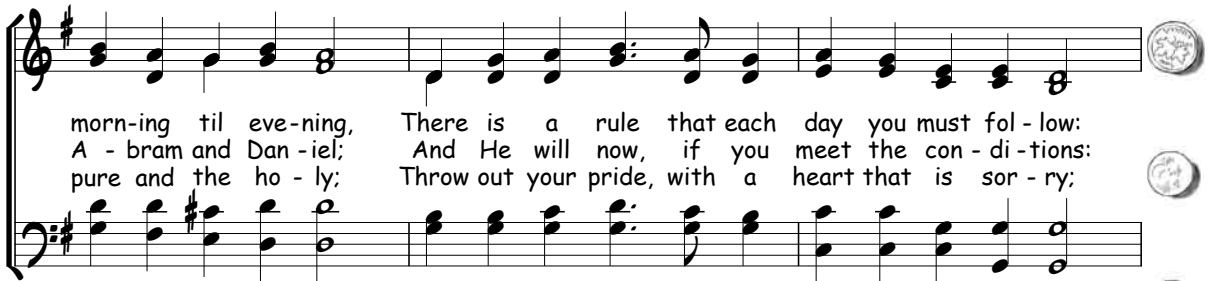
Have you found everything? Read Judges 7:20 to learn about the three weapons that Gideon's men carried. Why was one of them broken? You will find the answer in the 16th verse. Each of the weapons represent something that God's warriors need. Dig in the Bible to discover the hidden meaning. 2 Corinthians 4 has a few treasure clues to get you started!

Humble Yourself

What doth the LORD require of thee, but to... walk humbly with thy God? —Mic. 6:8



1. If you would have the dear Sav - ior from heav - en Walk by your side from the
2. Man - y years a - go the Lord talked with Sam - uel, And He was friends with
3. Just as the stream flows to ground that is low - ly, So Je - sus walks with the

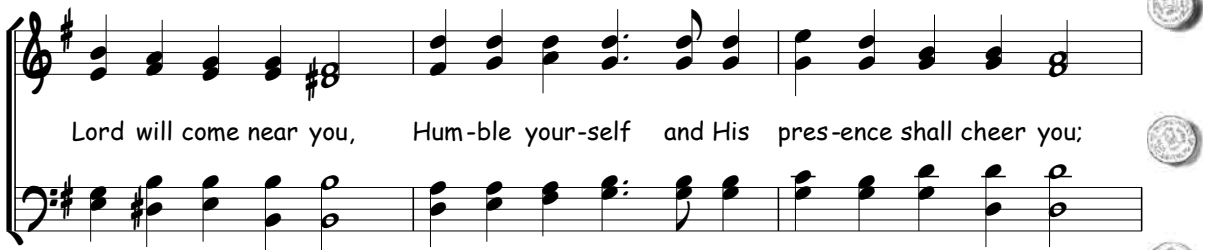


morn - ing til eve - ning, There is a rule that each day you must fol - low:
A - bram and Dan - iel; And He will now, if you meet the con - di - tions:
pure and the ho - ly; Throw out your pride, with a heart that is sor - ry;



Refrain

Hum - ble your - self to walk with God. Hum - ble your - self and the



Lord will come near you, Hum - ble your - self and His pres - ence shall cheer you;



He will not walk with the proud or the scorn - ful, Hum - ble your - self to walk with God.



Dear Reader,

You haven't been forgotten. There have been many months of praying and waiting to write this issue. Like Gideon, I have been humbled to depend more on God to do the work He has given me. It may be a small place, but by His help I purpose to fill it. I appreciate your prayers.



We always are glad to hear your stories! Moms and older siblings, please help the children in your families share their testimonies. You can also contact me by phone. Just call 503-769-7567 and ask for "Miss Laura."



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



We are a God-fearing family that includes Rick and Krista Erickson, and their daughters still at home: 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.



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In the King's service,
The Editors



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Treasures of the Kingdom

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*How many seperate coins can you find?
There are at least 97 including this one:*



SEND TO: