

# Treasures of the Kingdom

Casting Up a Highway for the Children of This Generation

## The KING on the CROSS

Amos hated the Romans' control.



*If only we had the power to defeat them!*

When Jesus taught about the kingdom of God, healed the sick, and fed the crowds, Amos was impressed.



*If only He was our king!*

But he didn't like Jesus' message.

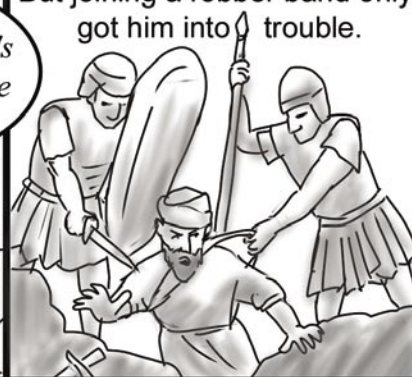


*Love your enemies, pray for those that persecute you... the kingdom of God is within you.*

*That won't solve anything! It's time to show those heathen dogs...*



But joining a robber band only got him into trouble.



Big trouble.



*A crucifixion will show those rebels who's boss!*

Bitterness and despair filled his heart. He had no power against them now!



The voice from the other cross startled him.



*Jesus? What is He doing here?*

*Father, forgive them.*

He was crowned as king now - in cruel mockery.



# Jerad's Lazy Eye

"Why does Tim wear a patch on his eye?" Jerad asked Mom. Tim's family had come to eat supper with Jerad's family, and the two boys had become friends. But the black patch had puzzled Jerad all evening. "He said he has to wear it 'cause he has a lazy eye. What does that mean?"

Mom turned off the light as Jerad got into bed. "A lazy eye means that one eye doesn't focus, or look at things, together with the other eye," she explained. "That makes it hard to see things clearly. If he wears a patch on the good eye, then the other eye has to learn to focus."

"Is that why he lifted up the patch when he looked at a book with me?" Jerad wondered. "It seemed like he went cross-eyed a little bit."

"Probably so," Mom agreed. "His lazy eye still doesn't focus well, so he uses his good eye when he wants to see something clearly. Most of the time everything probably looks a bit blurry to him."



"I thought the patch looked kind of neat, but I don't think it would be very fun to wear it," Jerad decided. "I'm glad that I can see things clearly."

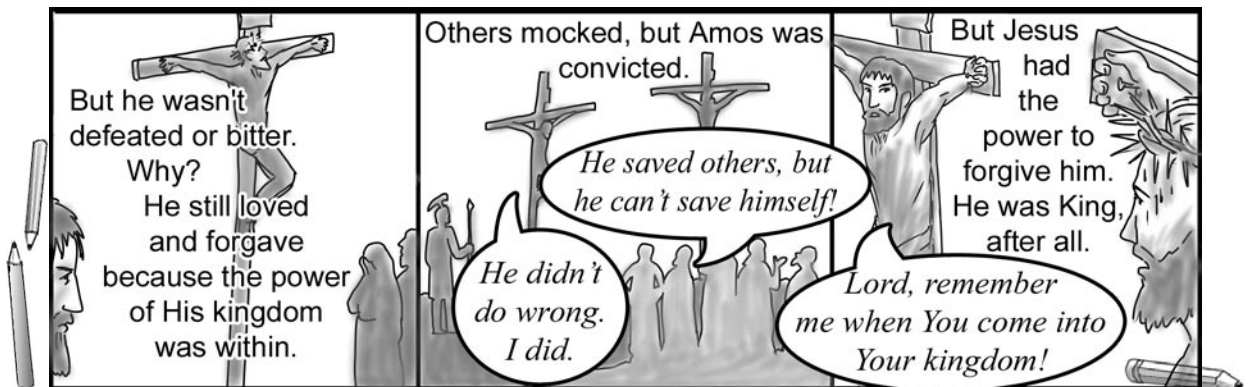
"Yes, God made our eyes to be very helpful to us. That will be a good thing to be thankful for tonight, don't you think?"

"Uh-huh," Jerad agreed, shutting his eyes. Since he was seven, he always counted seven things to thank God for every night. The first six were always the same—"Thank you God for Dad, and Mom, and Joshua, and baby Justin, and food to eat, and a bed to sleep in."

Tonight he added, "and being able to see without a patch."

It wasn't long after Jerad fell asleep that he heard Mom calling him. "Coming!" Jerad said obediently, but when he

hopped out of bed he couldn't see where the door was. *That's funny—it is usually right here*, he thought. *Maybe my eyes aren't working right*. When he reached for the wall, it moved and he fell against something hard. "Ouch!" he cried, trying to get up. "Mom, where are you?" Her voice came from behind him, but when he turned to look he saw someone with two heads



and three arms. Jerad was scared. "Mom! I need you!" Jerad cried, and suddenly he woke up. Jerad rubbed his eyes and looked around. There was his bedroom door with the hall light shining through. No one was there, except Joshua curled up asleep on the other end of the bed. It had all been a bad dream.

Jerad told Mom about his dream the next morning. "It was strange when I couldn't find the door," he said. "I thought my eyes were going to be bad like Tim's and I was scared!"

Mom gave him a hug. "I'm glad you can see me alright now," she said. "Maybe God let you have the dream so you can be extra thankful for two good eyes!"

Jerad was thankful for awhile. He was glad to see the pancakes at breakfast and baby Justin learning to crawl. But when Dad said they needed to stack the wood pile in the shed, Jerad wasn't so happy. "Do we have to do the whole woodpile?" he asked, frowning out the window. "It will take a long time!"

"Willing hands makes the work light," Dad said with a grin. "Let's see how fast we can get it done!" Jerad followed him outside slowly, wishing he could be building his fort or playing with the new kittens instead.

Dad took the biggest logs and Jerad took the smaller ones. It took awhile to fill the back of the shed. Jerad looked at the pile and it didn't seem much smaller, but Dad didn't seem to care. He whistled a tune, and then stopped to encourage Jerad. "Keep it up, son!"



They were on the second side when Uncle Mike drove up with the cousins. Jerad stopped working to wave excitedly. While Uncle Mike stopped to talk about business, Dad gave Jerad permission to go play with the cousins in the barn.

"I've been building a fort," Jerad told them, leading the way. "Do you want to see it?"

It wasn't long before Jerad came to the house. Slowly he opened the back door.

"Did the cousins leave already?" Mom asked, when she saw that he was alone.

"No," he said, taking off his shoes. "Can I have an apple? I'm hungry."

"I can slice it up so you can all share it," Mom decided.

"But there won't be enough," Jerad said with a frown.

"There is only one apple left, and I'm sure your cousins will want some, too," Mom said.

"But I'm not going to show it to them," Jerad said.

Mom looked at him in surprise.

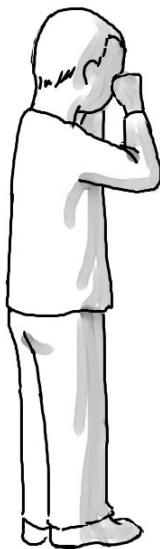
"I'm staying inside, 'cause they aren't playing nicely," Jerad explained.

"What happened?"

"Rob laughed about my fort and said it was for little kids," Jerad said, angrily.

"I'm sure they would like the new kittens," Mom said.

"But it's not fun at all—they





just hold them and won't share!"

"Were you sharing?" Mom asked quietly.

"Well, the white one is mine and I don't like other people to hold it."

"So you weren't sharing?"

I'm sorry to hear that."

Jerad began rubbing his eyes. "But they aren't being nice! Now the white one ran away and they said I scared it, and I didn't! They did!"

"Jerad, is something wrong with your eyes?" Mom asked. "You seem to be having trouble seeing things clearly. Maybe that's why you are rubbing them."

"No," Jerad muttered, glaring out the window. "It's because they aren't being nice to me!"

"That reminds me of what Jesus told some people," Mom said, smiling a little. "They didn't think they had a problem with seeing, but he said that they were blind. It was their selfishness and pride that made them see things in the wrong way. Sort of like their eyes being out of focus." She picked up her Bible and started looking through the pages.

Jerad stood still. He suddenly remembered Tim's black eye patch and his bad dream. Mom must have thought about the same thing, because she showed him some verses all about good eyes and bad eyes. "Jesus said that if your eye is single, or focused, your whole body will be full of light. That means you will see things clearly, just like they really are. But it also means that God's light



and blessing will fill you up inside. When you have an evil eye, or an eye that is selfish and lazy, you will have trouble seeing anything good or right. Jesus said then your whole body will be full of darkness."


Mom took Jerad's hands and looked into his eyes. "Remember how glad you were to see clearly this morning?" she asked. Jerad nodded. "That's what Jesus wants for your inside eyes, too. You see, our spirit has eyes, just like our head does. If our spirit doesn't focus on what is good and right—maybe one part of us wants to be kind and thankful, but the other part is thinking of ourselves and getting lazy—then everything looks bad. The wood pile looks too big, the apple looks too small, and the cousins look unfriendly and selfish." Mom smiled. "Sort of like when you thought you saw someone with two heads and three arms." Jerad hung his head.

"Let's ask the Lord to help you get your eyes focused," Mom suggested. "Are you ready



to be thankful for your cousins and share with them? Or maybe you will need an eye patch to help you out?"

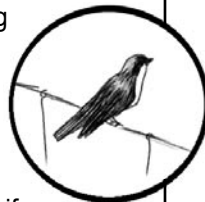
Jerad shook his head. "I don't want an eye patch!" He hesitated, then said, "I want to pray so that I can be thankful."

Soon Jerad was heading out to the barn with a bag of sliced apples and two bright eyes. 

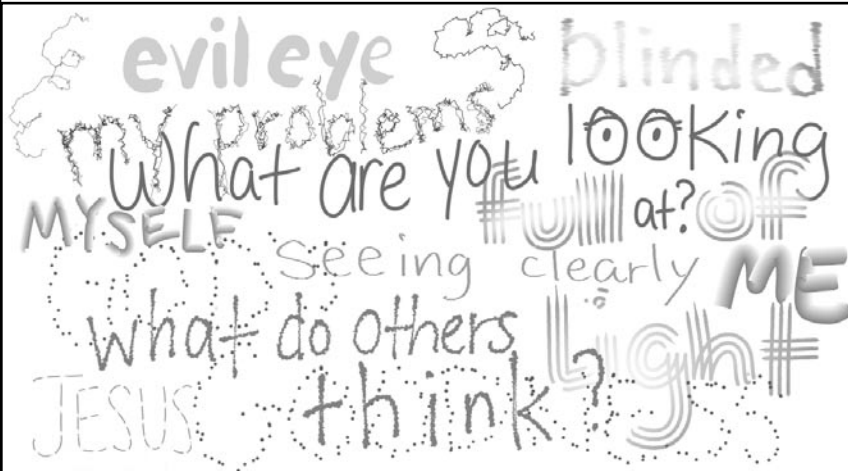
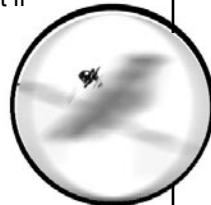
# In Focus

It is easy for our lives to get confused and out of focus, isn't it? Sometimes people say and do things that bother us. Sometimes we feel jumbled with fears and problems. When we feel confused

or in the dark, it is time to start focusing on the most important thing. What is that? Yes, God and His goodness. When we let Him get our full attention, then we can begin to see everything as it really is. Have you ever looked through binoculars or a microscope? At first everything is blurry. Maybe you can see lines and colors all blended together. But if you adjust the lens slowly, you can focus on the object you want to see—maybe a bird in the tree, or cells in an onion root. Suddenly everything is clear and understandable! In the same way, we need to focus our thoughts on God until we see His goodness clearly.



Getting focused is really important, but it's easy to focus on the wrong thing. What if you were looking through binoculars and got focused on a speck of dirt on the window instead of the bird? Now no matter how hard you look, you won't see anything but dirt. And that's how it is with our minds. If we decide to focus on our problems or the troubles around us, that's all we are going to see. And it isn't very encouraging, is it? We need turn our eyes away from the problems and look at the good things that God wants to show us. When we choose to focus on God, the other things will fade into the background. What do you want to have in focus?



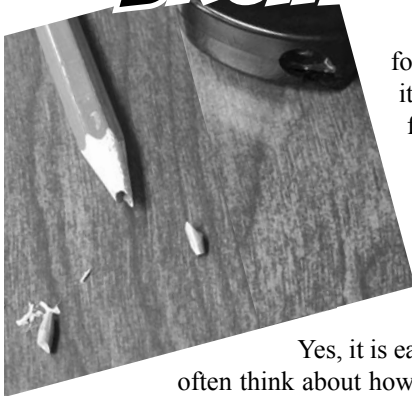
Does this look confusing? There are a lot of things to think about, but only a few are important. Trace over the words that tell us good things to focus our mind on.



**Jesus' Example:** Jesus lived with a life focused on one thing. What was that? Loving God, His Father. Jesus said, "I do always those things that please Him." There were plenty of other things Jesus could have thought about. Plenty of other things that looked more interesting. But Jesus didn't look at those things. His mind was set—focused—on something more wonderful than having fun or comfort in this life. "What about something to eat? Don't you want to be popular?" the devil asked. Yes, he was hungry. He did want friends and respect. But Jesus knew those things were just sparkly pieces of dirt compared to the real prize. So he kept turning his heart lens until he saw the smile of God. "For the joy set before him he endured the cross," the Bible says. Do you see how much joy God has stored up for us when we do what pleases Him? If you focus on God, and let Him fill your thoughts, you will be able to see His goodness and your life will be full of light!



# BROKEN PENCIL LEAD



We are coloring a picture together. “Can you sharpen this orange

for me?” you ask, handing me a colored pencil. The end is dull and so I put it into the sharpener. *Twist, twist*—oh no, the lead broke off inside! “I can fix it,” you say. Soon the broken piece comes out and we start over. *Twist, twist*—not quite enough—*twist, twist*. Now it is almost sharp, but look! “The lead is wiggly,” you say. “See? It pulls right out.” We look at the pieces of orange lead, disappointed.

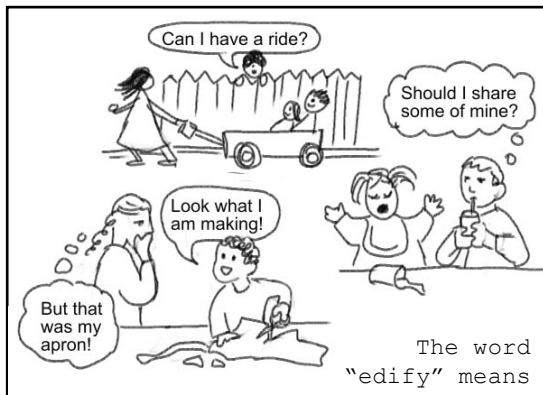
This pencil was probably dropped before, so the lead inside is all broken. “I guess we can’t use it,” you say. It won’t work for coloring, but I think we can learn a good lesson. “Not to drop pencils?” you suggest.

Yes, it is easy to forget that they are fragile inside. But even more important, we don’t often think about how hurtful our words can be to others. Just like dropping a pencil will break the inside of it, if we say unkind words to someone we are actually breaking something inside of them.

Remember the verse about a “broken spirit”? Proverbs 17:22 says, “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine; but a broken spirit drieth the bones.” Have you noticed how our brothers and sisters are blessed when we have a merry, or cheerful, heart? But what about when we start saying, “You are too little” or “I’ll tell Mama if you do that”? It is easy to be thoughtless and selfish, just like it is easy to let a pencil roll off the table. Then, suddenly, brother or sister’s attitude becomes grouchy and irritable. Why aren’t they being nice? You wonder. Maybe you try to get them to “shape up,” but it only gets worse—just like the pencil lead that keeps breaking. What has happened? You broke something inside them—their sense of being loved and wanted—and now they don’t trust you.

Do you want to be someone who hurts others with your words? Do you want to be someone whom others can’t trust? I don’t either. What can we do when someone’s spirit is broken and we caused the problem? First, we have to face our fault and be willing to humble down and apologize. That isn’t easy—unless we ask God to help us stop loving ourselves and be willing to lay down our desires to really love others. What does 1 John 3:16 tell us? What if God was always putting us down? Would we trust Him?

And second, let us follow what the Bible teaches about building others up. Each time we speak to others we have a choice—to nag and tear them down or encourage and build them up.



The word “edify” means to “build up”.

There are a lot of verses that tell us how important that is!

Find the missing pieces for these scripture pencils - then match each pencil to the example (above) of how God can help you to do them!

Romans 14:19 ...follow wherewith one may

things which make for

and things

Romans 15:2 - for his good

of us

his neighbor

Ephesians 4:29 - Let but that which is

communication of edifying, that

out of minister

mouth, unto the hearers.

peace,

Let every one to edification.

no corrupt good to the use

your grace

proceed it may

after the edify another.

please

# The Lost Thin Kittens



Our cat had 5 kittens. We enjoyed the kittens awhile, but they got lost underneath our house because the cat took them in there. I heard hungry meowing sounds underneath the house when I was looking for them, but I couldn't see them.

One day my sister, AutumnGrace, found

them in a nest of insulation. And one of them was out of the nest, so it died. I think it was because the mother forgot that poor little kitten. But I'm glad that all the rest are still alive. We buried the one that died inside a beautiful grave. We put the others in a safe place where the mother wouldn't hide them.

They were so thin and hungry. The foolish mama didn't feed them. Her milk dried up, but God helped them to still be alive. That was a big blessing. We fed them cat food soaked in milk. They liked it, too. I'm glad they are still alive!

By Raeanna,

age 7



Read about how other children have learned about God's care and comfort in their problems! We know He is ready to help you, because He has promised to be "a very present help in trouble."

*Buried Treasures*

I HOPE WE CAN PRINT  
YOUR STORY  
NEXT!

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

\*email us if you aren't included

Love

Courage

Gentleness

Trust

Kindness

Faith


Patience  
Meekness  
Truth  
Goodness  
Peace  
Joy

# Runaway Driver



When Josiah was about one year old he practiced walking by pushing a little wheeled push-toy. One day he was pushing it around outside while Judah (age 3) played nearby. Suddenly he took off running down the lane, toward the main road where a lot of logging trucks drove by. Judah

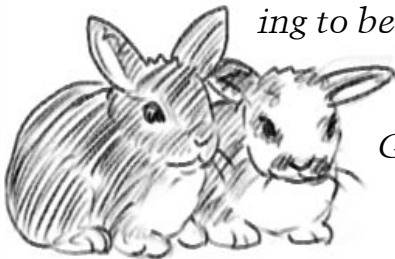
saw him and called the alarm at the top of his lungs. When Mama saw what was happening, she ran as fast as she could down the lane.

Thankfully the lane was very long, but Josiah was almost at the end by the time Mama caught up to him. She swooped him up and kissed him, rejoicing that God had saved her baby! - Josiah's Mama 

**Babies!** I have had a Holland Lop rabbit named Squid. Ever since I've had her she has not had live babies. A couple months ago I bred her again, hoping she would have live babies this time. One day I went to see if they were born yet. I found three newborn babies, but they were all dead. I walked in the house crying. Mamma told me to bury them. I went sadly to get the box out of Squid's pen and I felt something warm and wiggly inside the nest. Then I pulled them out and there were three live babies! PRAISE GOD!

I have been very blessed to see the bunnies growing. My siblings and I have enjoyed holding them. Soon they are going to be sold to a Christen lady that has a mentally handicapped son. I am so thankful to be able to bless others with the bunnies that God has given me. The bunnies are a big blessing to every body.

- Paulina, age 11





Let Me Tell You About...

# Keen's Place of Comfort



Keen is only a few months old, but he already knows what makes him feel happy and safe. He knows Mommy is the one who feeds him, and when he is hungry he is always happy to go to her! When he is full and content, Keen likes to look around and make noises. He likes it when his brothers talk and smile at him. And he especially likes back rubs! But sometimes Keen is not happy and a worried look comes on his face.

"Keen is feeling stressed by something," Mommy says. "Can you help make him happy?" His brothers try to make him smile, but instead Keen starts to fuss. Then Daddy says, "Let me hold him." When Keen feels Daddy's strong arms he stops crying. He snuggles his little head against Daddy's bristly chin and listens to his deep calm voice. Keen lays quietly on Daddy's chest. He knows Daddy will keep him safe. "Look," Mommy says. "Keen is calm and content now!"

Keen has a special place to go when he needs comfort, doesn't he? In the same way, our Heavenly Father has a special place for us to feel safe, no matter what is bothering us. His arms are so strong that they can carry the whole world – and they never wear out! We can trust Him to lift us up and hold us safely when we are fearful or overwhelmed. When we press close to Him, we can feel the security and warmth of His love for us. Be still now and listen! The rumble of His mighty voice fills our ears and chases away all our troubles. How comforting to just lay quietly and know that our great loving Daddy will keep us safe!



- shared by Keen's Mommy

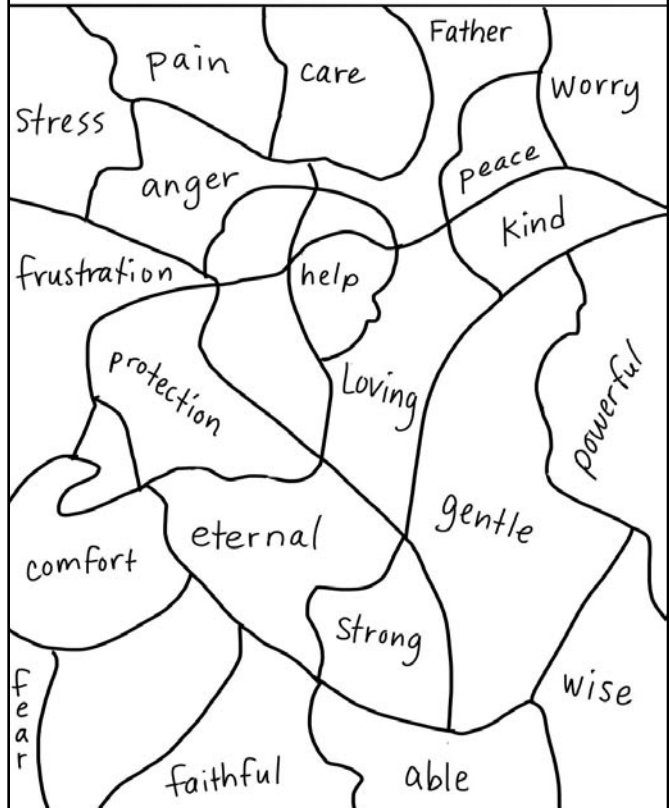
*Color the puzzle and find the hidden picture!*

*Things we need = tan*

*Another name for Daddy = dark brown*

*Things that bother us = dark blue*

*Words that describe God = yellow*



Love  
Courage  
Gentleness  
Trust  
Kindness  
Faith

Patience  
Meekness  
Truth  
Goodness  
Peace  
Joy

*Do you know that God cares?*

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

# A Place for Prayer

## REQUESTS AND THANKSGIVING



I am thankful for my baby bunnies. I am thankful for Jesus and the Bible. I am thankful for our new big bedroom.

I am praying that I will be helpful and cheerful all the time.  
- Paulina, age 11

Violet, our cow, has been giving a lot of milk and we're very thankful. I would like prayer that I love my siblings and treat them like my friends.  
- Isabella, age 13



I was grateful that we had a safe trip to Idaho (picture on left).  
- Judah, age 7

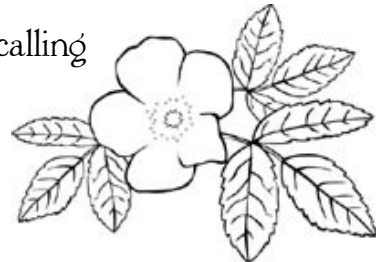
I am thankful that Jesus is helping me be thankful while I have allergies. - Niklanna, age 14



I am thankful that my horse's feet got better after he sprained them.  
- AutumnGrace, age 12

## Children of God

Just recently our family has been called Pacifists (which is the world's word for peacemakers or non-violence believers). In Matthew 5, Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." By calling us Pacifists the people are blessing us with a great honor. Praise the Lord!



- Niklanna, age 14

## IT HAD BEEN A TRYING WEEK

for the Robinson children with two young visitors in the house. “The Frank kids are so selfish and annoying!” Betsy said after their parents had picked them up for the evening. “I wish we didn’t have to babysit them.”

“Yes,” agreed her brothers, Thomas and Mark. “They always play with our toys and mess things up!”

Mrs. Robinson smiled a little. “Are they the only ones who are acting selfish? It seems that some of my children are having the same trouble.”

“I didn’t feel so selfish before they came,” sighed Thomas. “It is easy to share with Mark because he plays nicely.”

“Yes, and that is why I think it is good to have them here,” Mrs. Robinson said. “If we

Giant Selfishness sat in his arbor, where honeysuckle and roses climbed up graceful pillars and a fountain splashed in a marble basin. Since his willing servant Pleasure took care of the garden, everything was kept beautiful and pleasant. Often the giant came here to enjoy the results of his victories. He was tyrant over half the world and he had made many brave soldiers into his slaves. But today he sat alone, a gloomy frown on his massive face.

“Bad news, bad news,” he muttered to himself. “If this brave knight, Fides (*FI-deez*), has already killed my brother, Giant Sloth, what will he do next? I am not afraid of anything—except that invincible sword which the King has given him. Not even my great strength can stand against that!” Though millions had felt his chains, both young and old, the giant’s heart was full of fear. He pressed his immense hand over his eyes, and sat thinking.

“Ha! I have it!” he exclaimed, suddenly raising his head, “What my power cannot do, a cunning trick may accomplish.” He clapped his hands, which echoed through the garden like the

are going to serve the Lord, we have to face our enemies and overcome them. These children are giving us practice.”

Betsy looked thoughtful. “I guess we all have to battle with selfishness. Except it seems kind of hard.”

“When Max grabbed my Lego plane today, it made me mad,” admitted Thomas. “I didn’t smack him, but I sure felt like it!”

“I try to play nicely with them,” added Mark, “but sometimes they just are mean to me.”

“Yes, it does seem rather like selfishness is a giant that is too big for us,” Mrs. Robinson agreed. “But here is a story that will help us see his plot and how our King can help us. It may give us some ideas of how to win in this battle.” The children gathered around to listen as she began:

# GIANT SELFISHNESS



boom of thunder. In a moment his servant, Pleasure, appeared. She was a bright little creature, with glossy wings that sparkled with the colors of the rainbow. “Pleasure!” exclaimed the Giant, “I need your help to capture the knight who is

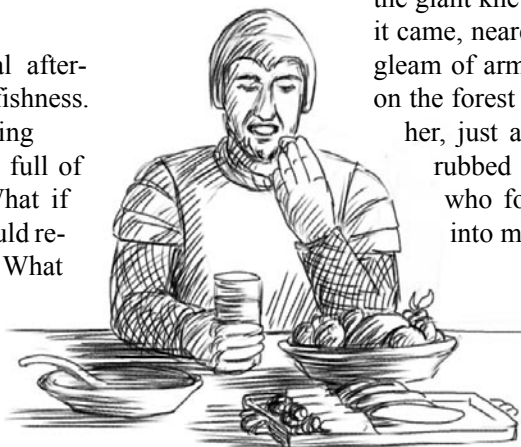
trying to destroy the family of Selfishness. Do you know if Fides is still at the castle where he killed Sloth this morning?”

“He is still there,” replied the musical voice of Pleasure. “He is busy cleaning up all the cobwebs and clutter, but I am sure he will leave before the sun goes down.”

“He must not leave it until the night dew falls!” cried the giant, leaning forward on his seat. “You must hurry to my brother’s castle, Pleasure,” he said, in a low earnest tone, “and lay out a tempting dinner so that he will be delayed. Be sure to choose the foods and drink that he loves best, and make sure there is plenty!” Pleasure answered the giant with a smile. She had learned many recipes from old Gluttony, her neighbor, and was confident of what she could do.

“There is no moon tonight,” continued Selfishness, “and if he tarries until dark then I will be able to catch him.” With a wide smile and a gleam in his eye, the giant told her the rest of his plans. “When he leaves that castle of Sloth, you will dance in front of him with a lantern in your hand and lure him away from the road. With your magical light, lead him to the deep pit in the woods which I have dug to catch wanderers like him.” Pleasure curtsied as she received the command, then spread her glossy wings and flew off.

It was a dismal afternoon for Giant Selfishness. Despite all his cunning plans, his mind was full of anxiety and fear. What if the brave knight should resist the temptation? What if he obeyed the faithful voice of Mercy, which had warned him to leave before



dark? How the great tyrant hated the wise King who knew so well how to keep his servants out of Selfishness’ trap!

As the night closed in and the sky grew darker and darker, the huge strides of the giant took him to his pit in the woods. Like a wild beast, he crouched to wait for Fides. When he thought of the invincible sword, he trembled. But if only the knight fell in the pit—then he would be easy to conquer.

Back in the castle of Sloth, Fides was delayed. How many times, while enjoying another serving of Gluttony’s feast, had the young knight heard the quiet warning voice of Mercy? “You must leave—hurry while it is still light!” But he had become so proud over his success in killing Giant Sloth that he did not heed her warning, nor think of the danger. At last, when the darkening shades reminded him of the nearness of night, he drained his last glass and slowly stood. “Ah, that was a good dinner after today’s work,” he said, contentedly. “Now I must be off.”

Giant Selfishness crouched by his pit in the woods and listened for the sound of footsteps. For a long time he only heard the rustling of the leaves as the wind moaned through the forest. The stars scarcely gleamed in the slate gray sky, which was darkened by clouds. At last a light appeared in the distance, and by its yellow flickering beams, the giant knew it was the lantern of Pleasure. On it came, nearer and nearer, until he could see the gleam of armor and the sound of tired footsteps on the forest path. Yes, the knight was following her, just as he had hoped! Giant Selfishness rubbed his huge hands with delight. “He who follows Pleasure will be sure to fall into my pit,” he murmured.

The sword of Fides hung by his side. It was not in his hand because it had gotten in his way as he followed Pleasure through the thicket. He was not



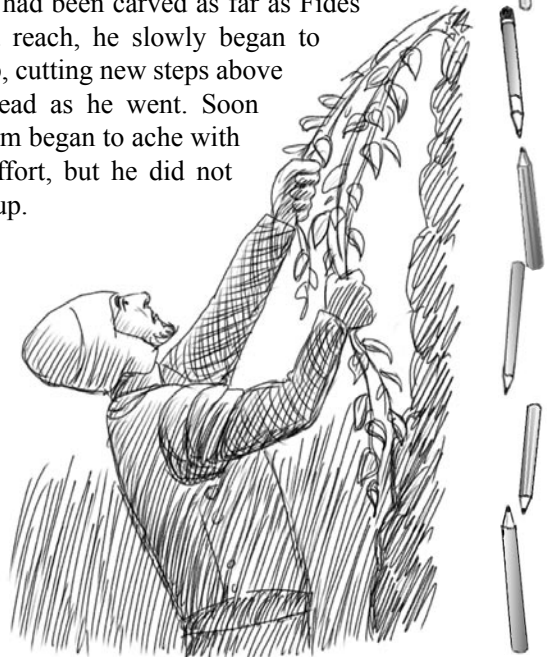
watching out for any foe. No, tonight he thought of nothing but the cheerful light in front of him. His feasting had made him sleepy and dreamy, and he was eager to keep up the good feeling of Pleasure as long as he could. Suddenly there was the sound of a crash and a cry. Fides had reached the pit. Stepping on the slippery edge, he had fallen into the snare of Selfishness!

The fall did not kill him, though the pit was deep. Perhaps it was his wonderful armor that protected him from severe injury. But the fall certainly did awaken his senses. The captured knight sat up in a dismal condition. More than the bruises that made his legs and back ache, Fides felt mortified and discouraged. How had he let himself be lured off the path of duty? Surely the cunning giant who had thrown him into this dark prison was lurking nearby! Yes, and he would keep him here until he perished by a slow, lingering death, as thousands had done before him. Had not the King warned him with the words of Mercy?

Fides roused himself. He would not be kept as captive to Selfishness—he must escape! “I

have been called to be a knight of the Great King,” he told himself. “I must not give up now. Though I have fallen by my carelessness, I will struggle to get free again!” He reached for the walls of the pit and began to try climbing out. The ground was crumbly, but there was a creeping plant called “Desire for Approval” that he could grab hold of. By clutching and pulling with great effort, he was able to climb several feet off of the ground. Then, all at once, the vines snapped and he fell heavily back to the bottom again. The mocking laugh of the giant came from above, adding to his disappointment and pain.

Still, Fides would not be discouraged. “There must be a better way,” he told himself, as he felt for his sword. “I cannot escape by my own strength, but the King has given me a weapon to use!” With renewed hope, he began to cut out steps into the soft wall of the pit. As he carefully and patiently worked, he thought of his King who had given him his strong armor and mighty sword. “He has promised me a treasure and golden crown when I have conquered all the giants in my path,” the knight reminded himself. “I must not be overcome by them, at any cost!” When steps had been carved as far as Fides could reach, he slowly began to climb, cutting new steps above his head as he went. Soon his arm began to ache with the effort, but he did not give up.





The giant knelt by the edge of the pit and glared down into the darkness. He could not see his intended victim, but he heard the sound of falling earth and caught glimpses of the shining point of the sword. "Ha! I will put a stop to this!" cried Selfishness, as he hastily gathered together a heap of stones and soil to hurl upon the climber. The mass fell first on the sword, which would not have snapped with the weight of a mountain, and this broke the force of it. But the blow was strong enough to dash the weapon from Fides' hand and hurl the knight down to the bottom once more.

Poor Fides felt quite dismayed. "I am sorry that I ever lingered at that feast!" he said, in distress. "It was all my fault that I did not listen to Mercy, but followed Pleasure instead. Now I am certainly trapped in this miserable pit of Selfishness! Is there any chance of escape?" He felt around in the dark for his sword. When he found it, he tried its edge. It was as sharp as ever and brought to his memory what Mercy had told him when he began his journey. "If ever you are in distress, breathe on the hilt of your sword and I will come to aid you."

"Surely this is the time she meant," he said, and sighed heavily upon his weapon. In a moment a faint light shown into his prison as he looked up to see the glowing star-wreath on the brow of the King's lovely messenger. "Oh, Mercy!" exclaimed the unhappy prisoner, "You have never found me before in such a terrible place! Must I remain buried alive in this pit? Am I shut out from the kingdom forever?"

"You must climb once more," replied Mercy. "Though you have fallen thrice, there is no reason to faint if you put your trust in the King!"

"But I'm bruised and worn out, and have hardly strength to arise. When I get up a little way, down comes a shower of earth which throws me back into my dungeon," said Fides dismally. "There is nothing firm to grab hold of, nothing to help me to rise from these depths."

"Look this way," said Mercy, "and see what has been placed here to enable poor captives to climb up from their dungeon." By the soft light which she shone around her, Fides caught sight of a cord of twisted silk and gold hanging on the side of the pit. "This," continued his guide, "is the strong cord of Love.

The bright scarlet twist is love towards man, while the golden is



the stronger and holier love toward your King. The giant knows of this cord, and a thousand times has tried to break or destroy it, but it is not in his power to do so. Sometimes indeed he pulls it out of the way, so that his victims cannot reach it. Either he has forgotten this precaution tonight, or he has trusted that the darkness would hide from you the way of safety and deliverance.”

Fides took courage and grasped the slender but firm cord of Love. With stronger hope and determination, once again he began his dangerous ascent. The climbing seemed far easier now, as his feet found the notches cut out by the sword and gave relief to his weary arms. But Selfishness did not give up easily, and tossed down another great heap of stones and of earth. This time, in the deep darkness, Fides was protected as he held fast to the cord. With another upward step, his hand was on the edge of the pit, and then his head rose above it! Giant Selfishness uttered a cry of



despair and turned to flee as the knight pulled out the invincible sword. With a flash of its blade, the great enemy was slain!

“I liked that story,” said Thomas. “I think Fides was brave to keep climbing out of the pit.”

“The giant was mean to throw dirt on him!” put in Mark. “But he didn’t give up!”

“And he learned some important lessons,” Mrs. Robinson pointed out. “Remember how the “desire for approval” vines broke? That should remind us that we can’t get free from selfishness because we want others to like us better.”

“But why couldn’t he get out by digging steps with his sword?” asked Thomas.

“Isn’t the sword the Word of God?” added Betsy. “I would think that when we think about God’s promises that it would help us not be selfish.”

“But it isn’t quite enough, if we go in our own strength and effort,” reminded their mother. “Who did Fides end up calling for, when he really started to be sorry for just trying to please himself?”

“Mercy,” said Besty, thoughtfully. “Does that mean we need to ask God for help, too, not just read our Bibles?”

Mrs. Robinson smiled. “I think you are starting to dig out some of the hidden meaning,” she encouraged. “Do you remember what the cord was called, Mark?”

“Love,” he said. “Just like I love you, Mama!” He gave her a big hug.

“It is easy to love people who are nice,” Thomas said with a sigh, then he smiled a little. “But I guess I’m not always very nice and you still love me.”

“I’m going to pray that I will love the Frank children,” Betsy decided. “I don’t want to be stuck in a selfishness pit!”

“Let’s all pray together,” agreed Mrs. Robinson. “We need God’s armor and weapons to be overcomers!”

- adapted from “The Giant Killer” by A.L.O.E. (Highly recommended)



Dear Reader,

Life can be busy and complicated. I'm so glad that God can show us what is most important! We have been thankful to trust Him with all our needs and problems, because He is big enough and good enough to take care of them. May the Lord bless you in seeing the goodness He has for you!

**Do you have something to share or questions to ask?**

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

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

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

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

In the King's service,  
The Editors

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**Number 64**

**Spring 2014**

<i>Comic</i>	1
- The King on the Cross	
<i>Live and Learn</i>	2
- Jerad's Lazy Eye	
<i>Think About It</i>	5
- In Focus	
<i>Lesson From Life</i>	6
- Broken Pencil Lead	

<b>Buried Treasures</b>	- The Lost Thin Kittens	<i>middle section (where readers share)</i>
	- Runaway Driver	
	- Babies!	
	<i>Let Me Tell You About...</i>	
	- Keen's Place of Comfort	
<i>A Place for Prayer</i>		
- Children of God		

<i>Allegory</i>	7
- Giant Selfishness	

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*How many pencils can you find?  
There should be 94, including this one:*



**SEND TO:**