

Treasures of the Kingdom

Casting Up a Highway for the Children of This Generation

ACUP for Jesus

They all wanted to be important, but only one was chosen. Why?



When Dylan was AFRAID

Dylan wasn't a "scared-y cat." Certainly not! He loved to climb the front maple tree and swing like a monkey. Cousin Justin was afraid to do that. And when the big rooster came running, Dylan would whack the ground with a big stick and scare him away. "You don't need to be scared of him," he told Justin. "Old Red is just a show off. He's really afraid of me. Let's go see if Henny Penny is sitting on her nest."



Dylan was brave about hard work, too. If big Brother Joe stacked wood or carried grocery sacks for Mother, Dylan did it, too. One time he dropped a box of canned vegetables because it was too heavy. Clankety-bang! The cans rolled all over the driveway. "I'll pick them up!" Dylan said quickly. And two by two he took those cans to the house and put them on the shelf where they belonged. No, Dylan wasn't a shirker, even if he was just six years old.

Strangers didn't scare Dylan either. In fact, Mother had to discipline him one day because he talked to the delivery man when he should have

been cleaning up. "You must always ask before you start talking to someone you don't know," said Mother. "Most strangers are kind, but some might want to hurt a little boy."

"Why?" asked Dylan. He liked to ask questions.

"Because they listen to the devil and he tells them to do mean things," said Mother. "When you obey, you will be kept happy and safe."

Dylan thought about that. "Does the devil talk to everyone?" he asked.

"Why, yes," said Mother. "He will whisper bad ideas to anyone who will listen. But there are two voices. God's Spirit always tells us to do what is right. I hope my little boy will always listen to the right voice."

"Was it the devil that told me to hit Katie when I was mad yesterday?" Dylan asked.

"Yes, I'm afraid that you listened to him that time. But you were much happier when you were sorry and treated your sister nicely, weren't you?"

Dylan nodded. "I know what the devil is saying right now," he told Mother. "He is saying that I should play and not clean up my toys. Bad devil!"



“What is Jesus saying?” asked Mother with a smile.

“To do it quickly!” shouted Dylan, as he ran off down the hall.

Dylan thought about the two voices all day. It helped him to remember to do right and obey. Whenever he thought about complaining or being unkind, he would imagine a black little devil whispering to him. “I will not do that!” he said, and in his mind he whacked the bad idea like he had whacked Big Red.

That night Dylan had his first nightmare. He had never been afraid of the dark before, but suddenly, in the middle of the night, he sat up with a frightened cry. It seemed that a giant black hand was trying to grab him and take him away. He jumped out of his bed and ran to his parent’s room.

“What is the matter, Dylan?” Daddy asked.

“I’m scared! Something bad is trying to get me,” Dylan sobbed. He hid his face in the blankets. Daddy’s strong arm reached around him and Dylan felt safe again. But he didn’t want to go back to bed. “Come, I will tuck you in,” said Daddy.

“You won’t leave me?” asked Dylan, clinging to his hand.

“God will never leave you, so you don’t need to be afraid. I will sing a song,” said Daddy. His low voice filled the dark room as he slowly rubbed Dylan’s back.

“Oh, how He loves you and me!” he repeated over and over. Dylan thought of God and it seemed like he

must be a bit like Daddy. Strong and kind and good. Soon Dylan began to feel sleepy and before he knew it, it was morning.

The next night the nightmare came again. This time he was sure the blackness was the devil and his heart beat very fast. “Daddy, Daddy!” he called. “I’m scared!” Again Daddy sang until Dylan felt safe again and could fall asleep.

At nap time the next day, when Mother was reading him a story, Dylan asked her about it. “Mom, is the devil in charge of the night? He seems so very big and bad when it is dark outside.”

“Is that why you were scared last night?” she asked. “The Bible says that the devil is the ruler of the darkness, but that is talking about the dark-

ness of sin. The devil wants you to do wrong and be scared. God is bigger than the devil and he says that you don’t need to be afraid if you trust and obey Him.”

Dylan snuggled down into his covers. “I’m not scared in the daytime. Only when it is dark outside.”

Mother gave him a kiss. “Tonight we will pray that you will not be afraid in the dark, either.”



That evening Daddy read Bible verses about trusting God in the night. "You see, Dylan. God is our refuge, which is like a safe hiding place," said Daddy. "That is why we don't have to be afraid of 'the terror by night' as this Psalm says. In verse four it says 'under his wings shalt thou trust.' We are safe when we trust Him."

"You can just imagine," added Mother, "that God is like a giant mother hen."

"Bigger than this house?" asked Dylan.

"Yes, much bigger. And when it is dark, remember that He is there protecting you, just as if you were a baby chick."

Dylan thought about that. "I know!" he said happily. "It is just dark because of God's big feathers. Now I will not be afraid any more!" And he wasn't.

The next week when Cousin Justin came to play, the boys went out to the chicken yard. "Whack, whack! I'm not scared of you, Big Red!" shouted Dylan. He led the way to the shed where Henny Penny had hidden her nest.

"Oh, there's a baby chicken!" said Justin. Sure enough, a little fluffy chick stood next to his mother. The boys crouched down to look, and

4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust...

Henny Penny puffed up with a warning CLUCK!

"Look, look!" cried Justin. "He's crawling under her!"

"Yes," said Dylan, with a big smile. "It's night-time for him, but he's not afraid of the dark. His mother's feathers keep him safe."

"I used to be afraid of the dark," said Justin.

"Did your Daddy sing to you and tell you about how big God is?" asked Dylan.

Justin shook his head. "I just hold onto my Eddie and he keeps me safe."

"Is your Eddie stronger than the devil?" asked Dylan.

"I-I don't know," Justin said slowly. "But the devil scares me too much. So I decided he wasn't real."

"But he is real," Dylan insisted. "He tells bad people to do bad things. My Mom said so. But I'm not scared of him anymore, because God covers me with His feathers every night. Just like Henny Penny's chick!"

As the boys watched, a little brown head poked out from under Henny Penny's wing and looked at them. "I'm not afraid," it seemed to say.

Dylan smiled. "I'm going to tell everyone that Henny Penny has chicks. Race you to the house, Justin!"



<p>Not him!</p>	<p>Forget it.</p>	<p>He's too good for us.</p>	<p>I have my own friends.</p>	<p>All ready for Jesus!</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>Isaiah 57:15</p>
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Roots and Fruits

Do you like strawberries? I do! Then come along. The strawberry patch needs to be dug up. I'll show you how you can help.

It looks all tangled and weedy, you say. Yes, we must first find all the strawberry plants – see these scalloped leaves? *This plant has a baby attached!* Let's cut it off and save it. *Why don't we keep the mama plant, too?* you ask. Because the secret of growing good fruit is in the roots. The big plant doesn't have any new roots, just old dry ones. It won't grow many berries.

Look – this little plant is trying to climb out of the strawberry patch! Do you think it will be able to grow in that crack? *No, you say, it's roots don't even touch the ground.* And here's one that is trying to grow in the gravel. It looks quite dry, doesn't it? *And dead, you add.* We don't want to keep that one. But here is a big plant that is strong and healthy. It was growing in good soil. See the long roots? Yes, it will be a good one for our strawberry patch.

We are being like scientists, you say. Yes, and the things we are learning can help us in our own lives. We know that roots are what make a plant good or bad, even though we don't usually see them. It is the same way with us. It is the hidden part of us – our attitude and thoughts – that are most important. What do you think is better? To tell the truth or get perfect grades? *Tell the truth.* Yes, I'd rather have a good-hearted person in my house than one that was really good-looking, but has a selfish heart.

You want to be a good-hearted person, don't you? But how can you grow up

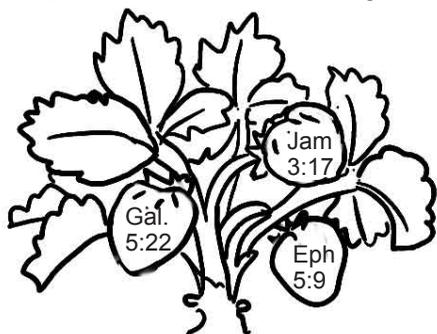
to be that way? *By trying really hard to be good, you say.* But

how do strawberries grow good roots? *In good soil?* you ask. Yes. And that is the same for us. We must grow in good soil to have good attitudes and desires. Trying hard didn't help the strawberry plant in the gravel, did it? *No.* And what about you? If you look at and talk about wrong things, will you have good thoughts? *No.*

What if bad things just come to my head, you ask, even when I try not to think about them? The problem is we are all born with selfish hearts and so we grow the wrong way – just like little plant in the crack. We don't have a chance on our own, so God sent His Son to rescue us. If you will ask Him, He can transplant you into the good soil of His love. Then your heart and mind will be filled with good things and you will bear good fruit.



Grow all your roots in God's love! -Eph 3:17-19



**O B E D I E N T H A N K F U L
S A D I S D N R G R U M P Y G
I D S D J E L U C I O L H E I
S E L F I S H S E R V I N G V
I O C T C A Q T I E R E N B I
Y M A D D N K I N D U S C K N
N P I W S I O W G I O C M S G**

Circle the loving words that are hidden in this puzzle:

T R U S T
O B E D I E N T
T H A N K F U L
P A T I E N T
S E R V I N G
G I V I N G
K I N D

Do you want to grow these kind of roots? What fruits will you have then?



GOD IS REAL?

A TRUE STORY

“So what is religion?”

The teacher asked, stepping in front of his desk.

The room full of children didn't make a sound. Slowly the teacher lifted a finger. “It is a way to believe when you do not know the answers!” he said loudly. “God is like a stick to lean on, when you are old and weak.”

Eight-year-old Natasha frowned. The teacher had it backwards. Father wasn't old and weak. It was God who had made him strong, when all the doctors said that he would die. But the teacher was still talking, so Natasha kept quiet.

“Why should you believe in God when you are smart? You have a mind to think! Don't be lazy and stupid!” The teacher clapped his hands together and then pointed to a boy sitting in the front row. “Kolya, do you believe that God is real?”

Kolya shook his head. So did Katya and Larissa, Natasha's best friends.

“What about you?” The teacher was looking at Natasha now. “Do you believe that God is real?” The teacher smiled, but he did not want her to say, “yes.” He did not know the God that her family prayed to every morning and evening. He did not believe that He had made the world and all living things. But Natasha did.

“Yes,” she said. “I believe God is real.”

“Well, you are a good student,” the teacher said quickly. “You believe what you have been told. But how can we prove there is any power that you can not see? Our Soviet Union is strong because of the minds and power of men, not by the idea of an invisible ‘God.’ It is time to study.” 3

Chairs scraped as the children got out their copybooks. Natasha worked hard, careful to write each answer neatly. She loved to study and the words flowed easily onto her paper. *Why does the teacher think that only stupid people pray?* Natasha wondered. *I am at the top of my class, and I always pray. It is God who has been so good to give us our minds to think!*

The weeks went by and Natasha stayed at the top of her class. At the end of the term, the teacher read the names of those with perfect marks. “Natasha Petrova,” he said, and smiled at her. “We also have some students with excellent marks: Pavel Ivanov, Larissa Sokolova...” Natasha smiled at her friend, but Larissa's back was toward her and all she could see were her thick blond braids.



One morning the teacher was late to class. Natasha slipped into her seat as the bell rang. She was thinking over her words for the spelling test when a loud “bang” startled her. Sasha Fokin had jumped off his chair and was whistling loudly.

“Yipee! We have no teacher today!” another boy said, and several girls giggled.

Natasha sat still, her hands folded in her lap. She saw Larissa and Katya look her way, then put their heads together. Suddenly Larissa got up and walked over. When she was next to Natasha’s desk, she dropped to her knees and pressed her hands together. Shutting her eyes, she began to murmur some words like she was praying.

Natasha was so surprised that she didn’t move. Katya covered her mouth and Kolya snickered. “Natasha prays to God,” he chanted. “How smart she must be!” Sasha and the others laughed loudly.

Natasha didn’t know what to do. She almost wished that she could disappear. *Why is Larissa making fun of me?* She wondered.

Larissa jumped up, laughing and swinging her braids. She was just slipping back into her seat when Pavel hissed, “Teacher’s coming!” In a moment everyone was quiet and classes began as usual.

Natasha was glad to put her mind on her studies. Larissa didn’t talk to her the rest of the day, and when school was over Natasha walked home alone. She usually walked home alone, but today she felt more alone than usual. *Why did Larissa act like that? She kept thinking. We were always friends before. Now she doesn’t even talk to me.*



“Mama!” Natasha called as soon as she entered the warm kitchen. “Mama, today the teacher was late and Larissa pretended to pray in the middle of the floor!”

“Pretended to pray? What do you mean?” asked Mama, looking up from the pan of potatoes that she was peeling.

The words came tumbling out as Natasha told what had happened. “Why did Larissa act like that? She made all the other children laugh at me,” Natasha said at last, wiping a tear from her eye.

It was good to feel her mother’s warm arm around her shoulders. “Larissa does not know God,” Mama said slowly. “When we pray, we know that we are talking to One who really hears us and loves us. We know that He will answer. But Larissa does not know Him, so that is why she made fun of praying. We must ask God to show her that He is real.”

So Natasha and her mother prayed for Larissa. And how much better it made Natasha feel inside! God would show Larissa that He was real. Natasha was sure of it.



It was not long before the summer holidays began. Soon the dark picture of that terrible day at school faded in Natasha's mind. In the happy, free days of sunshine and no studies, Larissa and the others at school were almost forgotten. Only when she knelt to pray, Natasha would remember to ask, "And Father in heaven, please help Larissa to know that You are real."



Time passed quickly, and before Natasha realized it another school year was approaching. "I must pick some flowers to take to my teachers today," Natasha told her mother, the first morning of September. "I can't wait to see all my friends! Won't we have so much to tell each other?"

Mama smiled. "I can tell that you are excited. With so much to say, will you be able to pay attention to your work?"

"Of course, I will try my best," Natasha said, grabbing up her copybooks.

"That is good," said Father. "Before you hurry off, let us pray. You will need God's help to be a good student and show love and respect to your classmates and teachers." As Natasha bowed her head, she was very glad to know that God was there. And she knew that He heard and answered prayer. Again, she whispered a request for Larissa.

The tall brick building was filled with noise and excitement as the children gathered that morning. "Did you know that I flew on an airplane?" Katya was telling the other girls when Natasha arrived. "Yes, and we stayed one whole week with my cousins in the city!"

"I spent the whole summer with my granny," said another girl. "And guess what? Her white cat had five kittens!"

Natasha was eager to tell all about how her cousins had come to visit, but she tried to wait patiently. "Well, I will tell you what happened to our kitten," Larissa was saying. "It climbed up the chimney and got stuck. We had to pull it out with the garden hoe, and oh it was the dirtiest thing you ever saw!" The others laughed.



All too soon the bell was ringing and the children had to hurry to their classes. The teacher smiled at all the bright flowers laid on his desk. "I know that you have many more things to talk about," he said. "But let us save our stories for later. We will begin with review lessons now, and see how much you remember after the long holiday from studies." Heads were bent over their desks and soon only the sound of scratching pencils could be heard.

The next few days were busy ones. Besides receiving new copybooks for each school subject, Natasha also had begun lessons in music. The piano teacher had a room at the end of the hall where each piano student went at their scheduled time. Natasha's lesson was just after the noon break, and Larissa's lesson was after that. As they passed in the hall

one afternoon, Natasha noticed that her friend's face was very downcast.

"What is the matter, Larissa?" she asked. "Aren't you ready for your lesson?"

Larissa shook her head. "I did not have time to study, so I am surely going to be in trouble and receive a bad mark," she said. "Even when I practice, I can never please him."

"Maybe he will be patient with you this time," said Natasha hopefully. Larissa shrugged, and Natasha hurried back to class.

The next day, at morning break, Natasha was putting her desk in order when she heard Larissa say excitedly, "You know, God really exists! He is real, for I found it out just yesterday." Everyone in the room turned to stare, and Natasha's heart beat quickly as she looked over at the teacher. But Larissa didn't seem to mind and told them all what had happened.

"When it was time for my piano lesson yesterday afternoon, I was not ready at all," she began. "Now I knew that the teacher would scold me and give me a bad mark. No matter how hard I try, I can not please him."

"Well, I was just going to my lesson when I passed Natasha in the hall," Larissa continued, turning to smile at her friend. "She tried to cheer me up, but I could not feel sure that it would turn out well. Then suddenly a thought came to my mind. What if God, in whom Natasha believes, really exists? Would He help me with my lesson?"

A warm glad feeling filled Natasha's heart as her friend went on. "So I called out to God in my heart, 'If You are real, please help me with this lesson.' That is all I said, but I guess He heard me!" Larissa laughed. "When I sat down at the piano, I was so surprised! My fingers did everything I wanted them to do, and my teacher was very pleased. He gave me an *excellent* mark."

Larissa looked around before she continued with a look of wonder in her happy face. "Of course, I never would have dreamed of doing so well in my whole life! So I know it was God who helped me, because He heard my prayer."

Everyone was silent as they thought about what Larissa had said. Of course, Natasha was happy. She had never expected God to answer her prayer in this wonderful way. Just think! The same girl who had made fun of prayer in front of everyone had stood up bravely to tell how God had heard her request. What did the teacher think about a pretend God now? But the teacher didn't say anything, and in a moment the bell rang for the next lesson.

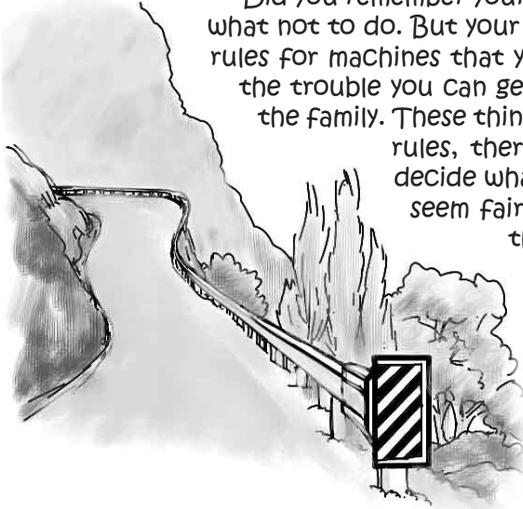
Natasha took out her copybook with a smile. No matter what anyone thought, God *was* real. She knew she could trust Him with everything, no matter how big or impossible it seemed.



Everyday life is like driving up this mountain highway. Each new experience is like a bend in the road. You don't know what might happen next. Sometimes that is exciting, but it also can be scary. Just like in driving, you can get into big trouble if you make the wrong turn. Instead of enjoying a useful, happy life you can end up destroying yourself and others.

What helps keep cars safe on this winding road? The guardrails! They are put there to protect drivers and keep them on track. In the same way God has designed restrictions and safety barriers to protect you from making a dangerous turn in your life. How many can you think of?

Did you remember your parents? Maybe you don't like to be told what to do and what not to do. But your parents are given the job to watch over you. They make rules for machines that you can't use or places you can't go, because they know the trouble you can get into. You are expected to behave and do your part in the family. These things help you to have a safe and happy home. Besides home rules, there are teachers, officers, and government officials that decide what you should or shouldn't do. Sometimes the rules might seem fair, and sometimes not. As a child, your job isn't to figure them out, but to follow them.



What happens when you don't pay attention and just "do your own thing"? Slam! You find yourself bouncing off the guardrails and getting a fender bender (otherwise known as "suffering the consequences of disobedience"). You might not like the jolt. But if you could only see where you were headed, you would be thankful. The other side is much worse.

But sometimes the guardrails are broken down or damaged. Maybe your parents don't care about living right, or they aren't around to watch over you. Then there is nothing to stop you from flying off the cliff and getting into really deep trouble. That is what is happening to many families now. Every day hundreds of people are messing up their lives because they don't have guardrails to protect them.

How can we live safely in this world full of trouble and dangers? Whom can we trust to protect us?

God also has laws and standards. He created us and the world we live in, so He knows best how to keep us happy and safe. Many people think the Bible is a hard book of rules. They try to live by their own ideas and laugh about God's guardrails. "Why should I have to tell the truth? What is so bad about getting my own way?" They don't realize what they are talking about until it is too late. There are others who have learned to trust God's way. They know He cares about them like a watchful parent. "God knows best and He loves me," they say. "Even if I don't get what I want, when I want it." They know God's standards are right and will keep them safe.

Are there broken guardrails in your life? Are you unsure of what is right or wrong? God wants to be your safety. He is waiting for you to ask for help. And let me tell you, He can be depended on no matter what! He will give you something solid to lean on when life is twisting and turning. He never fails or breaks down. Life is too dangerous to try on your own. Will you put your trust in God's way?



What is security? It is knowing you are safe and taken care of. Like you are holding onto someone's hand who is bigger and stronger than you. You don't have to defend yourself. You don't have to figure out what to do next. You are confident and happy, because you trust the other person to take care of you.

Was Jesus a secure child? Why do you think so? It wasn't because he had it easy. He was the oldest in a big family, so there was plenty of work to do. I'm sure his parents didn't give him everything he liked. Sometimes he felt like things were unfair or should be done differently. But Jesus obeyed his parents, because he knew it was their job to raise him. So he helped out cheerfully and trusted them to take care of him. But, like all parents, there were things Jesus' parents couldn't solve or take care of. Sometimes other kids didn't treat him right. Maybe they told lies about him and blamed him for things he didn't do. What could he do then? He could trust his heavenly Father.

We all need someone bigger and stronger that we can trust. Someone that loves us no matter what we do or how we feel. Someone who will always be there and never abandon us. That's what parents are for. But they can't do everything. And some parents lie or just do what they feel like, and can't be depended on. Their children are left



Jesus' Example: Security in God

to try to take care of themselves and they don't feel secure at all. That's why we need to know how much God loves us and cares for us. Only He can make us completely secure.

What is it like to be secure in God's care? It is like going through each day holding onto His hand. It is how Jesus lived. He obeyed, and God took care of the rest. Did Jesus pout for his way or try to make everyone do what he wanted? No, he knew his Father would give him what was best. So he could laugh and smile when others were arguing and fussing. If he had a problem or need, he told his Father about it. He didn't try to make others behave. He just did the right thing himself, because he knew God would take care of everybody else. What if something bad happened? One time they ran out of food, remember? Jesus wasn't afraid, because he knew His Father would take care of it. He knew his Father loved him.

Are you secure in God's love? God wants you to trust in His goodness. Just like He watched over Jesus when he was on the earth, He will watch over you. It doesn't matter what happens to you or how others treat you. You can live with your hand in your heavenly Father's. And one day He will take you home to live with Him forever in heaven. That's where you will always be secure and safe!



IDDOLS of Beauty

Becky was excited. It was always fun when Mama's friend, Miss Darlene, came to visit. Becky pulled out her favorite Bible story book. "Will you read me a story?" she asked. Soon they were both sitting in the big easy chair, reading about the brave prophet Elijah.

"Why did the people worship idols?" Becky asked suddenly. "They aren't even real. I wouldn't pray to a silly old statue!"

Miss Darlene smiled. "You wouldn't? But what if everyone else did?" She pointed to the picture. "Everyone wanted the king and queen to like them, so they did what they said."

"Were King Ahab and Queen Jezebel popular?" Becky asked.

"Yes," Miss Darlene said. "And do you think they liked what Prophet Elijah said?" Becky shook her head. "You see," Miss Darlene continued, "believing in God instead of idols isn't always easy. There are many other idols besides Baal, too. Even our money or clothes can be idols, if they are more important to us than God is."

"Let's finish the story," said Becky, wiggling impatiently.

That afternoon Becky walked through the fabric store with Mama and Miss Darlene. All around her were beautiful things to look at. There were bins of brightly-colored ribbons, stacks of fabric rolls, and a rack of shiny buttons. She was admiring the buttons when she heard a clinking sound behind her. Becky turned to see a tall girl taking some sparkling bracelets off of a rack.

"Don't you think my little sister would like these?" she asked her friend.

Becky watched as the other girl tried one on. "Yeah, they're really cute." She held up a golden hoop with pink and purple crystals on it.

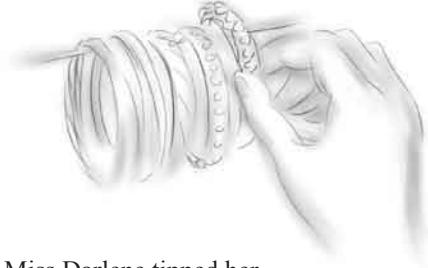
Becky sighed. It was so beautiful! When the older girls went to the cash register, Becky went over and touched the shiny bracelets. *I wish I could have one*, she thought. But Mama was calling and Becky had to leave them behind.

As she followed Mama and Miss Darlene through the store, Becky thought about the bracelets. *Maybe I could have one for dress up*, she decided. *Mama says we should be plain and simple, but I could wear a bracelet when I'm pretending to be a queen. Queens always wear jewelry.*

The more Becky thought of the idea, the more she liked it. While Mama was talking about fabric with the sales lady, Becky wandered back down the aisle. She had one dollar and 58 cents in her purse. It wouldn't cost that much for one little bracelet.

"What are you looking at?" asked Miss Darlene.

Becky looked up quickly. "Aren't these pretty?" she asked, pointing to the sparkling hoops on the rack.



Miss Darlene tipped her head. "I suppose, but not nearly as pretty as a cheerful smile. That is the most beautiful thing any girl can wear. What would you want a bracelet for?"

Becky fingered a silver band with purple jewels. "For dress up. Just to wear for being a queen, you know."

"For being a queen?" Miss Darlene opened her blue eyes wide. "What sort of queen? Like Jezebel?"

"No, a good queen," Becky said. "Like Queen Esther."

"Why would a queen wear a bracelet?" asked Miss Darlene.

"Because it is pretty."

"But don't we all want to look pretty? Why don't I wear jewelry?"

Becky looked up at her friend's smiling face, and shrugged. "Because you want to be plain and not get attention?" she asked slowly.

The blue eyes twinkled. "A good guess, but do you know *why* I don't want to focus on making myself look pretty?"

"Because God wants you to," Becky said in a



small voice, looking at the floor. She was surprised to hear Miss Darlene laugh.

"It's not all that terrible!" she said, putting a finger under Becky's chin. "Look at me, dear. Do you think that I am sad because I don't wear jewelry and fashionable clothes?" Her voice was filled with merry chuckles and Becky sighed as she shook her head. But how could it be possible to not *want* such pretty things?

"You know, bracelets are really just cheap beauty," Miss Darlene continued on. "You buy them and wear them, but it doesn't make you a truly beautiful person inside. And the inside is what counts. Even diamonds and gold are just a waste, because Jesus told us to store up our treasures in heaven."

Becky's eyes wandered over to the button rack. "These are cute," she said, pointing to a pair shaped like little ducks. "Maybe I could buy them."

"Buttons are useful," Miss Darlene agreed. "What would you use them for?"

"Oh, something for my doll," said Becky. "Maybe a little dress."

"Do you have fabric for a dress?"

Becky shook her head. "But I could buy some. Come, I'll show you my favorite. It is really soft." She led the way to the back of store where the flannel bolts were stacked. "See? Isn't it pretty?" She held the duck buttons up next to a sunny yellow print, covered with white daisies.

"It is very cheerful," Miss Darlene agreed. "But you won't need much fabric for a doll dress. Why don't you look through my scrap basket when you come to my house next?"

Mama came around the corner. "There you are," she said. "Darlene, what do you think of this green plaid for a dress?"

"Light, but practical," Miss Darlene said with a smile. "I think it is a good color on you."

Becky looked at the card of duck buttons in her hand. "I wonder how much these cost?" she asked aloud.

"You don't need buttons," Mama said. "Put those back, Becky."

Becky walked slowly back across the store again. There were so many wonderful things, and she couldn't buy any of them!

She found Mama and Miss Darlene looking at some blue denim. "This will be perfect to make you a new jumper," Mama said, smiling down at her. "I think I have some leftover yellow print to make a summer blouse, too."

Becky didn't say anything. A box of coats stood nearby. She pulled out a pink one with a white fur trim. It was much nicer than the dark blue one she had been wearing all winter. "Look, Miss Darlene," she said. "I think it will fit me."

"But you have a coat," Miss Darlene pointed out.

"I like this one better," Becky said, stroking the shiny pink front. "Mine is kind of old."

Miss Darlene squatted down beside her. Becky looked into her friend's kind face. It was serious now. "There are a lot of things you wish you could buy, aren't there?" Miss Darlene asked.

Becky nodded.

"And we keep saying 'no,' don't we?"

Becky nodded again. Her green eyes filled with tears, and she blinked hard.

"The problem is that you are wanting *more things*, Becky. It is called being 'covetous.' Do you know what the Bible says about being covetous?"

Becky shook her head. The soft fur trim on the coat brushed her cheek.

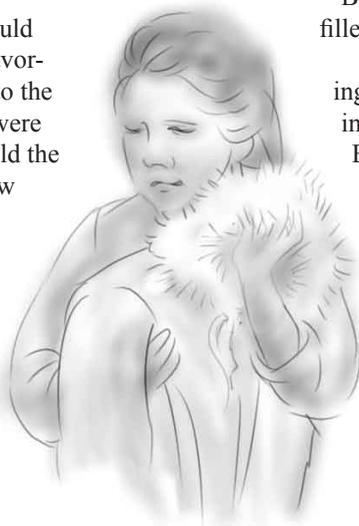
Miss Darlene voice was low. "It says that being covetous is like worshiping idols. When we love to get things and think that they will make us happy, we aren't loving God like we should. Remember how we were talking about idols this morning?"

Becky frowned. She remembered.

"It is easy to want lots of nice things like everyone else has. But the truth is, you'll never be happy with getting more things."

Becky looked at the pretty pink coat. "Maybe I can get it for my cousin," she said.

"I don't think she needs a coat, honey," Miss



Darlene said with a smile. "I'm glad you are thinking of others. But what matters right now is whether you are going to be a I-want-to-get-more-stuff person. Are you going to let 'beautiful things' be your idol, Becky?"

Becky looked at the floor.

"Let's pray that God will show you how these things aren't what make you happy," Miss Darlene said, pulling her close. "God has something much better than bracelets and coats for you. It is the beauty of a thankful, trusting heart."

At last they were leaving the store. Becky watched as a dark-haired lady passed by the parking lot, pushing a baby stroller. Her wrist sparkled with silver bracelets and bright beads decorated her shirt, but there was no smile on her rosy lips. A little girl followed slowly behind, stopping to pick some daisies growing near the sidewalk. "Hurry up!" the woman said sharply. "I'm not waiting on your dirty face."

Becky shrank back from the unkind words and hurried to join the others. "That lady isn't very

nice," she whispered, slipping her hand into Miss Darlene's. "I'm glad my mama never talks like that!"

"Yes," agreed Miss Darlene. "I'm afraid that lady has been worshiping the idol of selfishness, and it isn't making her very happy."

"Or very pretty," added Becky.

"Frowns are never very pretty," Mama agreed, as she started the car. "And I want to tell you, Becky, that I'm glad that you listened and obeyed while we were in the store. That makes me happy." She smiled at Becky in the rear view mirror, and Becky smiled back.

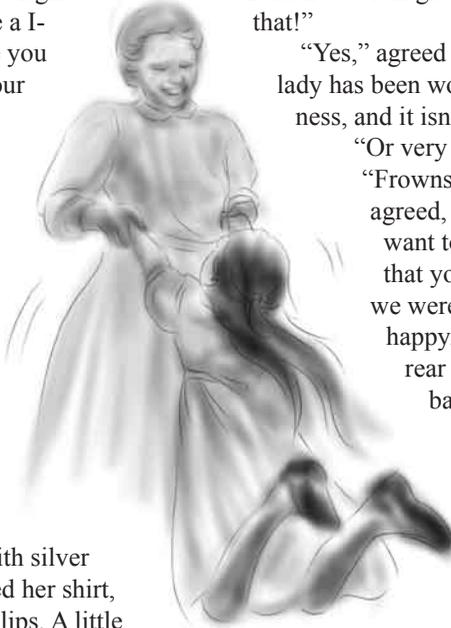
The sunlight sparkled on the wet grass as they turned into the driveway at home.

Miss Darlene laughed.

"Just see the diamonds God has sent us!" she said, twirling Becky around.

"Doesn't He make everything beautiful? This is the day that the Lord

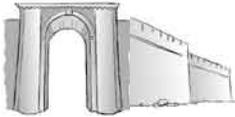
has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it!" Becky looked up into Miss Darlene's twinkling blue eyes, and it seemed like she saw some of God's diamonds sparkling there.



In this story Becky learned that true beauty is on the inside. Look at the pictures - Which one shows outward beauty and which one shows inward beauty? How many differences can you find between these two pictures? Which ones do you think are happier?

THE KING'S TREASURES

Does God like beautiful things? Of course He does! He is the King of Heaven, and He has storehouses of heavenly treasure for His children to enjoy. The trouble is, most people are too blind to see them. They think that a treasure is something that is shiny and costs lots of money. But gold, silver, and sparkling jewels cost nothing compared to the treasures that Jesus bought for us:



A palace with walls of _____
and gates of _____ (Isaiah 60:18)



Robes of _____ (Isaiah 61:10) and a crown
of _____ (Psalm 103:4) to wear.



The ornament of a _____ (1 Peter 3:4)
and riches of _____ (James 2:5)



The Jewels for Me

Laura S. and Amanda C. Erickson (1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Tim. 2:9-10)

Joel A. Erickson



1. I want to be pret - ty, I want to be smart, But Je - sus is
2. You can save up for dia - monds, and buy lots of things, But the trea - sures of
3. 4 Mon - ey and make - up don't help when I sad, But Je - sus has



look - ing at things in my heart. Refrain—
heav - en must come from the King. Hands that will help, feet that o - bey,
rich - es to make my heart glad.



Kinds thoughts for oth - ers, a heart to pray— These are the jew - els I'll wear to - day.





Dear Reader,

There are many things we can put our trust in. Does your success depend on your feelings, what others think, human ability or natural causes? These things will fail, but the Word of God still endures. Do you know the One who faints not, neither is weary - the God who never fails?

We are sorry this issue is so late in getting published. Thank you for your patience. We would enjoy hearing from you and appreciate your prayers.

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.

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

PO Box 1212, Jefferson, OR 97352

e-mail: totk@timelesstruths.org
website: totk.timelesstruths.org

*How many chicks can you find?
There should be 88, including this one:*



SEND TO: