

Treasures of the Kingdom

Casting Up a Highway for the Children of This Generation

Who Loves Jesus?

Four friends were listening to a Bible lesson one day. "How do we show that we love Jesus?" the teacher asked.

They read these verses:

Sue:

I love Jesus.
But sometimes I forget...

Joe:

Tony asks to play
with my things all
the time!

Jesus says,
"If you love me, keep
my commands."
"Give to them that ask."
"Love your enemies.
Do good to them..."
"Be merciful."

Amy: Yeah,
my brother is
a real pest!

"Pray for them that
persecute you."
"Ask, and it will be
given to you."

Tim:

It is hard to
be kind when
other people
are rude.

Later Sue...

I almost have
enough for a bunny.
But wait! Mr. Mike
really needs a new
walking cane.

Thanks,
deary!

Joe:

Can I play
with your
remote?

Tony will
never find it
here!

It's put away. Besides,
I'm too busy.

Amy:

I said, BE QUIET!
I need to study!

Why does she
get so mad? I was
just helping march
around Jericho.

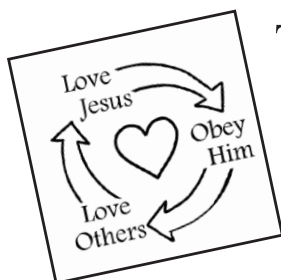
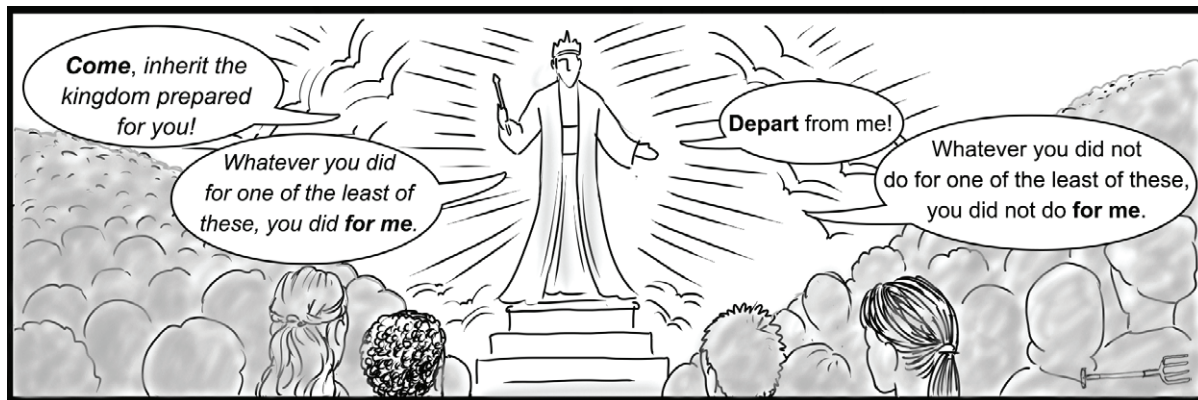
TOOT!
Toot-TOOT!

Tim: Science Center

Move over, boy.
My son wants to
try that station.

Lord Jesus,
Please help that
lady. Help me to
love her.

When Jesus returns, He will divide everyone into two groups. (Matthew 25:33)



Think About It: *Loving Others*

Have you ever noticed before that Jesus talks a lot about loving others and treating them right? Look at this cycle. So who is it that you should love right now if you are going to love Jesus?

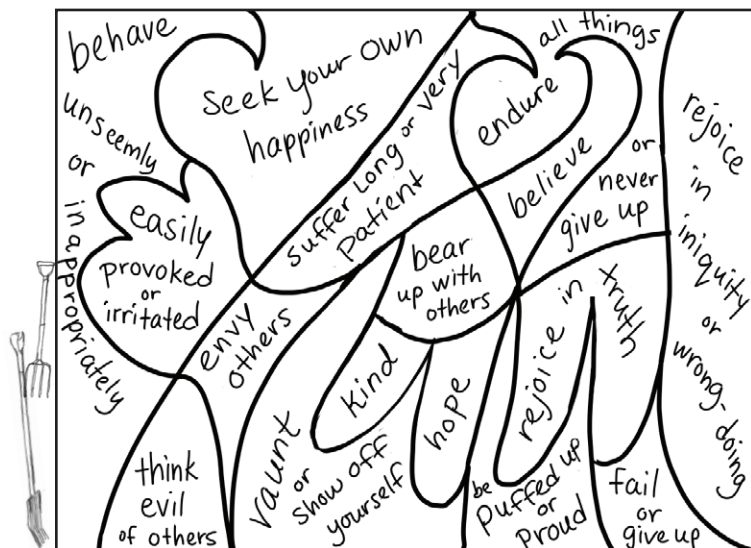


Loving our friends can be easy. But loving people that annoy and hurt you is not! There is a secret to love. It starts inside us—with receiving God's love to us. You see, all of us have a love cup inside of us. If it is full, we have plenty of love to share. If it is empty, all we can think about is “me, me, me.” So, if you don't think God really loves you, if you don't believe that Jesus wants to help you with every single problem in your life, then your love cup is empty. You can't love problem people. You want friends and nice people to love you, so you can feel safe and happy. But the problem is, other people can't keep your love cup full. Only

God can do that!

God wants to fill up your love cup. If you open your heart to Him and tell Him about your needs, He can take out the bitterness and fear and show you how much He loves you! Then you can know what real love is and share it with others.

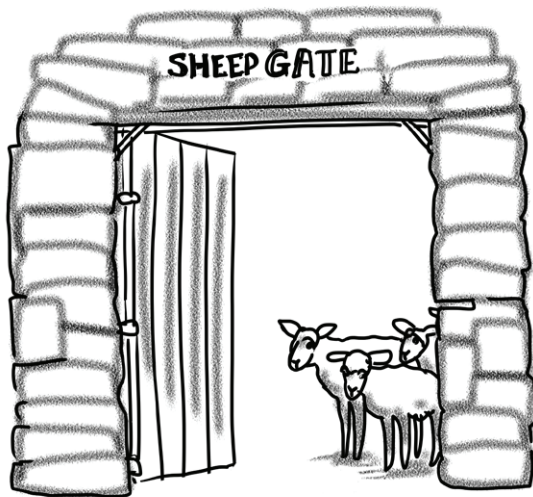
Which children in the story are you going to be like? Are you going to ask Jesus to show you how to love? Who will you love today?



What is a tool that we can show love with? Color the **loving** puzzle pieces pink and **unloving** pieces blue, to find out. (1 Cor. 13)

Do you remember the story of a man named Nehemiah who rebuilt the broken-down walls of a city? The city of Jerusalem had been destroyed and God's people were taken captive because they had disobeyed Him. That is just like what happens to us when we disobey—we become slaves to sin and the good things in our life are broken down. But the day came when God sent a man to help rebuild the walls and gates, so Jerusalem could be a safe and beautiful city again. His name was Nehemiah. Who is it that God sent to save us from sin and make our lives good and useful again? That's right, Jesus!

In this Bible study we will look at the first five gates that Nehemiah rebuilt in the wall. Each gate in Jerusalem had a special name and purpose. Let's see what lessons we can learn from them!



Rebuilding the Gates of Jerusalem

(part one)

It is so exciting that God had Nehemiah begin repairs at the *Sheep gate!* Why was that important? Here are a few verses to give you a clue. Can you finish them?

Jesus says, "I am the _____ of the sheep." Who are the sheep? Then He says that whoever enters through Him shall be _____. (John 10:7,9) Later on Jesus says, "No one comes to the Father (God) except _____." (John 14:6) Let's write down our clues. The Sheep Gate reminds us:

And guess what? Eliashib is one of the men that helped build it. His name means "God restores!" Neat, huh? Write down a problem in your life that you want to trust God to fix for you:

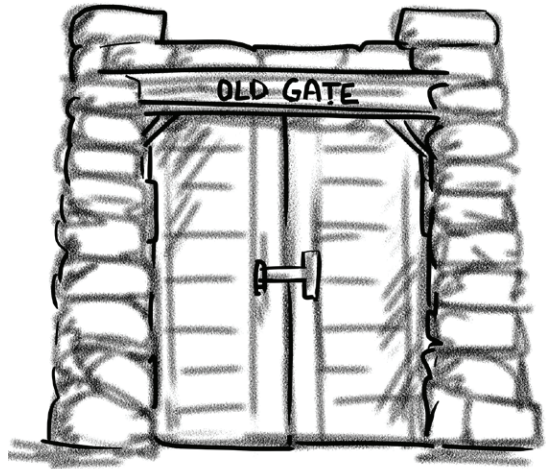




The *Fish gate* is next. Do you know why it was called that? Did someone say because they brought the fish that they caught through this gate? You are *right*! They sold it at this gate as well! How cool! After we go through the door to Christ, and are redeemed, Jesus gives us a job. Do you remember what it is? _____ (Mat. 4:19)

Write down one way you can do that:

One of the men who repaired this gate was named Meshullam. Funny name, huh? His name has a very special meaning! It means “restitution” (making things right with others). Jesus says that when we want to bring a gift to God, we first must be _____ to our brother. (Mat. 5:24) Is anyone at odds with you? How could you make it right with them?



The *Old gate* is the third gate. That does not sound too great if you are thinking of worn out and weak. But there is a good sense, too. An old person or thing has been around a long time and has lots of experience and proving out. See if you can fill out the missing words from Jeremiah 6:16: “Ask for the _____, where is the _____ way, and walk therein.” Learning the old ways of truth is very important. God is the same _____, today, and _____. Do you think His ways are trustworthy? Write down something that God said that you can rely on:

Jehoidiah was one of the repairers near this gate. His name means “whom Jehovah adores.” Wow! Does God really want to love and enjoy being with you? Read John 14:21-23 for a hint.



The *Valley gate* is in the fourth section of the wall being repaired. This reminds us of the valley experiences that we go through. Remember from Psalm 23 “though I walk through the valley of _____ You are with me”? We can think of a valley in our life as a time of humbling and trials. What difficulties or corrections have you had recently?

A valley is also a good place for fruit to grow. What kind of good character fruit does God wants to grow in your life?

Hanun helped with this gate, and his name means “whom God pities.” Hmm... Ps.56:8-9 tells us something about that. And here is a familiar verse that you can help finish: “_____ yourselves under the mighty hand of _____, that He may _____.” (1 Pet. 5:6)



The *Dung gate*? Yuck! And yes, this is where they got rid of the garbage. It means hill of rubbish and filth, dung hill. You know without me telling you, you smarties, that the trash was burned outside of this gate. Why do you think that is important? _____

Yes, and it represents stinking sin, and how we need to put it out of our lives. One of the men that repaired this gate was Malchiah. His name means “Jehovah's king.” Jesus came to be king in our lives, and 1 John 1:9 tells us an important part: “If we _____ our sin, He is faithful and just to _____ us our sin and to _____ us from all _____.” That means anything that isn't pure and good in our hearts, because it will _____ us. (Mat.15:18-20)



—shared by Mama Elaine





Spoon Carving

Would you like to join me at a spoon carving workshop today? Our friend is teaching how wooden spoons are made—and he'll help you make one for yourself! *To keep?* you ask. Yes!

First you have to choose a chunk of wood to start with. Hardwood with a fine grain are best. *I like that reddish one*, you say. That is red cherry, and it will make a pretty spoon. He has already drawn the spoon outline on it, see? So our next step is to clamp it to the table so it won't move while you carve it. *How will I make it into a spoon?* By using the right tools and following directions!

Here is our first tool, called a gouge. Mark a line 1/8-inch from the spoon edge, and that's where

you will start carving out the dip. Cut all around the edge and scoop toward the middle, like this. *This is fun!* you say. Good—just be sure that you carve evenly and make the middle deep like a bowl.

Are you ready for the next step? We need to flip the spoon over and start carving off the back of the handle with this coping saw. Do you want to try? Careful, because you don't want to cut too deep. *It is kind of hard to keep it even*, you say. *Can you help me?* Sure. Now we have a square handle and it is time to use the spoke shave. Can you guess what that does? *Oh, it peels the wood off in little pieces. I can do that!* Good. Work around the handle until you have a round shape.

You know, carving a spoon is a lot like what God does in our lives. We start out like a chunk of wood—different kinds from different families, all square and rough and not very useful yet. God is the Master carver, and when He looks at your life and mine, He has a plan. He knows just how to make our lives beautiful and useful in His kingdom. But what do you think our part is? *I don't know.* What does the wood that you are carving do? *Nothing.* Except it gets clamped to the table and lets us take all these pieces and shavings off! *But it doesn't feel anything.* That's true. But we do feel things, don't we? So when God wants to carve our lives, He first has to teach us how to trust Him. Especially when we feel that the trials and problems are ruining us! Actually, they are just shaping us for the special work He has in mind for our lives. But first you have to realize that you need God to do the carving and yield your life to Him. Jesus said that without Him we can do nothing. Just like this wood can't be a spoon without you!

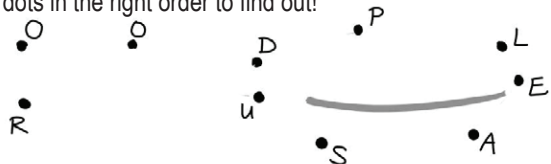
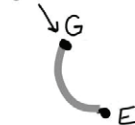
Look! My handle is done! It is looking good. Now work on the back of the spoon scoop. Be careful not to get it too thin. *Then will it be done?* No, after you finish making the shape you like, it will be time to sand it. See this spoon? Feel how silky it is? It has been sanded with 8 grades of sandpaper until every little grain of wood is polished smooth. And that's just what happens to us. We have to be corrected and taught by love and patience and skill, until we don't have any rough edges poking out to hurt others. You wouldn't want your spoon to give you slivers, would you? *No, I want mine to be perfect.* It takes awhile to make a good spoon, but when it is done you can enjoy and use it for many years. *I'm going to give mine to my Mom!* That's a great idea—I'm sure she'll love it!

What is the Master Carver doing in your life? Connect the dots in the right order to find out!

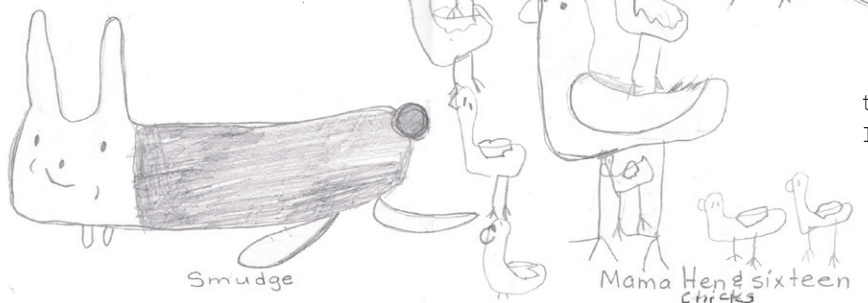
God wants you be
someone that shows
His _____

(Phil.2:13, KJV)

START



THE BUNNY AND THE CHICKS



Hi to you all!
I am going to tell
you the story of
the bunny and
the chicks ☺.
One day I was
not sure if I
could get very
cheerful. I don't
know what I was
doing, but sud-
denly I heard a
little peeping!
I looked out of
the window, and what
I saw took my breath
away!!! There was
a proud hen
clucking
happily.

She had sixteen chicks following her!
Wow, what a surprise. We thought she had been eaten by a wild
animal. Those sixteen chicks grew up to be pesky little balls of
feathers. I have always looked at those chicks as a blessing
from God.

Now to the bunny. I had a bunny besides Smudge. When
we were at camp last spring, she got loose. We never
saw her again. Then comes Smudge! I had been want-
ing a bunny, but I didn't have enough money. Last
Christmas I received a big surprise! We draw
names, and Joyful got my name. When they came
one night, Caleb had a box and gave it to
me and said, "be careful." I put it
on the ground. He said it was break-
able! Hmmm... what could be in it,
I thought. Pop! Off comes the lid
and can you guess? Yes, there
was my bunny! I named her
Smudge because she has a
dark brown smudge right
on her nose! I take
Smudge as a gift
from God, too!

- Ragain, 10



Some of
our treasures
are special gifts
that surprise us!

But sometimes they
are hidden in a
hard job or problem
we have. Read about
the "treasure hunts"
that these children had!

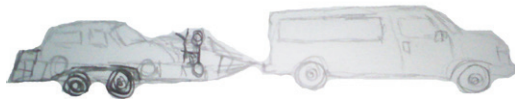
Buried Treasures

I HOPE WE CAN PRINT
YOUR STORY
NEXT!

Want to be included in the gold?
Get on our email list, and we'll contact
you before the next issue!

Love
Courage
Gentleness
Trust
Kindness
Faith

TO KENTUCKY OR BUST



Have you ever had to move and leave friends? These last few months have been a huge transition for me. In December my family was praying about moving to Kentucky. Even though we love where we live, we wanted to have a vision as a family. But when my parents were talking about going to work for Answers in Genesis, I didn't want to leave everyone here in Oregon that I have known since I was eight.

My parents put out a fleece and put our house up for sale with one listing on craigslist. A lady really liked it and wanted to sign papers. I sat on the hearth and cried. I said, "I don't want to move!" Momma told me that I needed to trust God about it. "As He had blessed you with friends here, He would bless you with friends there," she said. But I didn't agree. When the lady backed out of the sale, I was happy.

January came and my family was still praying about moving. I was praying that we wouldn't. Momma emailed Answers in Genesis several times about hiring Poppa. Finally they replied that they weren't hiring until February, but would take his application. I wasn't happy. Finally I prayed about it. I told God that whatever He chose I would accept. I trusted that He would bless me with friends over there, just like He did here. And I realized that we weren't leaving people here forever. I felt much more peaceful.

Finally, at the end of February, Answers in Genesis emailed that they would have an interview with Poppa. Meanwhile we were talking with our friends about possibly renting our house. We said that if Poppa was hired they could begin renting in May. The interview went well and by March 5th Poppa was hired.

We had a realtor in Kentucky looking for a house that would work for our large family. But nothing was working out. My older sisters put their applications in for part-time jobs at the Ark. Within days they were hired. At the beginning of April we still didn't have a house! We were looking all over because we were leaving on April 24th. After praying about it a lot, we noticed a house on Mount Zion Road. An elderly lady had been living there since it was built in the 70s and it was in good shape. It would work for our family! At last we knew where we were going, and had a place we could call home when we got there.

As we've packed and moved, I still have gotten tempted to worry and get sad about it. But I want to keep trusting God through it all. I know God has some good reason for us to be moving and I trust His plan for my life.

—Paulina, 15



Dishes

I was rinsing dishes, but then my mommy put a pot in my rinsing water. I didn't say, "that's too hard for me," but I did it anyways. —Judith, 7



Under the Couches



Once I was cleaning the living room and my sister said that I was putting everything under the couch. That made me have to clean under the couches. And it was a MESS!!! And I did it with a good attitude without getting angry. I ended up having sooo much fun!

—Ellianna, 11



Picking Flowers

I was picking dandelions for my aunt. My cousin took some of the flowers away from me. But I was nice and let her have them. I had a good attitude.

—Lillian, 10



I am very happy right now because I got my special rabbit back. I was a little sad at first, because the lady never emailed me back. I wanted to get my rabbit that I had raised up. But something changed and the lady emailed me. I got my Foo-Foo the Snoo! She is bigger now, but Foo-Foo Snoo is very sweet. I thank God for my rabbit, Foo-Foo the Snoo. —Rebecca, 11



**FOO-FOO
THE SNOO**



A New House

I'm really thankful that we got the bid on our new house in Stayton. It only has to get carpet and hardwood floor upstairs. Otherwise the house is brand new. We have been doing foster care again and our house has been very crowded for the amount of people we have. Mama and Papa were feeling the need to get a larger house for more space. This house is going to be just perfect for us. It is also walking distance from the hospital, which is nice because the baby gets pneumonia easily. I'm thankful that God gave us a bigger house for a good price.

—Ellianna, 11



Love

Courage

Gentleness

Trust

Kindness

Faith

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!

A Place for Prayer

REQUESTS AND THANKSGIVINGS



I was praying for a playhouse because we didn't have one and I kept seeing them in people's yards and wishing for one. Then one day a lady came by our house and dropped off a play house. She was one of our customers. God used her to give us a playhouse! —Anna Christine, 6

My cousin Jimmy was playing in our driveway and he went up on the road. A car stopped and helped Auntie Kaeley get him. I was out there, but was not watching closely enough. The Lord used that to teach me that I need to pay close attention to the little ones when we are playing outside. —Anna Christine, 6



One day our family went fishing on the North Umpqua river. Jedi was trying to climb on the tree roots but he couldn't get up. Daddy was fishing, but he didn't catch anything, so after a picnic supper we went home.

Another day we went to Wildlife Safari and we saw a cougar eating. That was my favorite part. We also saw a huge snake and lions very close. We walked all around and saw monkeys jumping all around. Wildlife Safari is a neat place to visit! —Sophia Joan, 4



I have been learning that foster kids have lots of issues. I am learning that sometimes they won't be nice to me. I have to make them happy and share with them. I have been playing ring-around-the-rose and picking up flowers with them when it is nice outside. My favorite thing is to play dolls with my little foster sister. Please pray that I will have more good times with them. —Emily, 6



Please pray for our children and outreach ministries here in India. —Pastor Paramjyothi

We were planning to go to family camp, but then everyone in my family but me got sick. We kept praying and we thought we weren't able to go. But on Friday morning we were able to go and got there before lunch! We had lots of fun! —Lillian, 10



PRAYING FOR SNOW—With summertime coming, why would we request praying for Snow?

Snow is a nurse in the NICU who took care of our little brother, Tyndale, last August. She was from an Oriental country and she was very friendly to us. When my dad and mom left with Tyndale on the last day, they left a package for Snow with a story book about a Christian family who had a very tiny baby in a NICU for a very, very long time. Over eight months later my mom got a text from Snow. She thanked us for the book and said she really loved reading it. She said she really learned a lot from their beliefs. We know God is working in her heart and ask you to help pray for her salvation. —Liesel, 9



Bible Go Fish Game

Do you memorize Bible verses and wish there was a fun way to review and practice them? Then you might like this game! It works well for 3 or more players or teams. Children who can't read yet can team up with players who can.

To Make the Game Cards:

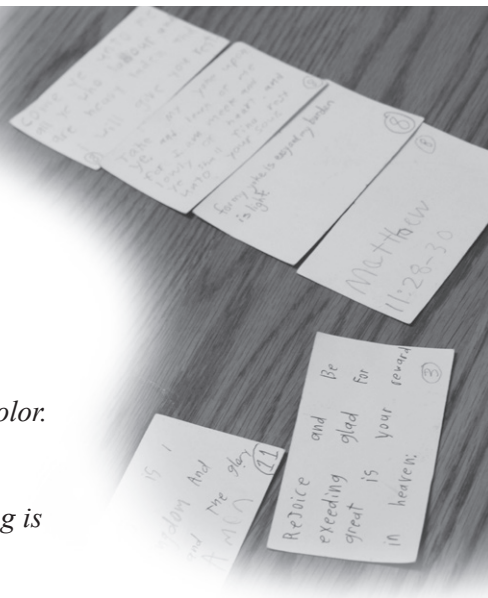
- ★ *Get or make cards that are all the same size and color.*
- ★ *Plan how each of the Bible verse(s) that you are memorizing can be written on 2 or more cards.*
- ★ *Print neatly and proofread to make sure everything is written correctly.*
- ★ *Put the reference on a separate card.*
- ★ *Draw a circle in the corner of each of the cards and write 1 in each circle (to show they all belong together).*
- ★ *Write a second verse (or set of verses) on another set of cards. Write 2 on those cards.*
- ★ *When you have 4 or 5 sets of cards, you are ready to play.*

How to Play the Game:

1. *Shuffle cards.*
2. *Pass out 4 to 8 cards per player or team. The remaining cards go in the GO FISH! pile.*
3. *To start the game, the first player chooses one of their verse cards to quote. Other players can help them remember and recite it.*
4. *If anyone has one of the cards to their set, they must give the cards to them. If not, then you should GO FISH! (take a card from the pile). If there are a lot of cards, take 2 more cards each time you finish your turn. Players who give out cards can also replace them from the pile. Don't let anyone run out of cards!*
5. *Then the next player or team has a turn to recite one of their card sets.*
6. *When the verses are all collected, each player or team can recite one of their collections while the rest listen. That's how you play BIBLE GO FISH!*

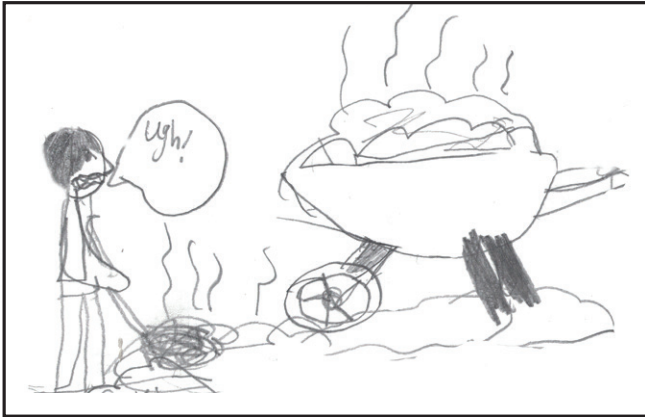
Tips: For an easy game, any cards that belong to a set someone has already quoted are handed over when they are pulled from the pile. For a harder game (and more practice), players have to keep requoting the verse on their turn to get the missing cards. Sometimes another player who pulls a missing card might quote it and take the whole set—that is part of the fun!

Do you have a fun game that you want to share with the rest of us? We'd like to hear about it!



MUCKY WORK

Tommy stared gloomily at the horse stall floor. It was caked with dirty straw. "Mucky work again," he growled to himself. "Why do I have to be the one always getting in trouble?" He shoved his pitch fork under a section of the wet brown muck and tried to lift. It was heavy and Tommy grunted as he lifted with both arms. As he flopped the stinky forkful into the wheel barrow, he wrinkled his nose. "Uhg!" Two more scoops, and Tommy stopped to rest.



Uncle Jerry stood in the barn doorway. "When that stall is cleaned out, call me to inspect," he said. His usually jolly face was serious. "I want it completely cleaned out. You can use that shovel to finish off. Dump the muck in the manure pile. Any questions?"

Tommy shook his head and picked up the pitch fork again. He had questions, but he knew better than to

ask. It would only get him more work—maybe even scraping out the barnyard. But as he slowly filled the wheelbarrow with sloppy, mucky straw, his mind was filled with mucky thoughts.

It is Emma's fault that the towels were stained, he told himself. She always cleans her dirty feet on them instead of washing them off first. Why is Mom so picky about the laundry anyway? I hate scrubbing stains on her old washboard! That's girls' work anyway. Emma should be scrubbing, not me! And just because I complained, Mom sent me to do mucky work for Uncle Jerry again. It isn't fair!

The rumble of a diesel engine filled the air and Tommy looked outside the barn door. Uncle Jerry was driving his tractor. *Put-put-put-put* it purred as it disappeared around the corner of the barn. Now that was the job Tommy wanted to do! But Uncle Jerry said that tractors were for boys who knew how to be respectful and responsible at home. Cousin Mike was only a year older than Tommy, and he got to help drive the tractor sometimes. He even had his own quad!

Tommy looked back at the wheelbarrow. It was getting full. He lifted the handles. It was heavy. But he was strong. He could push a full barrow out to the old manure pile! Tommy jabbed his pitch fork under the corner of the wet bedding and watched as another section of the slimy muck lifted and slopped into the wheelbarrow. It was almost like a machine. He was imagining himself as a giant crane lifting huge loads when a new sound came to his ears. A screech of brakes out by the road and the excited voices of children. Tommy peeked out of the door again. Oh, no! The cousins had come home from school!

Tommy hurried back to his work. Maybe he could get the stall cleaned before they came out to the barn. If Mike sees me, he'll know that I've been in trouble again, Tommy thought. He will never trust me to drive his quad! Tommy held his breath and listened. Yes, they were going in the house. The screen door slammed and everything was quiet. He'd better dump the wheel barrow quickly. Tommy picked up the handles and slowly backed toward the barn door.

He glanced over his shoulder. Oh, no! He could see the cousins sitting at the kitchen table right through the sliding glass doors. If he went out to dump his load in the manure pile, they would surely see him!

Quickly Tommy looked around the barn. In the corner was an empty calf pen. He grabbed the big push broom and shoved the clean straw to one side. I'll just dump the wheelbarrow here. If I cover it with clean straw, Uncle Jerry won't notice. He's so busy, he will just check to see if the horse stall is clean, he told himself. Tommy worked quickly and soon he had a second load of mucky bedding ready to dump. The pile in the calf stall was getting pretty big. He kicked some clean straw over it. That would have to do. But what about the rest of the horse stall muck? There was still enough for one more wheelbarrow load. As Tommy hurried to finish the job, he thought of an idea. Beneath the barn stairs there was a stack of buckets and feeding troughs. He could dump the last load behind them!

The horse stall looked pretty clean when Tommy put the tools away against the barn wall. He peeked outside the barn door again. Mike was sitting at the table with his back to the barn, but his big sister, Julie, was at the kitchen window. Tommy could hear Uncle Jerry and the tractor out behind the barn somewhere. That's right! There was a door in the back of the barn that went out to the horse corral. Tommy opened it and slipped outside. The horse twitched his ears and looked at Tommy. The tractor was stopped out by the big straw shed and Uncle Jerry was walking toward the barn. Tommy quickly climbed through the corral bars and ran to meet him.

"Ready for inspection?" Uncle Jerry asked. Tommy wasn't sure if he saw a twinkle in his eyes or not, but he nodded.

"Yes, sir! And when I'm done, can I help drive the tractor?"

Uncle Jerry frowned. "You remember, tractor driving is for boys who are respectful and responsible at home. When you get this work done, you have a job to do at home, remember?" Tommy's heart sank. He slowly nodded. Uncle Jerry was walking around to the big barn door, and Tommy tried to keep in step behind him. Maybe the cousins wouldn't notice that he was there. Or they would think he had just come to borrow something for Mom.

Uncle Jerry stopped inside the barn and blinked a few times. It was dark in the horse stall after being in the bright sunshine. Tommy held his breath. Uncle Jerry was nodding. "Looks good," he said, and then he started walking toward the stairway. "Now pitch in some clean—" suddenly his voice stopped as he bent down to pick up a bucket. Tommy's heart pounded and he felt like the time a spoonful of mashed potatoes got stuck in his throat. When Uncle Jerry stood up and looked straight at him, Tommy wished he could disappear.



"Why in the world did you put all that muck under my stairwell!?" Uncle Jerry's voice was angry. "What were you even thinking!?" He turned and looked around the barn closely. His eyes stopped on the pile in the calf pen. "And there's the rest of it! Where do you think the manure pile is, anyway?" Uncle Jerry was standing right in front of Tommy now, and his voice sounded like the roar of a tractor just starting up.

you even thinking!?" He turned and looked around the barn closely. His eyes stopped on the pile in the calf pen. "And there's the rest of it! Where do you think the manure pile is, anyway?" Uncle Jerry was standing right in front of Tommy now, and his voice sounded like the roar of a tractor just starting up.



"Where is the manure pile?" Uncle Jerry growled.

"Outside," Tommy managed to say.

"Right. And that is where all of it needs to go. All of it! Why you would want to make your job twice as difficult, I don't understand!"

In the silence that followed, Tommy could only think of one thing. Finally he got courage to ask. "Can I take it out through the horse corral?" he asked.

"What in the world for?" Uncle Jerry spluttered. "Do you want it to take you twice as long?"

"I just don't want the cousins to see me out here," Tommy confessed. "Can I, Uncle Jerry?" His voice was pleading now.

Uncle Jerry didn't answer for a minute. He looked at Tommy and then out the barn door toward the house. "I see how it is," he said at last, and his voice was low and rumbley again. "I know you don't want the others to see

you, but a consequence is a consequence. There are people all over that are in trouble for something they've done, and they lose their privileges... their licenses... their children... and it is embarrassing. It is better to learn this lesson now when you are young."

Uncle Jerry turned toward the door. "So can I..." Tommy began.

"Haul all this mucky mess to the manure pile—through the front," Uncle Jerry said firmly. He walked toward the house. Tommy's heart sank. Uncle Jerry stopped and looked over his shoulder. "A man of character faces the hard work and conquers it," he said.

Tommy watched Uncle Jerry disappear around the barn. He glanced toward the house. No one was in sight. Tommy grabbed the wheelbarrow and started working as fast as he could.

Cleaning up the piles took a long time. Every time he heard a door slam or voices, he froze. Once Mike walked right past the barn door and then Tommy heard the quad start up. He watched him drive off toward the field. As quick as he could, Tommy drove the wheelbarrow to the manure pile and dumped it. He was glad when the last scraping was done and he could dump the last load. Now he had to get Uncle Jerry to inspect.

Tommy waited until the tractor came around the field and was driving close to the back of the barn. He didn't see Mike until he was almost to the tractor. It was Mike driving, not Uncle Jerry! His cousin waved and pointed to the house. Tommy's face felt hot. Did Mike know? He quickly turned and headed back to the barn.

Uncle Jerry was standing in the doorway when he rounded the corner. He put his hand on Tommy's shoulder and pointed toward the horse stall. "How do you feel about your work now, Tommy?" he asked.

"I don't know. Okay, I guess," Tommy said. He wondered if Uncle Jerry had found something wrong with it. He watched his uncle's big hand point to the stairway.



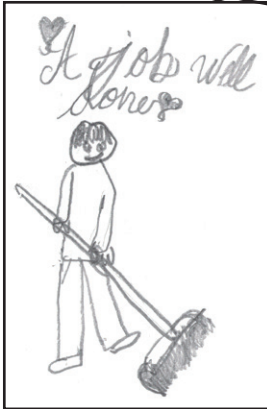
WHAT SOME CHILDREN HAVE LEARNED FROM DOING "MUCKY WORK:"

IT HELPS ME REMEMBER...

... **NOT TO ARGUE** WITH PEOPLE.—A 6-YEAR-OLD

... TO **BE NICE** TO OTHERS.—A 10-YEAR-OLD

... TO **BE RESPECTFUL**.—A 11-YEAR-OLD



it is suppose to be. A job well done. That is what a man of character does. Remember, God is faithful. He does a good job. That is what He wants for you, Tommy. You can be satisfied with yourself." Uncle Jerry gave Tommy's shoulder a squeeze.

Tommy took a deep breath. The faint smell of muck mixed with the dust from the field and the fresh spring air. It smelled good. Like hard work, done right.

"Spread clean bedding in the horse stall and sweep the floor, and you'll be done," Uncle Jerry said. "Then you can go home and show your mom that you are ready to be a man of character."

Tommy lifted his chin and nodded.



"No hidden piles, are there?" There was a nice sound in Uncle Jerry's voice, like the purr of the tractor working in the field. Tommy shook his head.

Uncle Jerry continued talking. "Everything is cleaned out and dumped like



A book review...

The Night the Angel Came

There was a little girl born in Korea. It was scary for her when her mother left her and the girl got adopted by a new mother and a new father. She had bad dreams of her birth mother leaving her. Then her new mother prayed that the bad dreams would go away. One night a bright light came into her room and an angel said, "Don't be afraid. I am with you." After that she never had bad dreams again, and she felt very happy.



I like this book because other adopted children could read this book and can know that they could be happy being an adopted child.

—Elijah, 13

I like this book because I can understand it better than most books. I like the paintings too.

—Ellianna, 11

I like the name of the story, "The Night the Angel Came."

—Rebecca, 11



Treasures of the Kingdom

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Dear Reader,

We are blessed to have another issue to share with you. It is good to live to share God's love and joy with others! In this issue we talk about our relationships—with God and one another. Do you have peace with God? Do you believe in His love for you? That is what we pray for.

Life has difficulties and blessings. God has a plan for good for your life, if you will learn to trust and obey Him. Each of us have a story to share. What is yours? Are you learning to know God's love for you? We are glad to receive your letters and emails.

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We are a family who loves Jesus: Rick and Krista Erickson and their daughters, Laura 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.

In the King's service,
The Editors

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SEND TO:

*How many pitchforks can you find?
There should be 86 including this one:*



Number 74

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1

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8

- Mucky Work

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11

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