

Lilian Stanley's

100 Little
& Stories
FOR Little
Hearts

Volume 2



**Little Stories
for
Little Hearts**
(Volume 2)

Dr. Mrs. LILIAN STANLEY, MBBS, DCH.,
Medical Missionary

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Church Colony, Vellore 632 006, India
Tel: 00 91 416 2242943, 2248943
<hq@bymonline.org>
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Why Another Story Book?

When I started writing stories, my idea was to write 365 stories—one a day for a year. But I ran out of steam after 213 stories. When the first volume of 100 stories reached people I thought they would think I had backslidden. But the response was too good, beyond my expectation. Children started calling me to say, “I have come up to this story.” A 67 year old brother said, “I wondered why they sent me a children’s book. But when I started reading it I got immersed in it. I’m just waiting for my children and grandchildren to read it.” A headmistress phoned and said that they are reading one story a day in their School Assembly. A brother wanted to make it into MP3. Another sister wanted permission to enact them. A family said they are using it for their family prayer. May God be glorified.

Once again I want to confess that these stories are but a collection which, over the years I have heard or read. God bless the original authors and all those who labored behind the curtain to bring my writings to book shape. Thalitha who typed, Bro. Benedict who chose the pictures and Mr. Selwyn who proof-read are in particular stood with me as the book took shape. I especially thank all those who let me know how blessed they were by reading the book. That gave me the impetuous to go ahead with the Second Volume. The Lord bless every one of you.

Will there be a third volume? you may ask. Well, may be. I have about 50 stories with me at present. If you are interested in a Third Volume you may send in stories, not published in the First and Second. The Lord willing, we may publish it with your name under your story.

So I sat with the second volume and here it is. May the Lord bless you as you read them to your children.

Lilian Stanley
www.lilianstanley.com

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1

The Modern Prodigal

Once upon a time there lived a rich family. They were four—father, mother and two sons, Mendez and Morris. Mendez was a good boy who helped his father in his business. Morris was disobedient, rebellious and a friend of the worst gang in town. The parents had taught both the boys about God. While Mendez went to church with his parents, Morris always spent his time with friends on Sundays.



One day, prompted by his friends, Morris asked his father to give him his share of the property. Without a word the father divided the property and gave him his share. Morris sold his property, gathered the money and walked out of the house. He and his friends went to a far country and lived as they pleased. They drank and danced, ate in hotels and visited theaters. They slept in the most expensive hotels. Gradually

the money was gone. One by one his friends left him.

The country was going through an economic crisis and nobody would employ him. He was hungry and penniless. Finally he joined as a cooley in a factory. Hard work took its toll. He became sick and thought of his mother who always sat by his side when he was sick and his father who brought the doctor home. “Why not return home? Even our servants there are well taken care of and I am starving here like a destitute he thought.” He was ashamed to face his father. Would he accept him? Finally Morris sat down and wrote a letter to his father.

“Father, I am not worthy to be called your son. I want to come back home. Keep me as one of your servants. If you are willing, tie a white handkerchief on the tree in front of our house. If I see the handkerchief I will alight in the station and walk home. If I don’t find a hanky I will carry on.” He posted the letter.

Fearfully he boarded the train. The train track passed by his house. As the train neared his hometown his heart started to beat rapidly. Will he see a handkerchief or not? The train neared his house. And what do you think he saw? Hundreds of white handkerchiefs were fluttering in the wind on the tree. His father, fearing his son might not see a single handkerchief had tied up so many white handkerchiefs! What happened next is anybody’s guess.

That’s the father’s love. If you have gone away from God, if you are not leading a God-pleasing life, come back to God. Father God is waiting for you with wide open arms!

2

Lower One Foot Lord!

Luxan was a village boy, ten years old. When Vacation Bible School was conducted in his village he enthusiastically attended the same and gave his heart to Jesus. He was very eager that his father should know the Lord. So he bought a Bible and presented it to his father. His father was a History Professor. He read the Bible and told Luxan that it was a good history book. Luxan was disappointed.



Luxan started praying for his father. One day the pastor came to see Luxan and found him praying, “Lower one foot Lord, lower one foot.” When Luxan finished his prayer the pastor asked what he meant by that prayer. Luxan answered, “My father knows everything in the head. I was asking

God to bring all his knowledge from his head one foot down to his heart.”

Funny. But that’s the condition of many. They know the Bible of God thoroughly but do not know the God of the Bible. It is not enough to read the Bible. As you read, pray that God will reveal Himself to you. Make Him your Lord, God and Saviour!

3

Beautiful Cheques!

A widowed mother sacrificed her life for her son. She worked in homes and educated him. He understood his mother’s love and studied well. He graduated and went to America and took up a job. He earned well.



At home his mother continued to lose her health. She had no proper food. She took to bed and died. Her son was shocked and came rushing home. Her neighbors met him on the way and cried, “Why didn’t you take care of your mother? You could have sent her some money for treatment and food. Why did you treat your mother so badly?”

The son was shocked. “What happened to all the money I sent? Every month I sent her a cheque,” he lamented. When they went inside the house they found all the beautiful foreign cheques stuck on the wall! Then the neighbors remembered that she used to boast that her son had sent her lovely pictures and understood her folly. If she had taken the cheques to the bank she could have led a royal life.

The Bible is like a cheque book. If we keep it without using it we will be paupers. The more we use it the richer we will become spiritually and then enjoy a royal life in heaven.

4

The Diamond

There was a mighty big tree in a jungle. Its fruit was sweet and animals and birds enjoyed its fruit and cool shade. One day a big tempest blew and the large tree was uprooted. The tree fell with a crash. She cried, “Why did God allow this? Have I not been serving everybody?” The winds blew, the rain lashed and the sun scorched. The tree was buried in soil and dead leaves.



The tree sank deeper and deeper into the ground. The heat was terrible. The tree waited for help but nobody came to its rescue. She wept, “God has forgotten me.”

Years and years rolled by. The tree lost all hope. One day she heard noises of digging on top. After a few days the team reached the tree and exclaimed, “Ah, here, the best coal ever!” They dug up coal. Someone picked up a hardened piece of the tree and shouted, “Look at this. It is as hard as a stone. It looks like a precious stone to me.” He took it to the jewelry shop and indeed it was a diamond. The jeweller put him in a machine and cut him. It was torture. But out came a dazzling diamond. The king heard of this very big special diamond and sent and purchased it. He had it fixed in his crown. The tree said, “Thank you Lord. It is worth it!”

Do you know coal is transformed to diamond under tremendous heat and pressure? God is making you into a diamond!

5

The Baby Elephant

Solomon’s job was to catch wild animals and sell them to the zoo or circus. His business was thriving. Once he went into the forest to get some elephants. He and his workers dug a deep pit and put bamboo sticks on its mouth. They spread leaves on the sticks to hide the pit. This was the trap for the elephants.

Evening when they returned to see the trap the scene was heart-rending. A baby elephant had fallen into the trap. A herd of elephants were near the trap, trumpeting. Solomon’s team fired shots in the air to scare the pachyderms away. All but one went into the forest. One stood farther away watching the baby. The workers loaded the baby in a truck and took him away even as the mother elephant gave chase, crying with tears flowing from her eyes. Finally she gave up and returned to the forest.

Solomon could not sleep that night after seeing the tears in the mother’s eyes. The baby elephant kept calling to its mother. Solomon named the baby as Rick and brought him up tenderly.

Rick grew up, but never forgot his mother. Now and then he would call out, “Ma aa” with tears in his eyes. Solomon continued his animal trade. All the while he was feeling bad about his trade and one day decided to stop it. Whenever he saw Rick cry he felt a deep sorrow in his heart. He vowed to take him back to his mother. But how to locate his mother?

One day Solomon was having his bath when he heard Rick cry, “Maa, maa, maa...” When Solomon came out he saw Rick caressing the TV and crying. A circus program was going on. It became clear to Solomon that Rick’s mother was among the circus elephants. He called the TV station and got the circus’ name. It was in Delhi.

It was a hard decision but Solomon decided to go ahead. He called the manager of the circus and informed him that he was coming with a baby elephant. He hired a truck and took Rick to Delhi. They arrived at the circus grounds by mid afternoon. Rick was let loose. Rick ran to his mother. Both mother and baby cried and caressed each other. Solomon cried too and the circus manager joined the trio in crying!



Solomon paid a huge sum to buy the mother elephant and brought her back by truck. He drove them both to their forest and let them free. Both the elephants saluted Solomon in the circus fashion and walked trunk in trunk into the forest.

Be kind to animals, birds, and fish. They are God’s creations.

6

A new Sylvia

Sylvia was a twenty year old girl. She was very unhappy at home. Her parents’ corrections irked her. She complained about everything — her food, her room, her pocket money — literally everything. She grumbled and cried and locked herself inside her room. Sylvia worked in an office.

Sylvia had a friend in her office. Her name was Nadia. Nadia was a bright girl. She was always smiling and cheerful, having a good word for everyone. Sylvia was surly and rude to everyone. She wondered how Nadia could be so bubbly. Sylvia



thought, “She has so little. Why is she so much happier than I am? Everyday I show up at work with an expression that suggests that the universe will soon come to an end. But Nadia on

the other hand, always wears a smile on her face, which with her two dimples, makes her look like a carefree angel. Conscientious about her work, she never looks around like I do.”

One day after yet another squabble with her parents, Sylvia packed her suitcase and went to the office. She told Nadia

that she wanted to live with her. Nadia nodded and took her home in the evening. Sylvia's parents were relaxed because they knew where she was going.

Sylvia had her first shock. Nadia's house was in a slum. There were only two rooms and a kitchen. The toilet was common for the street. Nadia's grandmother welcomed Sylvia. They had rice, pepper water and beans for dinner. Sylvia remembered the time when she shouted at her mother that the chicken fry was too spicy. She had her mother, father and two brothers. But Nadia lived with her old grandmother.

Nadia gave her cot to Sylvia and shared her grandmother's cot. Morning, Nadia washed vessels and gazing through the window said, "Look at the sunrise. How beautiful! I love to see it everyday." Sylvia wondered why she had never noticed the sunrise. Morning they had ragi porridge and left for office. After three days Sylvia decided to shift back to her house. Somehow her house did not seem so foreboding and her parents looked kind.

The girl with angelic dimples who had so little, taught her so much. It is all in our mind and it is a matter of attitude. We can be happy with little or miserable with much. Learn to love and appreciate God's gifts to you.



7

Geetha and the Golden Bus

It was war time in Burma (now Myanmar). There were wounded everywhere lying on the street. A Roman Catholic father was walking along helping the wounded and taking them to the hospital. His eyes fell on a tiny baby thrown near a garbage can. The mother and father lay dead nearby. He took pity on the baby and took her to his orphanage where there were already fifty girls. He named her Geetha. Father had a special love for Geetha.

Geetha grew up. Now and then she would go to the Father and ask him for pencil or rubber or color pencils and Father would give her. One day Geetha saw a bus load of children singing and dancing inside the bus. She asked the other children what it was and they said the girls were going on an excursion. Geetha was so taken up by the joyous sight that she went to Father and said, "Father, I want to go on an excursion in a bus." Father smiled and said, "Geetha my child, excursions are expensive. You ask God."

So, Geetha started praying in dead earnest. Every day she prayed morning and night. One day a bus entered their orphanage. It was made of dazzling gold. It was gorgeously decorated with flowers. The driver and conductor were in smart uniform. All the orphanage children ran to the bus and Geetha also ran thanking God for answering her prayers. The conductor had a long list of names. As he started reading the

names, the girls whose names were called out hopped into the bus, merrily shouting and laughing.

Geetha waited for her name. The list was going down but her name was not called. Geetha was becoming anxious. Finally the conductor closed the door and whistled. “Wait,” said Geetha. “Please check again. The bus has been sent for me.” The conductor said, “Sorry baby, your name is not here and I am instructed to take only those whose names are listed.” The conductor blew the whistle, the driver honked the horn and whirrr went the bus.

“My name is not there?” Screamed Geetha and woke up from her dream. She started sobbing and weeping, “My name is not there? Why is not my name there?” All the children in the dormitory got up. They switched on the light. Father came in to see what the commotion was all about. “Who put on the light?” he sternly asked. “Not me” said one and lay down. “Not me,” “Not me,” “Not me” said every one and lay down. Geetha also said, “Not me” and lay down. Father put off the light and went away.

Geetha was sobbing, “Why was not my name there? Why was not my name there? It was I who prayed for the bus.” She drifted off into sleep. Every day



she'd sit before her food and sob, “My name was not there, my name was not there.” “Where?” asked the children. But Geetha wouldn't reply. After three days (in her dream) God showed her her suitcase. Banu's hairclip was there; Rita's scented rubber lay in a corner; Danny's foreign pencil lay across. God showed her one by one and said, “Geetha, you can't get into the golden bus with all these things in your suitcase.”

Geetha got up in the morning and opened her suitcase. She gathered all the stolen items and put them inside her school bag. She briskly walked to school. “Banu, here's your hair clip. I'm sorry I took it.” “Rita, please forgive me. Your scented rubber was with me.” “Danny, Danny, did you miss your foreign pencil? I'm sorry. Here it is.” Geetha returned all other stolen items too. Her heart was filled with peace.

That day she lay down peacefully and slept. In her dream she saw a big register being opened. There were many names in it. A beautiful hand wrote the name “GEETHA” there in golden letters with a golden pen. Geetha got up in the morning and was jumping with joy. “My name is there, my name is there” she gleefully told all her friends. “Where?” they asked. But Geetha just kept jumping.

Do you know God has a big book called the Book of Life? Only those whose names are written there can enter heaven. All those whose names are not there will be thrown in hell fire prepared for Satan and his servants. So lead a God-pleasing life and ask God to write your name in the Book of Life.

The Bottle Imp

Chingling and Zuchi were husband and wife who lived in China. They were good Christians and went to church. They had two lovely children and they lived a happy contented life.

Misfortune struck them unexpectedly. One day while bathing Chingling found a patch of leprosy on his chest. Those days there was no treatment for leprosy. Chingling was shattered. He wanted to hide it from the family. Whenever he went to the market he started enquiring about the treatment. A native doctor told him that there was no cure for leprosy. However he knew a man who had an imp that could heal him.

Chingling was torn apart. How could he as a Christian go to an imp for healing? Finally he decided that after the healing he would have nothing to do with the imp. So he went to Yongchu, the man who had the imp. He had a very sad face. He made Chingling to sit and said, “Before I give you the imp, I have to explain to you certain things. 1) Once you buy the imp, it has to remain with you till you sell it to another person. 2) The imp can be sold only for a lesser price than you bought. 3) Whoever dies with the imp in possession would surely go to hell. I bought it for five rupees. I earned lot of riches. Now I can sell it only for four rupees to you.” Chingling gave him four rupees and the man brought the imp in a bottle.

Chingling came home and left the bottle in a secret closet.

He went for his bath. What a surprise! The leprosy was gone! But instead of joy, a deep sorrow filled his heart because he would go to hell. Every night he would sit alone with the bottle and cry and put it back in the closet. His wife became very anxious looking at his sorrowful face. One day she saw through the keyhole and everything was clear to her. She asked her husband about it and he confessed to her everything in detail.

Zuchi knew for sure that Chingling would not sell the bottle imp to her. So she devised a plan.



She talked to a peddler who came regularly to their house and asked him to buy the bottle for three rupees. She promised him that she would buy it from him for two rupees. The plan worked out well. But now it was her turn to cry. She was tormented day and night by the thought that she would go to

hell. She prayed and prayed and prayed.

One day there was a knock on the door. It was the peddler. He had brought a drunkard with him. “This man wants the bottle” he said. “Oh no,” cried Zuchi. “If you buy the bottle from me for one rupee then you cannot sell it to anyone. You’ll die with the bottle and go to hell. I will not sell the bottle to you.”

The drunkard said, “I want all the drinks I can drink. How dare you say you will not give the bottle to me? With the imp or without the imp I am going to hell anyway. I want to go

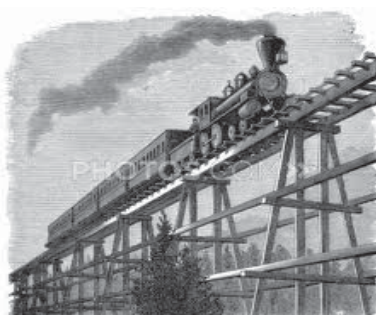
there drinking. You give me the bottle imp this very minute.” So saying he thrust a one rupee coin in her hand and snatched the bottle and went away singing.

Don’t have anything to do with evil spirits. It is better to die of a disease in the hands of the Lord than be healed by an evil spirit. There is no joy or peace where there are evil spirits. Nowadays in schools also children play with evil spirits. Don’t have anything to do with it. Hold on to the Lord in happy times or hard times.

9

My Daddy!

A train was running fast. People were chatting and playing inside the train. A little boy was running up and down the compartments playing with his toy car. Suddenly a storm arose and violently shook the train. The train swayed from side to side. The train crossed a long bridge under which torrents of water was flowing. People panicked and screamed. But



the little boy was coolly playing even as the train tilted from side to side. Someone asked him, “We are all scared for our life and nervous. Are you not afraid? How can you be playing when we are all shouting for help?” The little boy replied, “Oh that? My dad is the Engine Driver.”

God is our Dad. He runs our life. We don’t need to panic at anything. He will safely take us through life.

10

The Pet Parrot

Ragu went to the pet shop and bought a parrot and a cage. He loved pets. So he happily brought home the parrot. The first day he painted the cage. “Now it looks better” he said.



The second day he decorated the cage. “Beautiful” he commented. The third day he put a small light inside. “Wonderful” he rejoiced. The next day he found the parrot dead inside the cage. Why? What happened? He did not feed the parrot. He was taking care of the cage, not the parrot.

Our body is just a cage. There is a

soul inside our body like a parrot. The body will die and be buried. But our soul will never die. We keep caring for our body by buying nice clothes for it and eating three or four or more times a day. Do we feed our soul? God's word is food for the soul. The more of God's word we take the healthier will be our soul and fit to meet God after our death.

11

Super Offering

Lucky was an eight year old boy. He was keenly listening to the preacher in the church. He was very moved by what the



preacher spoke and decided to give his life over to Jesus. When the offering time came, an elder moved around from row to row, from person to person with a plate in his hand. When he came to Lucky he asked the elder to lower the plate.

When he lowered, Lucky said, "Still lower, still lower" until the plate was lowered to

the floor. Then Lucky stepped on to the plate!

We can give our money or things to God. But more than anything we must first give ourselves to the Lord.

12

The Great Catch!

Donald was all excited to go to the Fishing Competition. About ten kilometers from his house was a big lake. Every year a Fishing Competition was conducted. People from far and near would come with their fishing rods. The one who caught the biggest fish was awarded a gold medal. The competition was from 10 in the morning to 10 in the night.



Donald and his dad started in their car. 10 am all competitors sat on the shore with their fishing rods in water. "One k.g." shouted someone at 11 a.m. By 12 noon the biggest catch was only 2 kg. Evening 4 pm someone caught a four and a half k.g. fish and everyone decided it was the prize catch.

As darkness fell some started to leave. But Donald persisted. "Let's wait dad" he begged. 9.45 dad started packing

his things. “No dad, only 15 minutes more. I’ll sit till 10” pleaded Donald. 10 p.m he got up disappointed. Suddenly there was a tug of his rod. It was 10.02. Donald needed his dad’s help to pull the catch. It was a grand big fish. They weighed it and found it to be 5kg. “Dad!” shouted Don. “But it was 10.02 Don” insisted his father. Don’s face fell. But he accepted his father’s verdict and let the fish go in the water. The creature swished its tail and disappeared.

That was a lesson for his life. All through his life Donald never forgot what his father had taught — honesty.

Be always honest before God and man.

13

The Cat and his Dry Fish

A cat wanted to go to heaven. He knew he had some foul desires that he could not give up. But he thought he would somehow get by. He hid a piece of dry fish under his arm and went and stood before heaven’s gate along with many others. Peter came out and asked, “How many of you are holy? Put up your hands.” When every hand went up the dry fish fell down. Promptly the cat was sent to hell.



Many people believe they can somehow get into heaven with some of their foul sins. But God is very strict. No sin can enter heaven. Start getting rid of your sins from now on.

14

The Lottery Ticket

A master sent his car driver to buy two lottery tickets — one for him and one for the driver. When the driver brought the tickets the master asked him to keep both the tickets with him. So the driver wrote his name lightly on one and his master’s on the other.



On the date of the draw the driver found that his master’s ticket had won the lottery. “Change the names” his wife suggested. But the driver said ‘No.’ He took his master’s lottery ticket to him and told him that it had won the first prize. The master appreciated his honesty and gave half the amount to his driver.

Honesty pays! We don’t advocate buying lottery tickets. This is just a story to encourage you to be honest.

15

The Two Thieves

Two thieves entered a house to steal. They killed the house owner and proceeded to pack the cash. But it was early morning and the milk man knocked at the door. Both the thieves were frightened. One got up on the loft and hid himself while the other hid under the cot.



When there was no response, the milk man pushed open the door. He saw the owner lying in a pool of blood and was shocked. He spread both his hands towards heaven and said, “Only the One above knows what happened.” He then went away. People came one by one and spread their hands towards heaven and said the same thing, “Only the One above knows what happened.” A crowd gathered. The thief on the loft got irritated. He shouted at the crowd and said, “How do you people say only the one above knows? There is one fellow under the cot. He also knows everything.” The people caught the thieves and handed them over to the police.

Sin will betray you. Beware!

16

The Foolish Monkeys

Two monkeys stole some butter and had difficulty dividing it between them. So they went to the cat and asked them to divide the butter into two equal halves.

The cat divided the butter between both his hands. He looked at his right hand and said, “My, my, the butter is a



little more this side.” So saying he ate a little butter from the right hand. Then he looked at the left hand and said, “So sad, left hand has a little more.” Then he ate a bit from the left. Then he turned to the right. Alternatively he ate and finished up all the butter. The monkeys went away feeling sorry for themselves.

Never go to the wrong persons for help.

17

Who can go to Heaven?

Shiny was very interested in leading Differently Abled children to the Lord. She frequented the Home of Differently Abled Children in her town and regularly preached the Good news to them. One day a lady said Shiny was wasting her time. Mentally Retarded children could never understand salvation.

Shiny was very discouraged. That day in the Home she taught the children a song. She would show them her left three centre fingers as the three crosses and sing:

*One, two, three,
Jesus loves me;
The One in the middle
He died for me.*

So singing she would clutch the left middle finger with her right hand. She told the children to hold on to Jesus like that.



Back at home in the night she thought about the children and prayed that they would understand.

The next morning her telephone jangled. There was a fire in the

Home and thirty three children were charred to death. Shiny's

heart broke. She rushed to the Home. The Lord comforted her broken heart. How? When she saw the bodies, the children were clutching their left middle finger with their right hand!

Who can go to heaven? God has no partiality. Boy or girl, rich or poor, small sinner or great sinner, intelligent or unintelligent—anybody! All you have to do is to feel sorry for your sins and ask God's forgiveness. The blood of Jesus Christ will clean you from all sin. Then live in obedience to the Bible. You are sure to go to heaven.

18

The Trapped Tiger

A Brahman was walking through a jungle. He saw a tiger trapped in a cage. The tiger pleaded, "Please let me out." The

Brahman was afraid and said, "You are very hungry. If I release you, you will eat me up." But the tiger gave his word of honor that he would never do that. The Brahman then opened the door of the trap and let the tiger out. The tiger caught the



Brahman and said, “I am terribly hungry. I have no other go but to eat you.” The Brahman started shouting for help.

A fox came there and asked what the matter was. The Brahman told his plight and the tiger described its hunger pangs. Who was right they asked. The fox thought for a minute and said to the tiger, “I want to first of all see how you were.” The tiger stepped inside the cage and said, “This is how I was.” The fox immediately locked the trap door and told the Brahman, “This is what ungrateful people dese- rve.”

Don’t be ungrateful. Be grateful to those who help you.

19

The Vegetable Story

The vegetable vendor left his shop to have tea. The bitter gourd started to weep, “I am so bitter. I hate myself.” The



onion cried, “Why do I always make those who love me weep? Can’t I change myself?” The drumstick said, “I’m so thin, I wish I put on some weight.” The brinjal whimpered, “I am fat and

dark. I want to be fair as the carrot.” So each complained.

A lady came and bought one of each vegetable. She made delicious stew of all the vegetables. All her guests enjoyed the stew and said, “Super, super.”

We complement each other. What we cannot do alone we can do together. So always be friendly with everyone and be happy as you are.

20

The Fox and the Grapes

A fox that lived in a forest entered a vineyard. A cluster of grapes was hanging temptingly. The fox jumped and jumped and jumped. Alas! It could not reach the grapes. It said, “These are sour grapes. I don’t need them” and walked away.

There are many good things in life. But we may not get whatever we desire. Once we know something is out of our reach we should forget it. We should not let our heart be broken over something that we cannot get.



21

The Christmas Tree

A Christmas tree was growing on the edge of a forest. It was Christmas time and he could see many Christmas trees



gorgeously decorated and twinkling through glass windows in the town. The tree wished to be as beautiful. One day four boys came and started cutting him. It was unbearably painful but he bore the pain because he imagined himself to be a lovely Christmas tree.

The boys tied the tree to their cycle and carried it to town. They planted it in the open ground and started decorating it. The next day was Christmas. All the children sang and danced around the tree and the tree was thrilled at all the

attention it got.

The next day he was withering. A man came, carried the tree, put it in a store room, locked the room and left. It was dark, dingy and suffocating. The tree thought of the mountain breeze it enjoyed in the forest and wept.

After a week two men came and carried the tree out and started cutting it into logs. The tree writhed in pain as they cut. For some days the logs dried in the sun and finally were used as firewood.

Some things in life may look rosy from a distance. You are too young to know the dangers in the world. You must trust the wisdom of your parents and elders and go by their guidance.

22

Baby or Jackfruit?

A lady was washing clothes by the river side. Her one-year-old child was playing nearby. The lady saw a jackfruit floating on the water. She waded through the waters and got the jackfruit and happily carried it to the shore. A crude shock was awaiting her on the shore. Her child had crawled to the water's edge and was swept away by the river.



In life there are least important things, important things and very important things. You should never sacrifice the very important things by going after the least important things.

23

Solomon's Wisdom

A story goes like this. A queen came to test the wisdom of Solomon. She showed two flowers to Solomon. One was



natural and the other artificial. Both looked exactly the same. Solomon was asked to identify the natural flower, sitting on his throne.

Solomon had difficulty because both were identical. He ordered the soldiers to open the window. Within minutes bees were buzzing around the natural flower!

Wisdom is costlier than anything and most precious of all. Get it at any cost.

24

Giving to God

Xavier had no job. He asked his pastor to pray for him that he might get a job and promised to give the pastor 10% of his

salary for God's work. The pastor laid his hands on his head and prayed. The next week Xavier got a clerk's post and was paid Rs. 100 per month. He brought Rs. 10/- to the pastor and went back with his blessing. He worked hard and was soon promoted to Senior Clerk level. He was given Rs. 1000/- month. He was very happy and gave the pastor Rs. 100/-.

Looking at his faithful work the company made him the branch manager and paid him Rs. 10000/- month. Xavier was excited and gave an offering of Rs. 1000/- to the pastor. In a short while he was made the manager for the company in Mumbai for a salary of Rs. 50,000/-. Now Xavier took Rs.5000 in his hand and asked himself, "Can I afford to give Rs.5000 to God? There is school fees to pay and house rent is sky high!" He wanted to break his promise to the pastor.



He went to the pastor and said, "Pastor, it is true I promised to give a tenth of my income. But all the prices have gone up and Mumbai is a costly place. I want to break my deal with God. Can you pray and break it?" The Pastor thought

for a minute and said, "The deal cannot be broken. But I can do one thing. I can pray that God will reduce your income." Needless to say that Xavier was ashamed of himself.

Keep your promises to God.

The Frog that Survived

Two frogs fell inside a deep bowl of curd. Both kept splashing, trying to keep their head up. After an hour one frog said, “There is no use struggling” and sank and died. The other



frog kept on struggling. His feet ached. He saw no way out but still kept kicking its legs trying not to sink to the bottom. After an hour droplets of butter started to form. Soon they coalesced and

formed a ball. A ball of butter floated on the curd. The frog climbed up on the ball and jumped out.

Life may be hard. But you should never give up. Keep on struggling till you find a way out.

The Cow and the Pig

A cow and a pig went for a walk. On the way they went into a supermarket. As they walked through, the cow exclaimed, “Look here my friend— milk, milk powder, butter milk, curd, cheese, beef, butter, ghee — these are all my contributions.” The pig was filled with inferiority complex. After a while the pig said, “Look, look, look, here is my contribution — pork.”



So both continued to walk. The pig voiced its concern: “You give and I give too. But people love you, not me. They scold someone as ‘pig.’ Why?” The cow remained absorbed for some time and with a flashy smile replied, “It is because I give generously, regularly, voluntarily and happily. But you pig will not give till you are chased and caught and killed.”

We must give to God happily, generously, regularly and willingly not just when we have a problem.

The Bishop and the Convict

A convict by name Jean Valjean was released from prison. He wandered around hungrily and knocked at a house. It was the bishop's house. The bishop invited Jean Valjean lovingly inside the house and served him a hot meal. After chitchat the bishop showed him a warm bedroom and went to sleep.



Jean Valjean could not sleep. He had seen the silver candlesticks on the Bishop's dining table and thought they might come in handy for his journey. He quietly got up, took the silver candlesticks and walked out of the house.

The police found him with the silver candlesticks and suspected him of theft. They brought him to the bishop's house. The bishop saw him and exclaimed, "Hello friend." He then told the police that he had given Jean Valjean the candlesticks as gift. Whereupon the police left him. Jean Valjean fell at the bishop's feet and repented of his sins and became a new man.

Love conquers anyone!

All for Good!

Once upon a time there lived a rich king called Devendra. His minister Ragavan had a very irritating habit. Whatever may happen he'd say, "All for good." This upset Devendra very badly.



One day Devendra went to hunt, taking some of his soldiers and Ragavan with him. While hunting, a big thorn went into the King's foot. The soldiers removed the thorn, cleaned the wound and put medicine. The king moaned in pain. Ragavan said, "It's all for good." Devendra was furious and asked two of his soldiers to immediately take Ragavan to the prison.

This was promptly done and the king continued his hunting. Suddenly from the forest some tribals emerged and caught the king. They bound his hands and feet and took him to sacrifice to their god. All the soldiers ran away seeing the big crowd. The tribals danced around their god and was about to kill the king when one of them shouted, "Look, there's a wound in his foot. We cannot sacrifice this man to our god. The sacrifice must be flawless." So they let the king go.

The king reached his palace. He ordered Ragavan to be brought out and apologized to him.

God plans our life. He can even turn bad things that happen to us for our own good. So trust Him in all situations.

29

Empty-handed Exit

Alexander the Great, as he was known, won battle after battle. He wanted to bring the entire known world under his rule. But he died an untimely death at a young age. Before he died he told his attendants to put both his hands outside the coffin. He said: “Let the world know that Alexander the Great brought nothing into this world when he came and took nothing from this world when he left.”



What we can take from this world when we go is nothing but the souls we win. So talk to your friends about God.

30

Cinderella

There was once a very rich man and his wife. They had a lovely daughter. The parents taught her to read the Bible and pray. They taught her to respect people and love animals. She

grew up into a polite and gracious girl. Unfortunately her mother took ill and died. Seeing his daughter weep bitterly the father thought he should bring another mother for her. So he married a widow with two daughters.

However the new mother ill-treated the girl. She made her work in the kitchen near the cinders and fed her poorly. Thus she came to be known as Cinderella. The wicked mother wanted her own daughters to be well fed and comfortable. Both the girls were unruly and indisciplined. Cinderella cooked and cleaned the kitchen. She loved the birds and their cat and dog. Her father had no voice. But Cinderella read her Bible and prayed everyday and kept her faith in God.

One day there was an announcement in the streets that the King was looking for a beautiful girl for his son, the crown prince. All eligible girls were invited to the palace to dance. The prince would dance with the girls and decide his bride.

The wicked mother was excited. She stitched new dresses for her daughters and dressed them up. Cinderella was very eager to go but she was not allowed. When the girls had left, Cinderella went to the backyard to feed the animals and pray. Suddenly an angel appeared and said, “Cindy, I know you are crying. Don’t weep. Bring a pumpkin.” Cinderella was taken by a pleasant surprise. She ran and brought a pumpkin. The



angel transformed it into a beautiful chariot.

Then the angel asked for six rats. When Cinderella called they came running because she loved them and was kind to them. They became white horses. Cinderella's cat became the coach driver. Cinderella was transformed to a lovely girl with beautiful dress and glass slippers. "Have a good time" said the angel, "but remember one thing. You must be back before midnight."

So Cindy's chariot fled. When she entered the Dance Hall many girls were dancing, including her stepsisters. The prince's eyes fell on her. He was captivated by her charm and grace. He took her hand and started to dance with her.

They danced and danced without looking at the time. Suddenly Cinderella remembered the angel's instruction. She saw the time and it was one minute to midnight. She left the prince and fled the scene. The prince asked her name and place but she did not stop to answer his questions. As she ran down the steps, one of her glass slippers fell off. She got into the chariot and flew away.

Within a short while she was her old self. The Chariot and horses and chauffeur turned to their old self. The lovely girl was the talk of the town. The prince sent the single glass slipper from house to house to see who matched. None matched. Cindy's sisters tried hard but not a foot went in. Cindy peeped from behind the curtain. "Come, come, try your luck" said the soldier. Cinderella put her foot in and it was a perfect fit.

The Prince and Cinderella were happily married. Cinderella took her father, stepmother and sisters into the palace and

took care of them.

"God finds us in the cinders of a less than perfect world and would make a Cinderella out of us — if we allow Him" — Quote.

31

How is Christ Unique?

A little boy who was riding his bicycle accidentally fell into a deep gutter full of flowing sewage. He was sinking and shouting for help. A young man who passed by that way saw him and said, "Hereafter you don't be mischievous" and went along his way. Another man came along that road and hearing the screams, stopped. He looked at the sinking boy and said, "Oh my, as a boy you should have learnt swimming. Do that first" and walked away. Next came another man. He saw the boy and instantly jumped into the gutter. He brought the boy up, took him home, washed him and changed his clothes. Then he sat him in his drawing room and advised him.



The advice that the other two gave were sound counsel, but they did not help the boy. The third man saved him in his helpless condition and then advised him. This is what Jesus

did to us. He came to this world and lifted us out of our filthy sins. Then He taught us the way of life. Good teaching cannot save man from sins. Only Jesus can.

32

The Hurricane Light

A blind man was walking on the road in the night with a hurricane light. His friend who saw him asked, “Why are you carrying a hurricane? You can’t see anyway?.” To that, the wise man replied, “True, I cannot see. But those coming towards me must know I am here, isn’t it?”



God’s word is light. Take it wherever you go. Let people see you have God’s word in you.

33

One Foot at a Time

A man had to walk through a forest in the night. He took a hurricane lamp and started his journey. His neighbor asked, “Sir, with this light you can see only one foot. How will you walk this long road?” The man replied, “It is enough if I see one foot. When I take a step forward then I can see the next foot.”



Life is a long journey. We should not be anxious about tomorrow. Jesus has asked us not to worry. He will lead us step by step. You concentrate on being a good child today and do what God wants you to do. Tomorrow God will show you the next step.

Snow White

Once upon a time in a faraway city, there lived a King and Queen. They had everything but a child. They kept on praying for a child. One day the queen was sitting near the window and stitching. She accidentally pricked her finger with the needle and drops of blood fell on the snow outside. The Queen prayed, "Lord, give me a child as fair as this snow with lips as red as this blood." God heard her prayer and blessed them with a beautiful baby girl. They named her Snow White and she became the darling of her parents.

Her parents taught her about God and taught her to read the Bible and pray every day. She prayed before meals and helped her parents. She was very kind to the palace servants. One day her mother fell ill. In spite of all efforts she died. Snow White and her father were grief-stricken. Snow White was just five years old and she cried, "Mummy, who will teach me the Bible, who will tell me stories, why did you leave me and go?" Her father couldn't bear to see his little girl cry. So he married again.

The new queen was very lovely. She had a magic mirror. It would show the most beautiful woman in the whole world. Now and then she would ask the mirror,

*Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who's the fairest of us all?*

The mirror would then show her face and she'd be extremely happy and proud.

Snow White grew up to be a charming 16 year old. One day the queen asked the mirror her usual question. She was shocked when the mirror showed Snow White's face. She was so angry and jealous that she ordered two soldiers to take her into the forest and kill her. The soldiers took her into the deep forest and told her what the queen had ordered them to do. They then told her, "You have been so good to us. We have no heart to kill you. We will pray for you. The Lord Jesus whom you believe in will take care of you." Snow White cried in fright but they had to leave.

It was becoming dark. She could hear the lions roar. Pythons slid by. Elephant herds were grazing. Snow White walked and walked and walked and finally saw a small beautiful house. When she pushed the door it opened. There was a small table and seven small chairs. There was rice, dhal, chicken and sweet porridge on the table. Snow White was so hungry and tired that she had a hearty meal. She went to the next room and found seven small cots. She put them together and soon fell asleep.

This was the home of seven dwarfs. They were woodcutters. Evening when they returned home they saw their food gone! They went to the next room and saw Snow White. She woke up only the next morning. The dwarfs gave her breakfast. Snow White told them her story. The dwarfs asked her to stay with them. When they went to work they warned her never to go out or open the window. So Snow White lived with them and cooked and kept the house clean.

Every day Snow White would tell them one Bible story and taught them to pray. The dwarfs were enthralled to listen about God and how He sent Jesus Christ to this earth to die for their sins. Soon all the seven trusted in Jesus Christ.

Meanwhile the mother asked the mirror again and was taken aback to see Snow White's face. She could see her in a tiny cottage inside a forest. She devised a wicked plot. She took rosy apples in a basket. She put poison inside one apple and set it aside. She went into the forest. When she saw the cottage she shouted, "Apples, sweet apples." Snow White had not eaten apples for a long while. She quickly opened the window



and called the queen in disguise. The queen said, "Taste my child. First you taste and see." She cut the poison apple and gave her. Snow White ate the apple and fell down dead. The bad queen ran away.

When the dwarfs returned they cried. They put Snow White in a glass case and placed the case in the forest. Years rolled by. One day a prince came hunting, riding on his horse. He saw Snow White inside the glass case. He opened the case and kissed her. Snow White came back to life. They went to the dwarfs' house and along with the seven went to the prince's country. The prince married Snow White and they all lived happily ever after.

Do not resist evil. God will doubly bless you.

35

Rudolph the Reindeer

Rudolph was a reindeer who lived in the North Pole. He had a big red nose. He was very shy about his nose. He cried in the dark after going to bed and prayed hard to God that he would have a normal nose like any of his friends. No answer came from God and he was discouraged. All his friends made fun of his nose and he wished he was not born at all.

Christmas was nearing and Christmas Father wanted a reindeer for his sledge. He did not want an ordinary reindeer. He wanted a deer very different from the others. He went to North Pole to choose a deer. He inspected one reindeer after the other. All looked very ordinary and he was not satisfied with any of them. Then he noticed Rudolph shyly standing in a corner trying to hide himself behind a majestic reindeer. "Oh, you there, come here. Let me see you" shouted Christmas

Father. Rudolph hesitantly stepped out. "Oh great" shouted Christmas Father. "Where have you been hiding all the time? You are exactly whom I



wanted. Look at your nose, gorgeous. Children would love you. Would you like to draw my sledge?" Rudolph nodded shyly. All his friends applauded. Since that time hundreds of

years ago Rudolph has been going round and round the world, visiting many countries, delivering gifts for rich and poor children. He is very proud of himself today.

May be there is something that you do not like about yourself. It may be your nose or a limp or a stammer or anything else for that matter. Quit worrying. Train yourself where you shine. After many years you will feel proud of yourself and praise God for whatever bothered you!

36

Sneha

Sneha was five years old when her parents separated. She had to come away with her mother to another house. She missed her father and cried. She grew up to be seven. She blamed her mother and blamed God. Her mother cried too. One day her mother's sister visited them and Sneha's mother Deepa shared Sneha's problem with her. Reena, her sister said, "Don't worry. She'll be alright."

The next day Reena told Sneha, "Get ready. We'll go on an excursion. It is holiday for you and you are getting bored. We'll take an auto and go round." Sneha jumped with joy. In a jiffy she was ready to jump into the autorickshaw. Reena and Sneha waved good-bye to Deepa and left. Their first stop was at the Blind School. They were shown around the place. The

girls were reading Braille. When Sneha was introduced, some of them felt her face. They moved around with difficulty. Sneha was moved to tears.

Their next stop was an AIDS Home. Little babies to grown-ups who were suffering from AIDS were there. Sneha was told they would not live long. From there they went to the Cancer Institute. Sneha and Reena went into the Children's ward. Many were bald because of the treatment they received. Some were crying in pain. A nurse was taking blood from a screaming child. Another was starting a drip for a little girl held down by four people. Sneha's throat choked. "Let's go home" she told Deepa. "We will visit just one more place and then go" said Deepa.

So they went to an orphanage. Children were running around and playing. When the bell rang they all queued up with plate and tumbler for their food. An orderly shouted at them. The one who served food was in a nasty mood. Lunch was thick round rice and watery dal. Still the children sat in rows and ate hungrily, happily chatting among themselves. Sneha listened to the story of some. One was thrown in a garbage bin and saved by a health worker. The parents of another were washed away by tsunami. Sneha could not control her tears. How could they live without father and mother?



Sneha thought of her lovely home, comfortable bed, loving mother, monthly visits to her father, good food and play things. She had nothing to complain. Each must bear the cross given to her.

“Let’s go to the exhibition and have some fun. Then we’ll go to your favorite restaurant and then go home” Reena suggested. “No aunty. We’ll go home. We can give the money to these children” Sneha said.

Back home Sneha hugged her mother. She never again complained. She was thankful for all that God had given her.

You may have a problem. But remember there are others with greater problems.

37

The Chicken Thief

Rupesh stealthily went into a farm in the night and stole a chicken. He cleaned the chicken and ate it. The next day the owner found out that a chicken was missing. He rounded up six suspects including Rupesh. All of them denied stealing the chicken. The owner kept talking to



them and suddenly said, “Look, there’s a feather in your hair.” Nobody lifted up his hand to the hair except Rupesh (to remove the feather). The owner asked Rupesh to confess and Rupesh accepted his fault and confessed to stealing the chicken.

Guilt will betray you. Strive to develop a clean conscience.

38

The Missing Birthday Baby

It was Jan’s third birthday. Parents were very busy from morning. Father was ordering the birthday cake when Jan came running, crying, “Daddy, daddy...” “Go and play son. Daddy is busy” he said and talked over his mobile about the cake. Jan ran to his mother, “Mommy, mommy...” he started. But his mother was busy getting lunch ready for 50 guests. Servants were busy too as they had to decorate the house.

Guests started to arrive and suddenly mummy thought of Jan. “Oh, I must get him ready” she said and started looking for him. At the time there



was great commotion and cries outside the house. As the door was open, Jan had stepped out of the house and was hit by a speeding lorry. He died on the spot.

Christmas is the birthday of Christ. We should not forget Christ and revel in partying, feasting and dressing up. We should go to church on Christmas day and thank God for sending Jesus to save us. We should visit some place and share the Goodnews about Jesus to some people.

39

Gossip

A man came to a Sadhu and said, “Sir, I want to tell you something about your disciple.” The Sadhu asked, “Is this first



hand information or did you hear from someone?”

The man replied, “Someone told me.” The Sadhu asked a second question, “Is this information good or bad?”

The man said, “Bad.” The

Sadhu asked his third question, “Will it edify me?” The man

said, “No.” The Sadhu said, “Then I don’t need to hear about it.” The man was ashamed and went away.

Speak ill of no one.

40

The Dreadful Blanket

A man saw a black blanket floating on a river. He wanted to somehow get the blanket. He swam and finally laid his hands on the blanket. Alas! It was not a blanket. It was a big bear. He was killed by the bear.



Sin will look good from a distance. But once you are caught in it, escape is difficult. So avoid sin like poison.

Pinky

Pinky was a little girl brought up by her aunt because both her parents had died. Pinky was bright and lovely, a God-fearing and good-mannered girl. Her aunt had a daughter too of Pinky's age. Her name was Rita who was a spoilt child. The aunt thought Pinky was a burden and thought of ways to get rid of her, even though Pinky washed vessels and everybody's clothes and helped in cooking and cleaned the house.

One day it was heavily snowing outside. The aunt thought this was the right time to get rid of Pinky. So she sent her to pick strawberries. She had a threadbare sweater on and carried some dry bread given by her aunt with a bottle of water. Pinky was shivering in the cold. She walked a long distance looking for strawberries but could find none. Tired and worn out she sat under a tree to eat her bread.

She was about to take a bite when she saw an old woman coming towards her. She held out her hand and begged. Pinky felt sorry for the old lady. "Sit down" she said, "We'll eat together. When the old lady sat down Pinky gave half the bread and she ate the other half. She shared the water too. Pinky started to cry and told the old lady that her aunt would beat her if she went without strawberries.

The woman comforted her and gave her a small basket of strawberries. Pinky was overjoyed. She thanked the woman and left. The old lady blessed and sent her.

Pinky arrived home and gave the strawberries to her aunt. Her aunt was surprised she could find them in snow and asked her where she found them. "An old lady gave me" said Pinky. As she spoke, beautiful, costly pearls fell off her mouth. Mother and daughter picked them. As Pinky told the rest of the story more pearls fell.

Aunt wanted the same for her daughter Rita. She covered her with a heavy sweater, packed her *Biriyani* and *Gulabjamun* for lunch and sent her to find strawberries. Rita went straight to the tree Pinky mentioned and sat down to eat. The old woman appeared and begged. Rita looked at her lunch and then at the thin shivering old woman. Then she said, "My mummy has packed only for one person" and proceeded to eat. "Bless me and go" Rita said. The old woman kept her hand on her head and went away.



Rita arrived home and excitedly called, "Mummy." A frog jumped from her mouth. She talked further and more frogs jumped out. Her mother was angry and sent Pinky to wash a big bundle of clothes to the river. Pinky went to the river and finding it frozen started to sing. Pearls fell off her mouth. A prince came riding on his horse and was arrested by Pinky's song and her beauty. He took Pinky with him to his Kingdom and married her.

Be kind to everyone you see and speak only kind words. God will bless you.

The Necklace

Savithri and her husband Seran were a poor couple. They had rich and good neighbors, Seema and Sridhar. Savithri's sister was getting married. Savithri wanted to wear the diamond necklace that she had seen Seema wear. She hesistantly asked Seema to spare it for three days. "No problem," said Seema and gave her the necklace.

During the wedding Savithri felt her neck for the necklace and was shocked to find it missing. How would she face Seema? Savithri and Seran vacated their house overnight and left for a distant town. There they toiled and moiled for twenty years and saved money and finally purchased a diamond necklace. They returned to their old house and met their neighbors Seema and Sridhar. They handed over the jewel case and told the entire story and profusely apologized.

Seema opened the case and finding a dazzling diamond necklace exclaimed, "What is this? This is original diamond. What I gave you was just an imitation diamond necklace!"

Straightforwardness is best!



Piggy Attitude

Do you know pigs never look up? They always look at dirt. They spend their life looking at dirt. One day some men will



chase them, catch them, tie their legs on poles and lift them up upside down. Then they will look up. They will see the sun and clouds and moon and stars and say, "What a wonderful

world God has created. I failed to see all these."

Don't fail to enjoy nature. Observe the flowers and field. Feel the breeze and smell the aroma. Play in the rain and watch butterflies and birds. God has given us a beautiful world. We should enjoy it and maintain it beautiful. Never litter and spoil the beauty of your surroundings. Don't use plastic bags. Put waste paper only in the garbage basket. Cleanliness is next to godliness.

44

The Unfinished Bench

A man walked into a carpentry shop and viewed the things. He looked at one bench and said, “This is crude. Its edges are not smooth. It is not varnished and one nut is missing.” The shop keeper came over and told him, “Sir, I am not finished with it yet.”



Don't get discouraged looking at yourself or when others pass negative comments at you. God has not finished with you yet. He is still working on you! So also, God is making each individual. So don't unnecessarily criticize others.

45

Are you a Nut?

There once was a nut screwed tight to a chair. “I just sit here all the time. What am I doing here? I am so useless. Nobody wants me” thought the nut. Day in and day out the thought tortured him. Finally it decided to run away. It wriggled

and wriggled and got loose and fell down under the chair. There it remained.

That evening an important guest visited the home and was shown the chair.

When he sat down he crashed and fell on the floor, on the nut. He was hurt and the house owners were embarrassed and the nut itself was injured when the guest and chair fell on its head. The house owner found the nut and screwed him back again tight.

Now the nut realized how important he was. He decided to stay there and do his job faithfully.

We also may think we are useless. But God has put us in a corner to be His useful vessel. Wherever God has put you, be faithfully fulfilling your role. Or else you will be causing harm to others and your own self.



46

The Baby in the Tummy

A little baby was in his mother's tummy. It was all dark inside. He could not run anywhere or do anything. He thought, “Why has God given me eyes? It is all dark in here. These

eyes are of no use to me. What can I do with my hands? I have no use of them. All the time I keep my feet bent. What is the use of having them?"



One day the baby came into the world. It opened its eyes and saw the big wide world. "How big and beautiful the world is" he thought. He kicked his feet and cried. The baby grew up and learnt to do things and play cricket. He was happy God gave him eyes and hands and feet.

Your gifts are not developed yet. They are rudimentary. Keep using them in whatever way you can. Gradually you will grow up and shine.

47

The Emperor's Treasure Box

An Emperor was going to his palace, carrying a treasure box full of jewels and precious stones. He was going on an elephant surrounded by soldiers for his own safety and his ministers'. Suddenly the elephant made a jerky movement and

the treasure box tumbled down. The box fell open and the jewels lay all around. Gold coins and precious pearls rolled away. Everyone stood still not knowing what the Emperor would order.

Now, the Emperor was a kindhearted generous man. He thought for a moment and said, "All of you can take whatever you want. It is yours." All the soldiers and ministers ran helter skelter trying to grab this or get that.

When the Emperor was happily looking around the scene he noticed one soldier who was standing near him, with his javelin straight and his eyes fixed on the Emperor. The Emperor was surprised. He asked the soldier, "Don't you want to take some of the precious jewels for your family?" "Your highness," said the soldier, "everybody's eyes are on the jewels. What if somebody harms you when nobody is watching? That's why I am keeping my eye on you. You are more precious to me than any jewel." The Emperor felt blessed to have a soldier like him. He made him his bodyguard and presented him a box full of precious jewels and stones.



Seek first God and His Kingdom and everything else will be given to you.

The Dainty Princess

A royal family was looking for a suitable bride for their son. Many girls came claiming to be princesses. The king and queen did not know how to ascertain if a girl was really a princess. Then they thought of a plan. When a girl came they would give her a bed to sleep with ten mattresses on it. They would put a pea under the bottom mattress. When the girl got up in the morning they would ask her how she slept. If she told them that she slept soundly they concluded she was not a princess.



Many girls came. All slept soundly and they were all sent off as not fit for their prince. At last a beautiful girl came. She was given the same bed. Morning when the king and queen asked her how she slept she answered, "I could not sleep properly. Something was under the mattress that was irritating me." The couple decided this was the girl for their son and got her married to him.

Children brought up very comfortably are fit only to be princes and princesses. Do not get used to all the comforts of life. Rise up early in the morning and have a bath (if possible in cold water). Wash your own clothes. Don't be in an air-conditioned room all the time. Walk in the sun with an umbrella and travel by public transport. Eat simple food and get used to living in any kind of place. That way you will be an adjustable person. Otherwise you will find it difficult to adjust with different kinds of people in different places.

What do you give God?

A man brought his salary and put it in the box. When night fell, all the thousand rupee notes started to jump and dance



and sing: "We are going to the Supermarket. We are going to the Supermarket." Then the hundred rupee notes started to swirl and gyrate and sing, "We are going to the school, we are going to the school." The

ten rupee notes sang: "We are going to the shop, we are going to the shop." The coins were very sad. Everybody was going

out; the thousand rupee notes for purchase and hundred rupee notes for school fees and ten rupees for vegetables. Where would they go? Suddenly they knew where they were going and they kicked and yelled and sang, “We are going to the church, we are going to the church.”

Do you get the point? When we give to God, we must give generously and not throw coins.

50

The Troubled Horse

A king was about to get on his horse. But his usually tame and gentle horse was very disturbed, kicking and neighing. All his soldiers came and tried to calm the horse. Nothing worked. All their efforts were futile. Finally a soldier came and asked to be given charge of the horse. Every one moved away giving the rein to him. He promptly turned the horse to face the sun so that his shadow fell behind him. Immediately the horse cooled down. The king



understood that the horse was frightened of its own shadow.

Problems in life are like shadows. They threaten us and frighten us. But if we turn our face to the Sun of righteousness all shadows will fall back and our fear will be gone.

51

The Gadarenes Pigs

Jesus drove out evil spirits from two men. Some pigs were feeding nearby. The evil spirits asked permission from Jesus to go into the pigs that were nearby. When Jesus permitted, they all went into the pigs. The pigs ran up a cliff and from there dived into the sea and perished. A story goes like this:



As the pigs were running up the cliff one pig asked the other, “Where are we running?” The pig replied, “I don’t know. Everybody is running, let us also run.” So they all died.

Do not do a thing just because everybody is doing it. Stand by what you believe. Stand for your convictions.

52

The Interesting Stranger

A god-fearing family lived in a small town. It comprised of mummy, daddy and two children. Daddy worked and Mummy took care of the home. When daddy came home in the evening they all went for a walk to the park. Then, children did their homework and studied. After family prayer they went to bed.



One day, daddy brought with him a stranger and said he would live in the house. Though everybody was hesitant, soon they all took a liking for him. He talked very interestingly. He drew beautiful pictures and told jokes and made them all laugh. His songs held them in a grip and his stories were absorbing.

At first he talked only now and then but children loved him so much that after breakfast they sat with him without reading their Bible or even praying. Evening the entire family spent time with him and stopped going to the park. Sometimes he talked late into the night and they had no time for family prayer. Mummy objected. It was when the kids took their food to sit with him as they ate that daddy realized something was wrong. Another contributing factor was that children forgot the choruses and started singing the songs the stranger taught.

The stranger was taking up all their time. They had no time for each other and they hardly talked to one another. Children were going down in their studies. With great difficulty daddy coaxed him into a room. He was called for only when they needed him. The family was restored back to their old godly ways.

Have you recognized this stranger? He is none other than Mr. TV! Do not spend too much time in front of the TV or even computer. It is not good for your body or soul.

53

Justice for a Cow!

There was a very righteous king. He had a bell hung in front of his palace. Anyone who needed justice could ring the bell.



Immediately the king would enquire into the matter and justice would be done.

One day a cow was found ringing the bell. When the king called his ministers to find out what the matter was, he was told that his son, the prince ran his chariot over a calf and the calf died. It was the mother of the calf that was ringing the bell. On

hearing this the king ordered his son to be brought and laid on the street. The king sat on his chariot and ran it over the boy that the boy died. The cow stopped ringing the bell.

This may be an extreme story. The lesson for us is that justice must be done to anyone to whom injustice has been done. God loves the just.

54

Umbrella to a Stranger

It was raining. A man heard a knock on the door. He opened the door to find a lady standing there. She asked for an umbrella and promised to return it the next morning. The man had two umbrellas. One was a brand new one and the other was an old holey one. He wasn't sure of getting his umbrella back and hence gave her the old one. The lady thanked him and left in the rain.

The next day morning there was a knock on the door and the man opened it. He found a royal palace guard standing there with his



umbrella and a 'Thank you' note from Queen Elizabeth!

We are looking for Jesus in all the wrong places. He wanders the streets in disguise like a beggar, leper, old widow, stranger in need or a hungry kid. Do your best for them and you are doing it for Jesus!

55

Where are you Going?

Princy and Gracy were great friends. They went for a walk down the road. The road divided into two. There was a big gateway to one road with a huge arch and banners advertising lots of fun. Princy pulled Gracy, "Come on, let's go." Gracy was hesitant. She could see drunkards along that road and wild people. "My mummy has warned me of these things. I am not coming" she said. "I want to go down the road and see" said Princy and entered the gate.

Gracy stood there for a minute watching Princy go happily singing. However she decided to take the other road which was nothing more than a footpath. She took a few steps and stepped on a big thorn. She sat down to take the thorn. From a distance Princy saw her and waved. She was watching an interesting film. Gracy was tempted to go back and enter the arch but decided against it.

She continued to walk along the path. She tripped and fell down and injured her ankle. She limped as she walked. She could see Princy playing electronic games betting the money



she had. Her face was glowing with happiness. Princy limped painfully when some stones fell on her. She saw a big cross and ran and hid behind it.

When the stones stopped she got up and walked. Dark storm clouds gathered and the thunder and lightning frightened her. Had she chosen the wrong path? Princy was laughing at her from a distance; she was walking through a maze of fun games and shops, heavily lighted and flashy.

Suddenly something terrible happened. Princy was at the end of the road. She was trapped. She could not go back. She fell into a deep burning pit with a loud scream that sent a chill through Gracy's spine. Gracy looked up. She was at the end of the road. Jesus stood there with arms open wide. "Come Gracy, come. All your troubles are over. No more sorrow, no more pain" said Jesus and embraced her. Her pain in the ankle disappeared. All the dark clouds were gone. It was bright and shiny. Yes, she was in heaven!

The Bible speaks of two gates and two roads. Never choose the wide gate and broad road full of evils. The way to heaven is a narrow road full of problems and pain. But if you bear the cross, you will wear the crown!

56

Napoleon's Soldier

One of Napoleon's soldiers was given the duty of guarding a gate with the instruction, strictly not to allow anyone. He stood there faithfully not allowing anyone to pass through the gate. Evening Napoleon

came on a horse with two soldiers. Since the soldier had not seen Napoleon, he could not recognize him and hence he did not allow Napoleon in. When Napoleon insisted that he was Napoleon and had to go in, the soldier said: "Even if you are Napoleon you cannot pass through this gate." Napoleon turned back and went.



Everyone who heard of this incident thought the soldier would be beheaded. Instead the next day he received a letter of promotion from Napoleon.

Whatever work you are given to do, do it faithfully. God will honor you.

Mother's Strength

A mother had placed her tiny baby under a tree and was working in the field. A huge vulture swept down, picked up the baby and flew to a high cliff. A crowd gathered. The



strongest among them climbed the cliff to retrieve the baby but half way through had to come down due to exhaustion.

Finally the mother started to climb. She climbed and climbed. She was breathless and exhausted but she climbed. She reached the top. The vulture left the baby and flew away. She came down with the baby. "How

did you manage it?" asked every one. "Because I am the mother" was her answer.

Jesus has a mother's heart. That's how He could retrieve us from Satan's hand.

How much do you Trust Jesus?

A rope walker tied a rope across the Niagara falls. A huge crowd had gathered to watch him walk across the swirling waters. When he walked across, the crowd applauded. Then he took an empty wheelchair and walked on the rope. The crowd was in a frenzy to watch the feat. Now the man addressed the crowd, "Do you believe I can do it again?" he asked. "Yeah" shouted the crowd. Now he challenged them, "If you really believe I can once again walk across the Niagara on this rope with the wheelchair, one of you come up and sit on the chair." People looked at one another. Nobody was willing. No one went up!

You may believe in Jesus but are you ready to give your life completely in His hands? If you have not given your life to Jesus but want to do it now,

say this prayer, "Dear Father God, I believe you sent your Son Jesus Christ to this world to die on the cross for my sins. I believe He died on the cross and came back alive on the third day. I believe His blood washes away my sins. Please forgive all my sins and make me your child.



Write my name in the Book of Life. Help me to lead a pure life. In Jesus name I pray. Amen."

59

Mother's Plate



Day after day Meena, a little girl saw her mother serve food to her grandmother in an old ugly dented aluminium plate. She would put the food on the plate and leave it for her. After some time her grandmother died. Meena took the plate, washed it and kept it in the shelf. Her mother asked her why she kept it there. Meena innocently said: “I will need it for you mummy,

when you grow old.”

God has asked us to honor our parents. We must care for them to the very end. If we don't treat them with dignity we also will be treated the same way in our old age. If we treat them well, God will bless us.

60

Do you Know your Friend?

Daddy loved the burnt side of the bread. So whenever they bought bread he would cut off the burnt portion and give to

mummy. Mummy would take it quietly and eat it. This went on for years. On their Silver Wedding Anniversary, that is, after 25 years of marriage, Daddy lovingly cut off the burnt portion of the bread and gave to mummy. Mummy cried saying, “Today is our Silver Wedding Anniversary. I thought atleast today you will give me the good portion of the bread.”



All these years daddy thought mummy also loved the brown portion. Mummy thought daddy always gave her the unwanted portion. The problem is, they never expressed themselves openly. It is important that you talk to your parents openly. You also must try to understand them. If parents are too busy for you, tell them that you need to talk to them and express yourself freely. We must understand one another.

61

Only One Nail

Sundar wanted to rent a house and he wandered the streets. He heard that one Mr. Mani had a vacant house. So he went to see him. Mani welcomed him and had him seated. He was willing to give the house on rent on one condition. He wanted just one nail in the bed room for him. He showed Sundar around

the small house. He also showed the nail on the bedroom wall. Mani did not think much about it. What did one nail matter after all? So he agreed and paid the advance.

Sundar's family moved into the house and they all liked it.



Two days later Mani came with a big bag and hung it on the nail and left. The bag was full of dry fish and the stench filled the whole house. You can easily guess the end of the story. Sunder vacated the house!

We should not give even one nail to the devil. He will fill our life with stench!

62

The Competition

Angels and devils had a competition. Each of them had to stitch a handkerchief. The competition was to see who finished stitching first—angels or devils. The competition started. Angels cut pieces of thread, threaded them in the needle and stitched. The devils did not want to waste time threading the needle often. So they all took very long threads, threaded them in the needle and started stitching. After each



daily pray for wisdom.

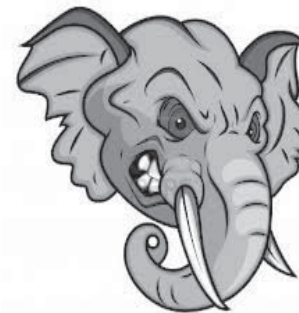
stitch they had to pull the needle a long long distance. Not only that, because the thread was long it got tangled. So the angels won the competition.

We must be Christians with practical wisdom. Anyone can ask God for that wisdom. So

63

The Angry Elephant

An elephant was going from shop to shop asking for something to eat. People gave banana, coconut, sugarcane or something. Then it came to a tailor's shop and stretched its trunk. The tailor poked its trunk with his needle. The elephant became very angry. It went to the sewage and loaded its trunk with sewage water. It came back to the tailor's shop and



spurted all the dirty sewage water on the tailor and all his new clothes.

Never irritate anyone. Be gentle and kind to everyone.

64

A Murder?

It was a rainy day and it was beginning to get dark. A man wanted shelter from the rain and ran to the verandah of a house.



As he waited for the rain to stop he could hear voices coming from inside the house. “Let’s cut the neck first.” “No, no, you hold here. I’ll cut the hand first.” “Hold tight. Otherwise how can I cut?” The man was

frightened. He ran to the police station and came back with the police. What did they find inside? Two tailors cutting a shirt!

If you hear something don’t go to another person with the information without ascertaining the truth. After making sure of the validity of what you heard, if it is not good information, if it is not useful for anyone, don’t pass it on. Only speak good of others.

65

The Hole in the Compound Wall

A rich business man had lots of money in the house. Thieves were watching him. Daily night they would come to rob the

house but would find a huge big compound wall around his house.

They would return back, unable to rob. One day as usual they went. This day they found a hole in the compound wall



and went in. They lost interest in stealing. They were more interested in finding out how a compound wall came up in the night and why there was a hole that day.

So they woke up the business man. They asked him their doubts. He thought for a while and said, “Now I remember: Every night I would pray to God to protect me. But today I was too tired. I forgot to pray. I just fell on my bed and slept off.” The thieves were touched. They gave their life to Jesus then and there and stopped stealing.

Pray every day.

66

The Sheep Thief

A man was always stealing sheep in the village. The best efforts to reform him failed. So people branded him as Sheep



Thief and tattooed “ST” on his forehead so that everybody would be careful about him. One day he attended a gospel meeting and was gloriously converted. He stopped stealing and his behavior

changed. People asked him about the tattoo, “What are you going to do with the tattoo?” “Let it be” he said “the ST stands for SainT now!”

God can change the way you were, to what He wants you to be if you allow Him.

67

Tinkerbelle

Twelve year old Swati went to church. She was a believer. The pastor was preaching a wonderful message on salvation.

The teenager who sat in the front row was a nauseating sight to Swati. She wore heavy lipstick and makeup. Her long ear-drops fell on her shoulders. Her glass bangles made tinkling



noises which distracted Swati from the message she was keenly listening to. Swati was cursing her under her breath, “Terrible teenagers. Why do they primp like this without decency or decorum?” The sermon was coming to the climax. The pastor gave the altar call. To Swati’s surprise it was this Tinkerbelle who got up first and walked to the altar and knelt down. After prayer she came back wiping her eyes.

Swati felt guilty for despising her in her heart. She vowed never to do that again. She started praying for bad people.

Never despise anyone in your heart and think they are not worth the kingdom of God.

68

Piggy Man

Piglets were running round and round their mother. “Mummy, mummy, we want to become men mummy,” they cried in unison. Their mother screwed up her face and said, “These are days when men are becoming pigs, why do you want to become men?”



Take the lesson. Don't become a pig.

69

The Missing Leg!

A lady went to a pastor for prayer for her dead husband that he might go to heaven. The pastor wanted Rs. 1000/- for that and she promptly paid. The next week when she visited him the pastor said that his head had gone into heaven and she needed to pay another 1000 Rupees. Money was paid. The

next week he said the right hand had gone into heaven. Then the left hand and then the torso. The pastor was extracting



money from her. Finally she gave Rs. 1000/- and he said the right leg had gone in. After that the lady didn't turn up. The pastor was in need of another thousand rupees and so he visited her. “Why didn't you come for prayer? Your husband's left leg is still outside heaven” he said. The woman said, “Now I know you are a cheat. My

husband had an accident and his left leg was amputated. He had only one leg.” So saying she chased him out.

Beware of people who have their eye on your money.

70

How Great am I?

One day Churchill was getting ready to go to an auditorium where he was to give a speech. He called a taxi. The driver said, “Sir, today Churchill is delivering a speech and I want to listen to him. I am sorry I cannot come.” Churchill was very pleased to hear that. He took a 20 pound note and gave



to him. The driver said, “To hell with Churchill, sir. Get in, I’ll take you wherever you want to go”!

Don’t think too much about yourself!

71

Sweet Brinjals

The King had a brinjal garden and the brinjals were very sweet and nice. The King and Queen enjoyed the brinjals everyday. The court jester Thenaliraman wanted to eat the brinjals. So he told his wife that he would steal some brinjals and bring them in the night for dinner. “Don’t do it. The King would definitely find out” objected his wife. But Thenaliraman said that he would take care of it.

Night he stole some brinjals and they all had a sumptuous dinner. Thenaliraman’s son slept in the verandah. In the middle of the night Thenaliraman sprinkled water on his son and said, “Come in and sleep. It’s raining outside.” So the son groggily came in and slept.



The next day the King noticed some brinjals missing and asked Thenali about it. He denied stealing brinjals. Let’s ask your son, said the king and the lad was brought. “What did you have for dinner?” asked the King. The lad promptly replied, “Brinjal curry.” The King looked at Thenali. “What does a small child know sir? Ask him if it rained yesterday night and decide for yourself.” The King asked the boy, “Did it rain yesterday night?” And the boy said, “O yes. I had to go in and sleep because it rained.” The King believed Thenaliraman and let him go.

Beware of clever crooks.

72

The Wounded Bird

There were three doves sitting on a tree. A hunter took aim with his gun and shot. One flew away. One fell dead. One was wounded and flapping its wings, trying to escape. Which one will the hunter take first? Obviously the one that was trying to escape. He cannot get the one that flew away. He can take the dead



one anytime. But he will be anxious to take the one that is struggling away.

Satan may not trouble strong believers. He will not bother about sinners as they are his, any time. But he will try to get those who are trying to run away from him.

73

Daddy's Potato Patch

There was an agriculture competition in the town. Pretty was very eager to participate in it. She grew up in a farm where her daddy cultivated lot of vegetables. So she was confident she would win a prize. Daddy had registered his name for the competition and so also Pretty. Daddy taught all the techniques to Pretty.



Morning daddy called her, “Come Pretty, let’s go to the market to buy some manure for the potato patch.” “O daddy, it is so cold. I can’t come” said Pretty. So daddy went and

bought manure for him alone. “Come baby, let’s prepare the patch” daddy invited. Pretty came but she would not dig deep. Neither did she have manure. She felt lazy. It was now afternoon and the sun was beating down. Pretty didn’t want to sweat. But she planted the potatoes.

Evening daddy called her, “ Come darling, let’s water the patch.” Pretty was playing with her friends and shouted back, “Daaad, I’m playing. I’ll water my patch later.” When her playmates left it was getting dark and she could not water her patch that day. Days and months passed by. The harvest time was nearing and the competition date was closing in on them.

The next day the competitors would bring their products and prizes would be distributed. Daddy and Pretty went to dig in their products. Daddy brought out huge big potatoes. Pretty put her hand inside the soil and searched for potatoes and pulled out tiny, shrivelled, pathetic ones. That year the prize for potatoes was bagged by daddy.

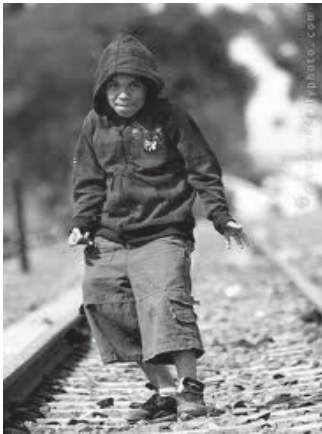
Without hard work you cannot come up in life. You must labor and sweat to win a prize. Lazy people do not accomplish much in life.

74

Devan the Great!

Devan was a village boy. Daily he walked ten kilometers to the next town to attend school. Six boys from his village went to that school. On the way they crossed a railway track every day.

One day Devan noticed that some sleepers were removed from the track. He was worried. Would an accident occur? He told his friends. They didn't bother and didn't want to be late for school. "What if it is not a problem? Will they scold me if I stop the train?" Now he heard the whistle of a train coming and he had no time to think. Luckily that day he was wearing a red shirt. He took off his shirt and waving it ran on the track.



The Engine Driver saw something red and stepped on the brake. The train slowed down and stopped. The driver got down and asked Devan why he stopped the train. Devan took him to the spot and showed him the gap in the track. The driver was shocked. It was the act of Naxalites. The driver hugged Devan. Railway authorities came and inspected the spot. Devan was praised. The authorities wanted to know what he wanted as a

gift. "Sir, only a few of us are going to school from our village because we have to walk 10 km. If we have a station in our village more children will go to school. Please arrange for it" said Devan. The Railway authorities were very happy and complied with his request. The next day Devan's picture and the news of how Devan prevented an accident and the loss of many lives was in the newspaper. The title was *Devan the Great!*

Be courageous and act fast in emergencies.

75

The White Church

It was a white church. Black people were not allowed in. A black man was in deep distress. He was in trouble and needed help, but he could not go in. He sat there at the steps weeping. Suddenly he saw the figure of Christ walking towards him. Christ touched him and said, "Don't weep. Even I am not allowed in," and He disappeared. The man realized he had



come to the wrong place where he would not get help. He went to a spiritual church where he was embraced, taken in, counseled and helped.

Rise above racial discrimination. Whether we are brown or black or white or yellow, God made us all.

76

The Christmas Party

The flavor of *biriyani*, chicken and chocolate cake wafted across the street. A Christmas party was going on inside a big hall. People were eating and dancing and playing games. A hungry beggar watched through the glass window. At that time a white-robed gentleman came there. He touched the shoulder of the beggar and asked, “Are you not going in?” The beggar replied, “No sir, I am not invited.” The gentleman said, “It is My birthday they are celebrating and neither am I invited.”



Why don't you invite some beggars to share your Christmas dinner this year?

77

Bible, how long?

The famous Dr. C.T. Studd went to Africa as a missionary. He labored in the dark continent for many years. He came to the fag end of his life. One day he had a visitor from his own country. The guest found him sitting up in the night and reading the Bible in candle light. “Dr. Studd,” he asked, “you have been reading the Bible for so many years. What more are you reading now?” Dr. Studd replied, “I am seeing if there is any commandment I have yet to obey”!



We can never exhaust the Bible. Read it everyday; read it as much as possible; read it again and again. Every time you read the Bible you become a little more wiser. After reading, put what you read to practice.

To Catch a Thief

It was a camp. A crowd was in a room. Someone's money was missing and the thief could not be found. "Don't worry"



said an old man. "Bring a rooster and a cooking pot from a coal stove. I'll catch the thief." So both were brought. The crowd was instructed by the old man: "All lights will be put off. Each of you will place both your hands on the pot and remove. When the thief

places his hands on the pot the rooster inside will crow."

So all lights were put off. Each one placed his hands on the pot. All had finished but the rooster did not crow. Lights were switched on and the old man inspected each pair of hands. Only one pair was clean. All other hands were dirty with soot. The thief was caught.

Guilty conscience will make you behave differently. Have a clean conscience and you will behave normally. Your sleep will be sound.

Mercy begets Mercy

The reputed North Indian missionary, Sadhu Sunder Singh used to travel far and wide to preach the Goodnews of Jesus

Christ. Often he would cross the Indian border to go into Tibet, crossing cold mountains and valleys covered with snow. Once while he was walking on such a snow-covered rough terrain he saw a traveler lying on the road exhausted, unconscious and



frostbitten. Just ahead of Sadhu Sunder Singh walked another man who did not pay attention to the dying man but walked ahead.

Sadhu's heart welled with pity. He covered the man as much as he could and carried him on his shoulder to the next town. The pity is, he saw the man who walked ahead of him lying dead by the roadside in the cold. What was the secret? The man who died was alone and could not withstand the cold. But since Sadhu Sunder Singh carried a man, his muscles

generated heat and the contact with another person produced warmth, so much so both survived.

Jesus said, “Blessed are the merciful for they shall get mercy.”

80

Milk Bath

A queen heard an advice that if she took bath in milk she would become fairer. She ordered that each family bring a can of milk and pour in the tank. All the subjects were very worried. Where would they get a can of milk and at what cost? One man thought if he would take a can of water and poured into the tank full of milk, nobody would find out. So he took a can of water and stealthily poured into the tank and slipped away.



The next day when the queen went for her milk bath what did she find? A tank full of water! Each family thought if they alone brought a can of water nothing would be seen. So all brought only water.

If each of us do our job well the final product will be good. If each of us are sloppy the end product will be a failure.

81

The Stone Cutters

A man was walking along a road where he saw a building coming up. He saw people cutting stones. He asked one man what he was doing. The man replied, “I am cutting stones.” He asked another stone cutter what he was doing. That man replied, “I am building a temple.”

Both were cutting stones. For one man it was a job of cutting stones. The other man’s mind was focussed on his accomplishment. Whatever we do we must set our mind on what we are going to accomplish. Then the burden of work will be lighter and we can do it with joy. It is a matter of attitude.



The Wicked Beggar

A man went for a walk. He saw a very pathetic beggar. He felt sorry for him. He put his hand inside his pocket and saw



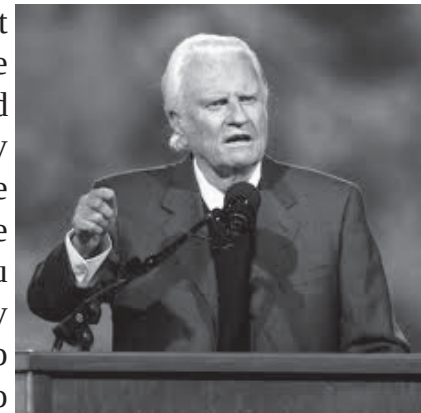
that he had seven, hundred rupee notes. He took pity on the beggar and gave him 600 rupees and kept an one hundred rupee note back in his pocket. He continued his walk. The beggar came behind him, struck the man on his head and took away the hundred rupee note from his pocket and fled.

Who is this wicked beggar? It is you and I. God has given us seven days in a week. He says, 'Six days are for you but one day is for Me. But we rob Him of that day too. Sunday is for God. So go to the church and Sunday class every Sunday. Don't give excuses and stay back at home.

The Way to Heaven

Billy Graham was preaching in another country. Before he went to the preaching hall in the evening he wanted to post a letter. On the road he asked a

little girl the way to the Post Office. She showed him the way. Then Billy Graham told her, "I am speaking in the City Hall this evening. Please attend the meeting." The little girl asked, "What are you going to speak about?" Billy answered, "I am going to show everybody the way to heaven." The little girl replied, "Sir, I am not coming. You don't even know the way to the Post Office; how are you going to show the way to heaven?"



Billy must have had a good laugh. But learn one thing — You don't have to know everything. You don't need to get discouraged that you don't know certain things.

Flying Feathers

A lady told a bad story about the pastor to many people. Later on she came to know it was a false rumor. She felt very sorry for what she had done. She went to the pastor and apologized.



The pastor asked her to come to the terrace. He took a pillow with him. He opened the pillow and let the feathers be blown in the wind in all directions. The pastor asked her to collect all the feathers

and bring them back. Of course she could not and she hung her head in shame.

We should be careful about the words we speak. We cannot get them back.

10—9—10

In China, Christianity was looked down upon. Those who believed in Jesus Christ were hounded and killed. Once 10 believers were caught worshiping God. They were made to stand in ice cold waters. They started to shiver and their teeth were chattering.

The soldiers stood on the edge of the river and kept tempting them. “Come” they said, “we’ll give you blanket and hot food. You’ll get promotion in your job.”

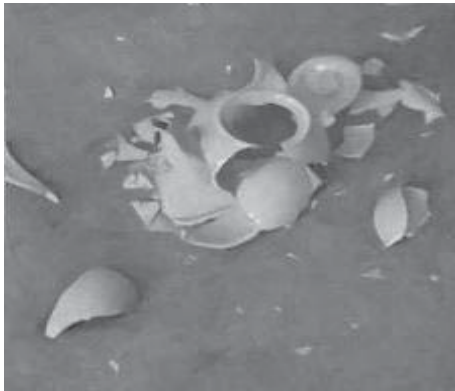


The believers started to freeze but they kept singing hymns. After an hour, one Christian could not stand the freezing cold. He walked out of the waters. Immediately he was covered in a blanket and taken for a hot meal. Seeing this, one soldier started to weep. “If your faith is so strong your God is the true God. I become a Christian today and I come to die with you.” So saying, he walked into the freezing waters to take the place of the missing Christian.

We must be prepared to suffer for Christ and even die for Him.

What we do or what we Are?

A man received an invitation from a sister named Mary to come and speak in the prayer meeting she conducted at her home. The preacher agreed and on the said day started off for



her house. He reached her town. He had her address in his hand and so he came searching for her house and entered the street where she lived. There was the street tap that she had mentioned and he knew he was close. Women were collecting water from the

tap and there was a long queue. A fight broke out among the women and it was a noisy scene. One woman in particular was very abusive. She shouted and screamed and threw her mud pot to the ground and broke it in her anger and walked away. When the dust settled the preacher walked near the crowd and asked if there lived anybody by name Mary. "Oh yes," came the reply. "You saw one lady breaking the pot and walking away? That's sister Mary."

How terrible. People see us before they hear us. Our words must be backed by our life. Live a life that will speak about your Christian faith to others.

Missionaries to China

A pastor gave a very challenging message in the church. "Who will go to China as a missionary? People are perishing

without Christ. Will you give yourself?" He pounded the pulpit. After the service an old widow approached the pastor and said, "Pastor, I want to send one of my daughters to China." The pastor said, "Dear lady, it is good you have a burden but



you are old and you are a widow. Your daughters must be around you for any help." "God will take care of me. Besides I have five daughters with missionary zeal" she insisted.

So the first daughter was sent as a missionary to China. She was a fiery preacher. The Chinese were provoked and within a month she was killed. When news reached the mother she cried and cried. The pastor visited her and said, "Did I not tell you not to send your daughter? You should have listened to me." "No pastor" wept the lady. "I am not crying for my daughter. I am crying for the Chinese people. Please send my second daughter." In spite of the pastor's protests she persisted and the second daughter was sent.

The second daughter met with the same fate. As per the lady's compulsion her third and fourth and fifth daughters were sent and all died as martyrs on the soil of China. When news came of the fifth daughter's death the mother fell down on the floor and cried and rolled. The pastor visited her and said, "No use crying now. You should have listened to me." She looked into his eyes and said, "You are mistaken pastor. I am not crying for my five daughters. I am crying because I don't have one more daughter to give to God. Please send me to China." She would not rest until she was sent.

She landed on the shores of China and started sharing the love of Christ to the people. They looked at her in amazement and said, "Does she look like the girls we killed?" "Yes," she said, "I am their mother." "Why did you come knowing we have killed your five daughters and will kill you too?" they asked. "Because I love you and don't want you to go to hell" she replied. There was not an eye that was dry. People saw the love of God in action. They started turning to Christ in hordes.

Jesus gave His life for you. Will you give your life for Him?

88

Envy Kills

Some people don't like others to shine. When others prosper and shine they feel very bad. It is called envy or jealousy. There is a story about a man who killed himself through envy. Sudhan and Anand were very good in sports and games. They were rivals. But Anand outshone Sudhan. People decided to erect a statue for Anand who was a celebrated champion in public games and did erect. Sudhan's stomach churned. Being a rival of the honored athlete he was so envious that he vowed to destroy that statue. Every night he went out into the darkness and chiselled at the statue's base in an effort to undermine its foundation and make it fall. At last he succeeded. It did fall—but it fell on him and he died. He became a victim of his own envy.



If you love people you will not be envious when they succeed. You will rejoice with them.

Radha's Right Eye

Radha's right eye was very unhappy to be an eye. She felt it very unfair that she had to cry for the problem of every part of the body. If the leg had pain or stomach had, she had to cry. Moreover even a small dust made her cry whereas the neck or even the face just wiped it off. She complained to God and God gave her the choice. She thought if she could be the foot she could walk to all places. So God made her a foot.



She was very happy wandering until she stepped on a big thorn. "Ouch" she cried. The pain was terrible. She felt sorry for her choice and wanted to be the hand. It would be so nice to receive gifts from everyone. "OK" said God, "I'll make you a hand." That day in school the teacher asked Radha for her homework. Radha had forgotten her homework. "Show me your hand" the teacher growled and gave a nice beating on her hand with a scale. "Cruel, cruel" the eye cried. "It is not at all nice. God make me the mouth. This is my last wish. I'll be eating ice-cream and sweets and I'll be happy. I will not ask you anything more." So God made her the mouth. She ate

biriyani, chicken and ice-cream for a day.

The next day Radha had to see a dentist for her tooth ache. The doctor gave an injection inside the mouth and pulled out a tooth. Radha's eye screamed and cried. "I want to be the right eye, God, I want to be the right eye." So God once again made her the right eye. And there she is, even today, happy, contented and doing her job without complaining, looking around the beautiful world and enjoying the scenery.

We all belong to one body. We are all parts of one body. Be happy whatever God made you to be.

A Stony Gift!

Maduram had two sons. The elder one Booshan was a worldly fellow. Darshan the younger, loved God. Maduram had ten acres of land. Five acres were very fertile and situated on a riverside. He cultivated that land every year and reaped bumper crops. The other five acres were stony and not fit for cultivation.

One day Maduram developed chest pain and was hospitalized. Both the sons took turns to be at his bedside. When Booshan was by his side and Darshan was at home, Madhuram's chest pain became very severe. He told Booshan, "I am going to die. Divide the fertile land between you two. Take half each. In the same way divide the rocky land also

between yourselves equally. Live in peace.” Soon he died. When Darshan came, he was shattered and he cried. “What were papa’s last words?” He asked Booshan. Booshan said, “Papa wanted us to live in peace. He said that I being the elder should take the fertile soil. Since you are younger, he said you can take the rocky soil and work on it.”



Darshan cried, “Yes papa, I will work on the rocky soil and turn it into good soil and fulfill your wish.” Booshan lived a relaxed life with the income he got from the fertile land. Darshan started digging the land. It was very hard. He toiled and moiled but nothing but stones were found. He noticed that the rocks were shiny. He had never seen such shiny rocks before. So he brought his friend over to see. His friend was amazed. “These are all very costly granite stones. You are fortunate. Set up a factory here and you’ll become the richest man in town” he said.

Darshan set up a factory to cut the granite and sell it. Money started flowing in. He became very rich and thanked God for His blessing. Booshan felt sorry for cheating his brother.

Do not cheat. Do not worry if others cheat you. Put your trust in God. He will lift you up in due time.

91

The Fearful Rabbits

There were lot of rabbits and bunnies in a forest. They were afraid when the lion roared. They were scared when the python hissed. They ran away and hid when they saw a fox. They trembled at the sight of a tiger. One day they all got together. “We are not fit to live in this world. We are too timid to face life. Let us all go and together jump into the pond and die” they said.

They all agreed on this and scampered to the pond. When they came to the edge of the pond the frogs sitting on the sides started



jumping into the pond. “Oh, great” the rabbits exclaimed. “We are not the timidest creatures on earth. There are creatures more fearful than

us. These frogs are afraid of us. When they are facing life courageously why not we?” So they decided not to kill themselves. They returned to the forest and lived happily handling one day at a time.

Be courageous to face life. God’s grace is sufficient for you.

God's Grace

Daddy always used to tell Dimple, his daughter that God's grace was enough. When she had no evening snacks he would repeat it. When she failed in her exams he said that. When she was not promoted that year he encouraged her saying the same thing.

Dimple could not understand the motherhood of God's grace.

She asked, "Daddy, the world is full of people. How can God's grace be enough for all? I have so many problems. How can God's grace last all my life?"

Her Daddy took her to the top of a hill and said, "Breathe, Dimple baby, breathe." Dimple breathed in and out. "Keep on breathing, keep on breathing. You must exhaust all the air up here" said Daddy. "Oh Daddy, that's not possible. I can never finish breathing all the air" giggled Dimple. "That's God's grace. As a fish cannot dry up the sea by drinking its water, as we cannot exhaust the air in this world, so is God's grace" explained Daddy.

God's grace is so high, so deep, so wide that it will last all your life, for all your problems.



Benita's Lily Garden

Benita was five years old and her mother was in a wheelchair. Her mother loved to watch flowers blooming. Their house was on top of a hill. "Mummy, I'll plant lilies for you all over the hillside so you can watch them and smile" said little Benita. "You are so small darling. How can you do that?" asked her mother. "Wait and watch" said Benita.

Everyday Benita would come back from school and plant a lily bulb. Then she would play and do her homework. By the end of one month there were 30 lily plants. By the end of the year there were 365 plants. Benita would push her mother around the garden and make her smile. When Benita was 15



years old, there were 3650 lily plants in full bloom. Benita grew up and married and took care of her mother in the same house with her family. She continued to plant lilies.

The hillside was covered with various colors of lilies. People traveling along the road stopped to take photographs.

One day a traveler climbed up the hill and asked Benita, "How did you do such a great task all alone?" Benita replied humbly, "It is not a great task. It is only one bulb a day."

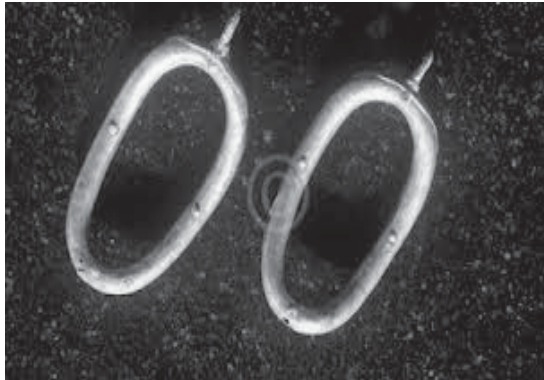
Our life can be as beautiful as these lilies if we live our life beautiful each day! Great tasks, if done in stages become simple and easy.

94

Silambu

Do you know what a silambu is? It is an ornament worn around the ankles by ancient women in India. It is a hollow ring with beads or precious stones inside, that made a jal jal noise as the women folk walked.

Now, there was a couple — Kovalan and Kannagi. They went through a hard time and Kannagi



gave one silambu to Kovalan to sell it and start a business. Both went to Madurai. Kovalan went to sell it to a goldsmith. He was waiting to be paid.

Suddenly soldiers from the King's palace came and arrested Kovalan. The Queen's silambu was stolen. In a bid to escape,

the thief informed the palace that it was Kovalan who stole the Queen's silambu and was selling it to a goldsmith. The King sent soldiers and had him killed. The silambu was taken to the palace.



News reached Kannagi. She was distraught. The poor girl wanted to prove her husband's innocence. She was taken to the King's presence. She cried in the presence of the King and Queen. She demanded that the silambu recovered from her husband be brought. Whereupon she broke it in the court for everyone to see. The silambu broke and precious stones fell out. It was her's indeed, for the Queen's silambu had precious pearls inside. The King was mortified at the injustice done to an innocent man because of impatience. He fell back saying Kovalan was not the thief but he himself was the thief and died.

How careful we have to be before judging or punishing others!

The Dream Cow!

There was a jobless man in a village and they got him married. One day the wife Rucku told her husband Kittu, “Why



don’t you take up some work? Why are you lazy?” Kittu replied, “I am planning to buy a goat. Ask your father to give me a loan and I’ll repay it.”

“What will you do with the goat?”

enquired Rucku. Kittu replied, “The goat will grow up and yield many kids. I will sell those kids and buy a cow. We can sell the milk and earn a lot, drink coffee every day and also give my sick father a cup of milk every day.”

Rucku responded, “We can also give milk to my mother who lives in the next street.” Kittu became angry and shouted, “Why should we give milk to your mother?” Both of them started to scream and shout and fight.

On hearing the noise the neighbor came running. He understood that they were fighting over a dream cow that had not yet been bought. At the top of his voice he shouted. “Hey

Kittu, your cow is eating away my garden. You should pay for the loss.” Kittu was terrified. “I have not bought a cow yet and you have no garden. How can my dream cow eat away your nonexistent garden?” he asked.

“If you have not yet bought a cow how can Rucku send milk to her mother? That’s how your dream cow can destroy my garden” replied the wise neighbor.

Kittu and Rucku put their heads down in shame and realized how they were fighting over nothing.

If we are thoughtful we can avoid a lot of fighting.

The Lesson that Children Taught

Leena and Dahlia were playing in their courtyard. Both were four years old and were playing in the sand. When Dahlia stepped on Leena’s sand castle a fight started. They started pulling at each other’s hair.



Leena’s mother came rushing out and pulled her daughter away and started shouting at Dahlia. Dahlia’s mother Victoria was watching everything through the window. She stepped out of the house and started verbally abusing Rosy,

Leena's mother. The quarrel escalated and both of them started pulling each other's hair. Neighbors gathered around them and watched the fun. Suddenly the entire crowd started laughing merrily. Rosy and Victoria were rattled out of their fight. They stopped their quarrel to see what the matter was. They saw Leena and Dahlia building sand castles and joyfully playing and laughing.

Jesus told adults to be like children because they quickly forget their misunderstanding and forgive each other.

97

The Faithful Dog

Xavier and Jason were brothers. They brought in a dog to be reared. Mother was very tolerant and fed the dog. After six



months the brothers found a fluffy puppy on the street and brought it home. Now, mother put her foot down. "I can feed only one dog" she said. "Either you send Rani away or the puppy. You cannot keep both."

Now the boys were in a dilemma. Neither pleading

nor tears moved the heart of their mother. Finally they opted for the puppy. They hugged and kissed Rani and took her to a well five kilometers away from their house. They tied a heavy stone around her neck and pushed her inside (those days it was common to dispose off stray dogs in this fashion). Both the boys returned home crying.

Around midnight there was some noise outside the door. Father, mother and the boys got up and listened. It was like someone scratching the door. They opened the door and — who do you think it was? — It was Rani who stood there looking up into their faces, belly swollen with water!

This is what is called faithfulness. Job said he would trust in the Lord even if He were to kill him. We must hold on to the Lord under all circumstances and never let Him go.

98

The Sadhu and the Snake

There lived a wicked snake in the village of Swapnapuri. It used to bite the people and terrify them. So the whole village gathered and went to the Sadhu who lived in that village. They complained about the snake to the Sadhu and requested him to advise the snake. So the Sadhu called the snake and had a talk. He counseled the snake not to harm anyone.

One week later the snake came to the Sadhu with a long face. He told the Sadhu, "Sir, you told me not to bite the people

or harm them. So I have become very harmless. But see now what they do. They throw stones at me and pull my tail. You only must tell me the solution to this problem.” The Sadhu said, “*Harre*, I told you only not to bite the people. I never told you not to hiss.”

The snake was very happy and went away. Thereafter if anybody came near to hurt him, he would hiss. Children and people got scared and ran away. Now the people were safe and the snake was comfortable.

Jesus said we must be harmless as the dove and wise as the snake.



99

Due Time

A farmer was taking a sack load of grains to the store house. The grains were crying. The sack was stuffy and dark. There was a hole in the sack. Some grains said they could not stand the torture and wanted to escape through the hole. They slipped out and fell on the road. Birds and rats devoured them.

The sack was kept in the store house and some more grains decided to escape. They slipped outside and fell on the store house floor. They could breathe more easily now. But a maid came and swept them off and threw them in the drain.



The other grains suffocated, cried and waited for how long they did not know. One day the farmer came and carried the sack of grains to the field. He opened the sack and scattered the grains. The grains enjoyed the fresh breeze and the soft bed. They were given water to drink and food to eat. They grew and grew and yielded plenty of grains. How happy and proud they were!

It is not easy to be under God’s hands. We have to endure times of suffering and hardship. If we try to escape we will meet with disastrous ends. But if we keep ourselves under the mighty hand of God, in ‘due time’ He will exalt us. So wait patiently for the ‘due time.’

Dr. Shanon

Dr. Shanon had made a name for himself. He was an excellent surgeon and people came from far and near to be operated by him. He charged anything like one lakh for a surgery. But he was also a kindhearted gentleman and treated many poor patients.



One day Salman, a very poor man, came to the doctor who took pity on him and operated on him. When he recovered, Salman felt very bad that he was freely operated. He wanted to pay Dr. Shanon. But the doctor said, “It’s okay, don’t bother.”

But when Salman insisted to know his fees the doctor replied, “One lakh.” Salman knew he could never get so much to pay the doctor. He thanked Dr. Shanon profusely and left gratefully.

God’s salvation is free. We cannot give anything to God and merit our salvation. We have to accept it as a free gift from God.

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