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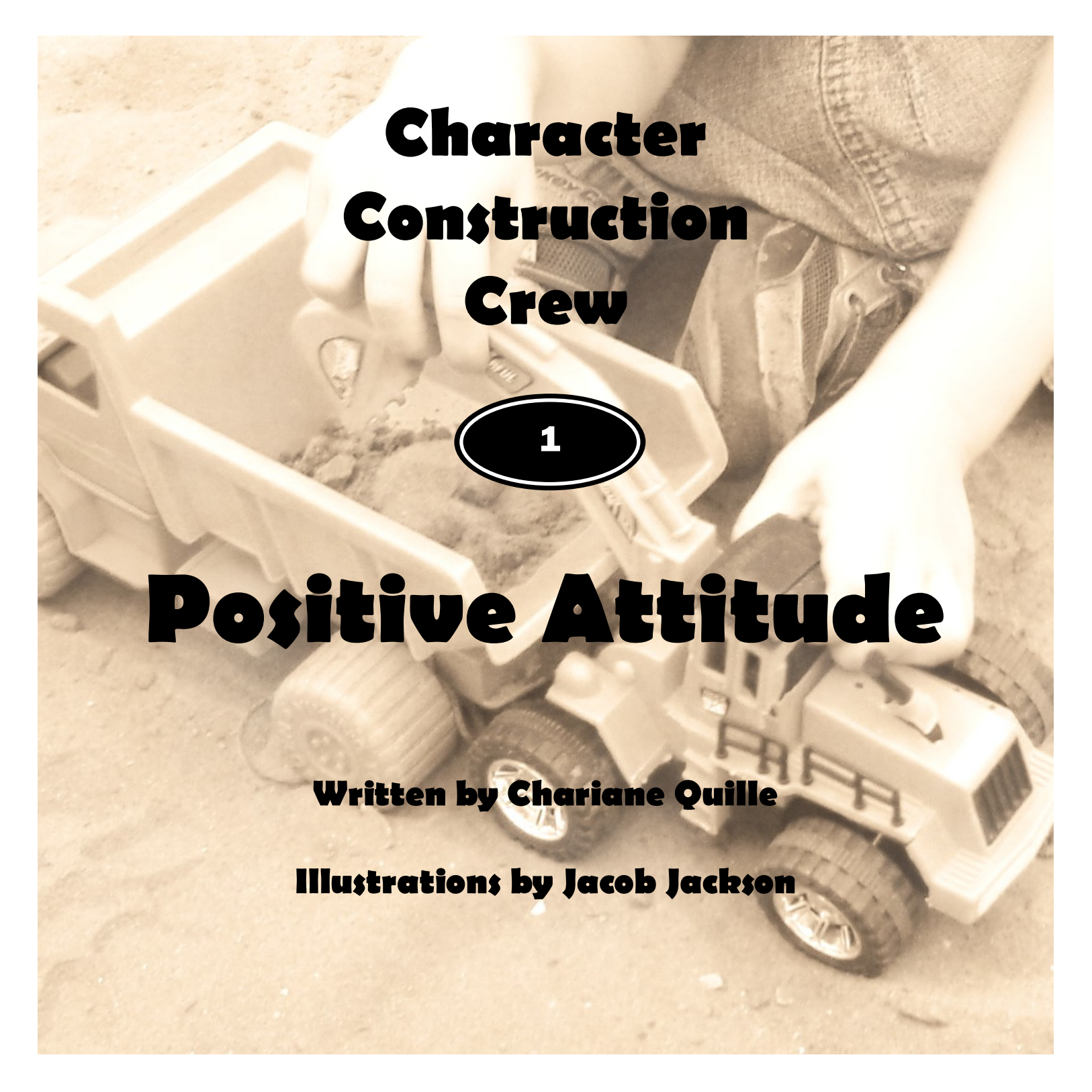
**Positive
Attitude**

Character Construction Crew

“What you think about will affect more than just your life, but each and everyone you come in contact with. ...Look for the good and focus on it.”

www.nurture-inspire-teach.com

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A close-up photograph of a child's hands playing with a white plastic toy dump truck on a sandy surface. The child is wearing denim overalls and a white long-sleeved shirt. The truck's bed is tilted, and the child is using their fingers to move sand. The background is a soft-focus view of the sand and the child's clothing.

Character Construction Crew

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Positive Attitude

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Definitions

Positive:

*Tending in the direction regarded as that of increase, progress, etc.

*Making a definite contribution; constructive.

Attitude:

*The position or posture assumed by the body in connection with an action, feeling, mood, etc.

*A manner of acting, feeling, or thinking that shows one's disposition, opinion, etc.

Optimism:

*The doctrine or belief that good ultimately prevails over evil.

*The tendency to take the most hopeful or cheerful view of matters, or to expect the best outcome; practice of looking on the bright side of things.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.



Art by Fleur Celeste/ Coloured by Mia

Psalm 144:15

**Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea,
happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.**

Bible Story

(True Story)

Tough Stuff

Job was a man who had more troubles in one day than you or I can imagine having! He lost all that he owned, as well as almost all those he lived with.

It was very difficult for him to experience being rich, healthy, and well thought of, and then to suddenly have everything taken from him in a day.

Job learned a lot through the hard times. He learned faith and trust. He learned that even if the worst possible things were going on around him, or happening to him, that God can and will make things right in the end.



Romans 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

He learned to pray in humility, and to hold on to God's promises.

Sometimes it helps to compare yourself with others who have a much worse situation to endure than you do. So if things seem too rough for you today, and you just can't seem to smile much, try to think about Job.

He learned faith even in the midst of the hardest times. Be glad that you don't have it nearly as bad, and if you do, or if you think you do, well, if Job could make it through that difficult time, so can you!

Because of Job's faith and how he learned to trust in God's wisdom, God rewarded him with even more than he had before. How about that? Will your faith be that strong?



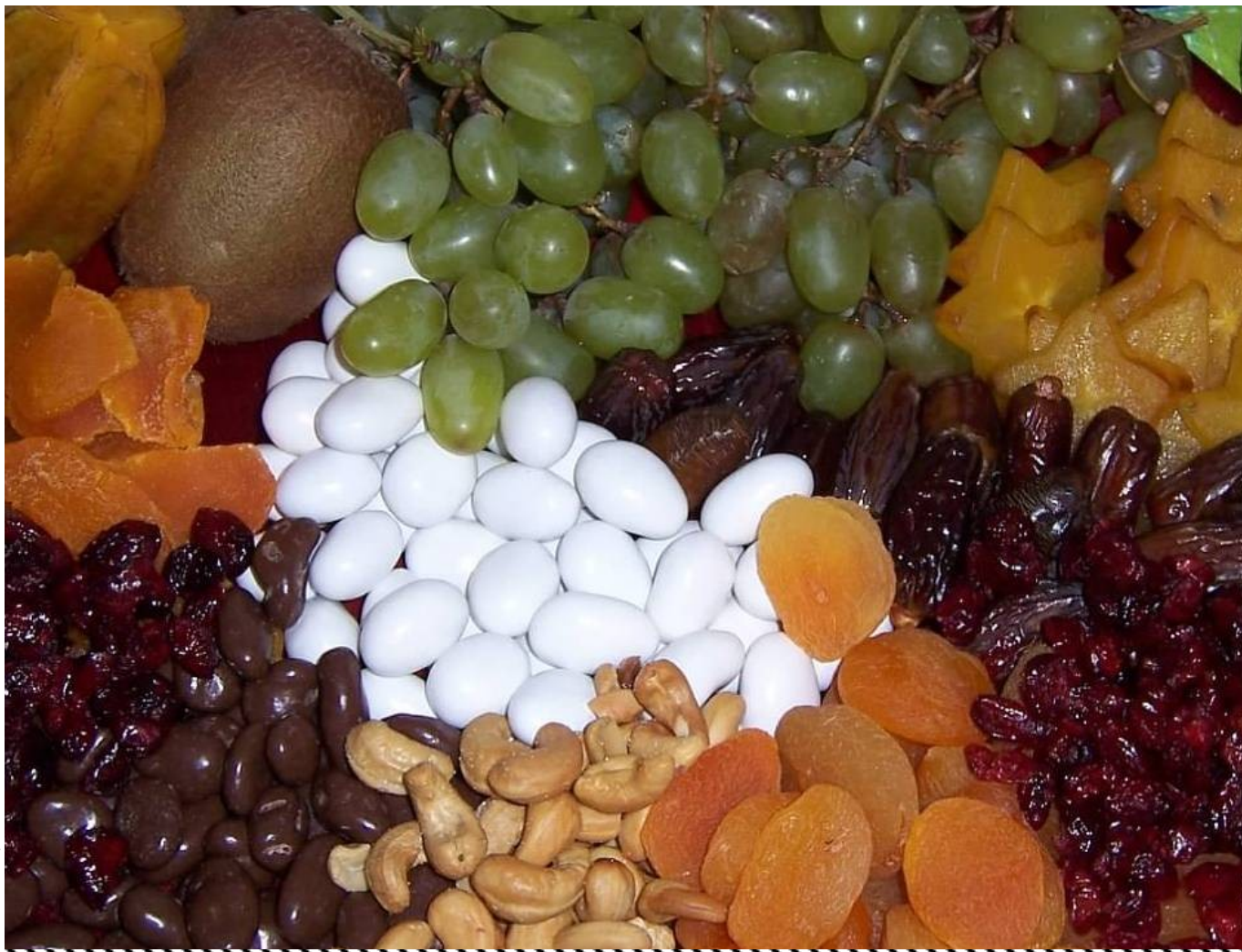
Habakkuk 3:17-18

Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

Will you still praise God in spite of all the difficulties that you might have to face today? Then as a result, you will also gain wonderful rewards in return!

Jesus knows what you can manage and just how much you can take, and He only allows you to experience the things that will in the end help you in some way. He is a God of love, and cares so very much for you. Trust that He loves you, no matter what may be happening to you.

The prophet Habakkuk included a wonderful word of praise in his book, a promise he wrote in prayer. He wanted to praise God even if his crops didn't grow well, and he didn't have any farm animals left, and if the food he was depending on for his family wasn't available.



Deuteronomy 12:18

And thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God in all that thou putteth thine hands unto.

We are used to the idea of just going to the shop or market to get our food.—But for them back then, if their crops didn't grow, that would be the same as us saying, today "I'll praise God even if the market was all empty, and nothing was left in the shops when I needed to get food to eat."

Can we be that filled with faith in the Lord, that even when things we need the most aren't there, that we'll still trust that Him to take care of us and to work good or even better things out for us? That's positive thinking!

When you're thinking positive thoughts you're thinking that things will work out, even if it looks difficult. Jesus can help us to do this!

Character Construction Crew Stories

(Imaginary story)

Be Glad

It was a beautiful day outside, when Sammy Smileshine woke to embrace the new day. Little did he know that just because the sun shines, it doesn't make everything happen perfectly, like magic.

When he rose to dress he noticed that the clothes he was planning on wearing had a large tear in them.

“Oh, well, I'll have to find something else,” he said, though somewhat puzzled about what to do. He was determined to not let his joy on this new day be shooed away so quickly, by such a small thing as a rip.

“It’s normal, and bound to happen at some point or another,” he encouraged himself. “Clothes aren’t made to mend themselves overnight either.”

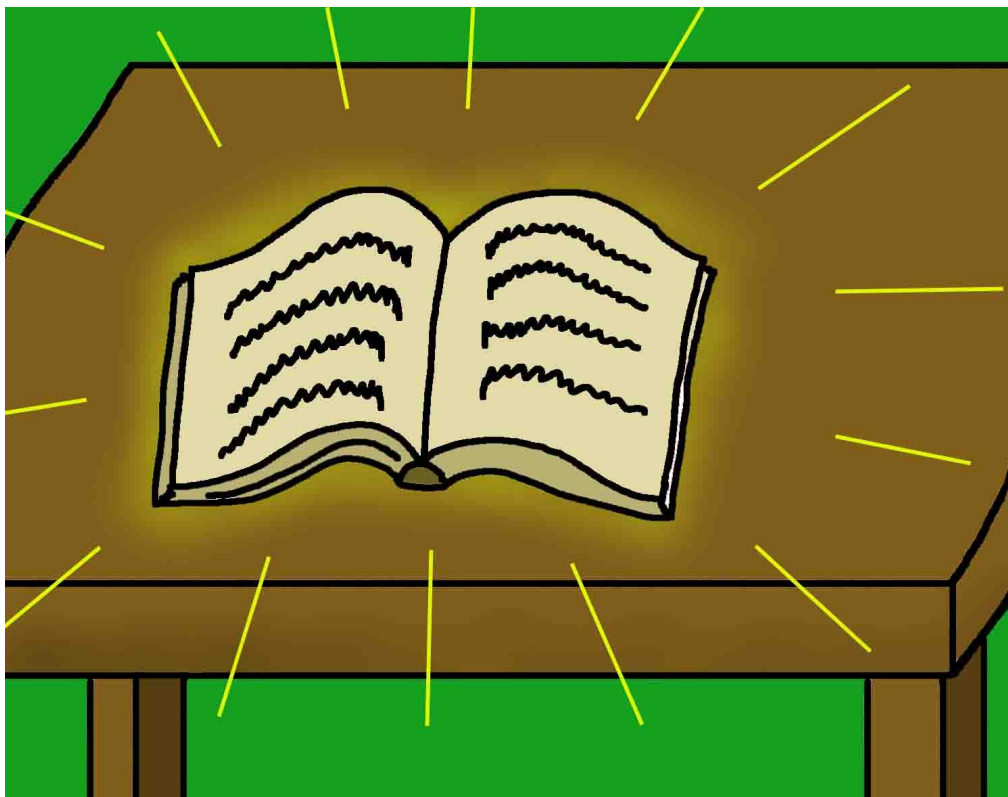
He whistled a merry tune as he found something else to wear, that though not his favourite, would be suitable for the day.

As he sat down to eat his breakfast and open his Bible his eyes fell on the verse that says, “O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.” (Psalms 90:14)

Sammy Smilesine thought about each part of the verse:

“‘Early,’ that must mean now, first thing in the morning.





Proverbs 17:22

A merry heart doeth good like a medicine.

Isaiah 61:10

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God.

“‘Mercy,’ that means I need the Lord’s help and love, so I need to talk with Him about my day.

“‘Rejoice,’ that means to not just be happy, but to be very glad and excited about the wonderful things He can and will do for me!

“‘All our days,’ that means today, and every day! Not just birthdays or special times, and in any kind of weather or health condition.

“‘All’ doesn’t leave any days out. So if I’m to be very happy, today, I need to have some good prayer time to start with,” Sammy Smilesine concluded, and did just that.

“This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it!” he said aloud, as he stood and stretched his arms up into a praise.

(Psalms 118:24)

Just then there was a knock on the door. It was the postman bringing a package. Excitedly Sammy Smilesine took it, but then noticed that it was for his neighbour.

“I think there’s been a mistake on the address,” he said to the postman, who then took the package to the right door.

Sammy Smilesine started to feel a little sad. It had been a fun thought that a gift had unexpectedly come for him! Here was his chance to choose to either “rejoice and be glad,” or to feel down.

While washing his dish he began thinking, “Why is it that the neighbour is often getting packages? I can’t remember the last time I got one. Maybe people have forgotten about me...” His thoughts started going the wrong way.

Then he remembered his ripped clothes, and then he started thinking about the day before, and all the difficulties he had in his work – machines that didn't work right, people that talked unkindly to him, stubbing his toe, and being told that the weekend party had been cancelled.

Things started to get too much for him. It was like he'd opened a bag by letting in that one negative and discouraging thought, and now he was letting it get all filled up with anything sad he could think of.



Was he planning on carrying this heavy, sad bag around all day, and perhaps even adding more to it as he went along?



As he got into his truck and drove off to the work site, a frown was on his face, and his prayer time and verse long forgotten.

As the morning went along, those who talked with him usually went away also frowning. Everything he said just came out wrong, because he'd let unpleasant, sad, and undesirable events settle in his heart.

At lunch break he sat alone on a bench. No one wanted to be too near him today. His smile was lost somewhere in the kitchen back at home, it seemed.

“Wait a minute!” he said to himself, “I’m doing just what I chose not to do today! I wanted to rejoice and have the best day yet, but here I am moping and complaining, when nothing is actually going wrong. –I still can see and hear and walk. I’m not

hurt. I have food and a place to live. I have friends. I have clothes. I have work to do. And most of all I have a God Who is so powerful that He can help me in any situation!”

Sammy Smilesine realised that even if he prayed for a good day, it was still his choice to focus on the good things. And there were so many more than he even had time to think of right then at his lunch break!

“I’m going to do something to get me thinking about the good today. Every time something doesn’t go just the way I wish it would, or I start feeling sad, I will stop and think of ten other things that I can be glad about. There’s much more that is right than wrong, I think.”

He got the first chance to put his plan into practice, as soon as he walked back to begin driving the

paver for his afternoon work job. Sammy Smilesine didn't see where he was stepping, and he placed his foot right into a puddle of gooey black something or other.

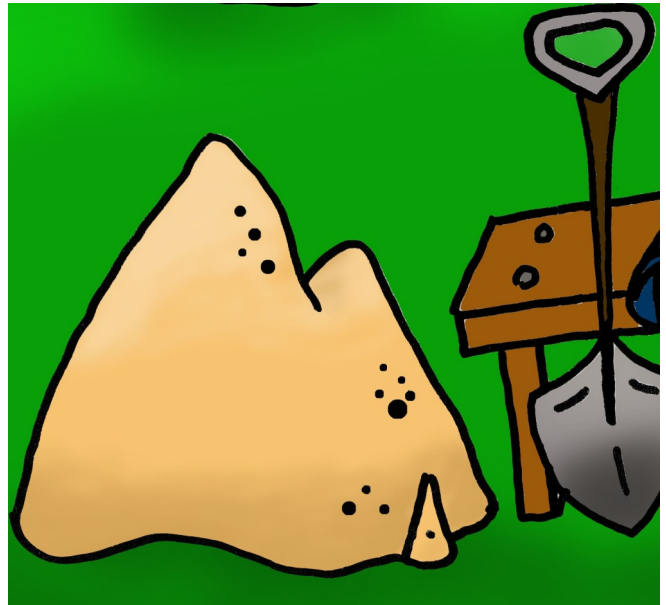
An ugly word was about to leave his lips when he caught himself. "Ten things, remember, ten things!" he told himself quickly, as he forced a smile to his face.

Sammy Smilesine scraped his foot off in the nearby sandy ground, and counted in his mind,

"One: I can walk.

Two: I didn't get hurt.

Three: These aren't the only shoes I have.





Philippians 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Four: I learned to be more careful, and that might save me from something worse later on.

Five: I don't have to do this whole job alone, but have a team to work with. ..." and on he went.

By the time he'd reached ten, his smile was no longer forced, and he was even starting to laugh, thinking he had it pretty good, and was going to have a great afternoon.

It was good that he had decided to play the "Count Ten Things" game, as there were several other difficult moments throughout the rest of the day.

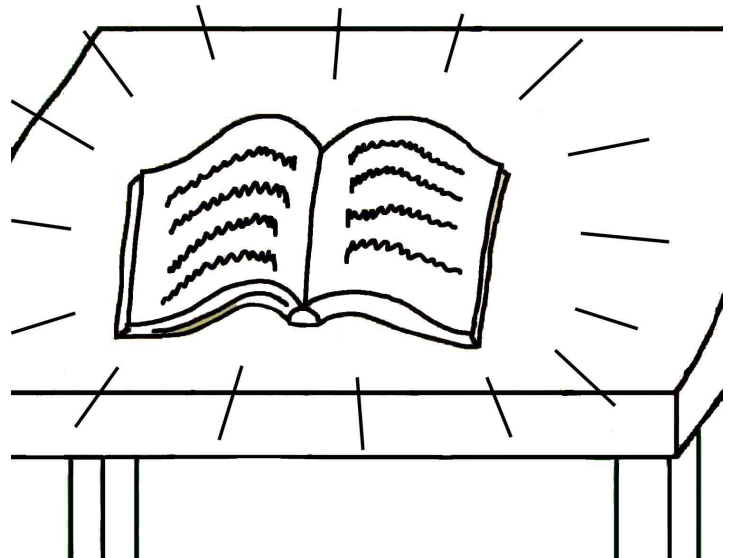
If he hadn't been choosing to look on the bright side, it would have made the day seem too hard. But, as he looked on the good, thought of the good and pushed away the "poor me's" and feelings of discouragement, he had new joy and strength—

even more than he had even before something tough happened.

When things were going well, he didn't always remember to thank the Lord for it. It would be odd if as soon as things went wrong he always remembered to complain about them.

So when he took time to stop and praise the Lord for all that was still going well, even if one or two things weren't, it gave him a great boost of renewed energy and vigour.

That evening as Sammy Smilesine sat down at the kitchen table to enjoy a warm meal, he noticed his Bible was



still open to the verse he'd found that morning. He read it over again, and then played his counting game one last time that day.

This time he thanked the Lord for all the ways He had answered his prayers, and made it a wonderful day—maybe not a perfect day, but good in so many ways!

John 15:10

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

(Imaginary story)

Notice the Good

Larry Laughinglad looked down at the cast on his leg and foot. It had all sorts of notes and pictures drawn on it from friends and relatives. “Be happy!” was written beside a funny looking smiley face. It was written by his cousin Anton.

Larry Laughinglad smiled, not only because the picture was funny, but because it came from someone who was great at being positive and upbeat no matter what. His cousin was crippled, and stayed in a wheelchair most of the day, but still managed to see the good in nearly everything.

Larry Laughinglad wished he didn't have this cast on. His leg hurt a bit still, and it was very difficult to get around. The skiing trip a few weeks before had

been fun. Well, fun until his accident. It could have been worse, but he was glad that it wasn't.

Still, Larry Laughinglad couldn't say he was glad it happened. He hadn't been to work in quite awhile, as he needed time to heal.

The phone rang, and it was Tom Truckalong, his friend from work. "Wanna have some company at your place for dinner? You won't have to worry about a thing! I and some others will bring dinner, and we can play some board games and chat. Sound good?"

1 Timothy 6:6-8

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

Larry Laughinglad thought it was a great idea! Friends coming and food being prepared for him was a relaxing and happy thought.

“Just one thing more,” Tom Truckalong added, “There is to be a rule for the dinner.”

“A rule?” Larry Laughinglad questioned.

“Yes,” explained Tom Truckalong. “No one is to say anything sad or negative or discouraging, or to complain in any way during the evening. We all must stay upbeat. That will be the ticket to coming to the dinner and game time. Do you agree? Would that help make it a great time?”

“Uh, yes. Okay, let’s try that,” Larry Laughinglad said. “Perhaps I can prepare a special game also, to do with that theme of the night, along with a few jokes?”



Psalm 89:15

**Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound:
they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy
countenance.**

“Sounds great!” Tom Truckalong replied. “Okay, we’ll see you at 7:00 PM.”

Larry Laughinglad was feeling cheered up, and was going to start getting things prepared. However, nearly each time he thought of something he wanted to get or do, something held him back—his foot! He couldn’t just get up and dash here and there. Every step took a struggle!

“Well,” he thought to himself, “If I’m going to have a fun evening, and play the ‘gladness rule’ I’d better start practising now! If I’m grumbling about all I can’t do, and what is hurting, and how difficult things are, I’ll most likely still be reacting that way when my friends visit too.”

So every time something was hard for him, he chose to instead start singing a song, or whistling a tune. It started to become fun!

Larry Laughinglad would think of a new song each time he needed a boost or a cheerful thought.

Before too long he had made a great game to play during the evening and other preparations as well. He felt ready for the guests to arrive. He dressed in something nice—even that helped to make him feel better.

“Now, to think up and collect some jokes...” He started to look through a little bookshelf and pulled out a book called,



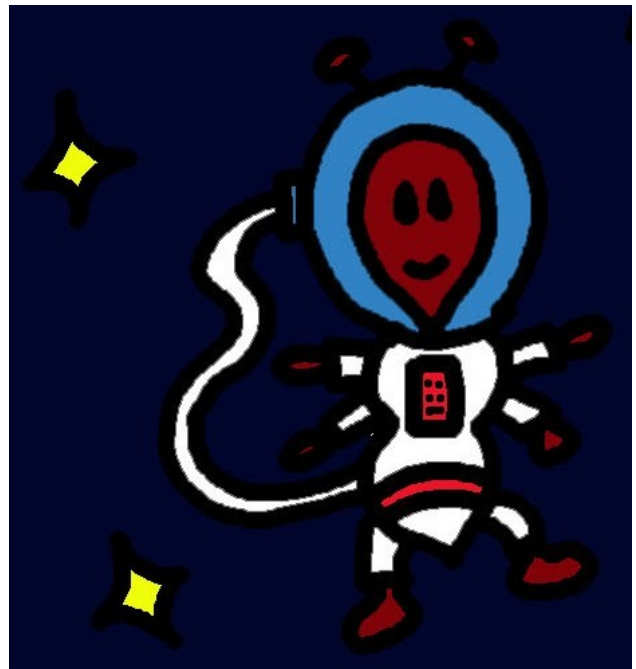
“Jolly Jester Jokes.” He smiled. The book was given to him by his brother when he was younger. Larry Laughinglad had held onto it all these years.

He looked through the pages and chose a few jokes:

“What do you say when you are sick on your 16th birthday? —‘I’m sick-teen!’”

“What is a flying ant called, that won the contest for highest flight? — Antronaut!”

“What does a grumpy antelope need to get better? —Anti-mope.”



They were simple jokes, but might help to set the mood: light-hearted and cheerful.

Later when the guests arrived, at first they thought they'd come to the wrong place, or that he had gone to sleep, as it was completely dark inside.

It seemed, however, that someone had left the door open for them. Just when they were about to leave, all of a sudden the light turned on.

“Surprise!” Larry Laughinglad called out.

They were so surprised—both by the sudden light

John 16:33

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

and also by the beautifully decorated dining area. There were balloons and a nice table cloth, a pile of games to choose from, and fancy plates and glasses set on the table.

“Wow!” said Tom Truckalong. “You did all this? Thanks!”

Larry Laughinglad smiled. “Come in and sit down!” he said, welcoming them all.

After setting the food they’d brought onto the table and sitting down together, they offered a prayer for their meal and their evening. Larry Laughinglad then began with a question. “What is the first thing you noticed when you came into my house?”

After a moment of thinking, several piped up with comments like, “It was dark,” or “No lights were on.”

Larry Laughinglad's game had begun, and he commented: "Isn't it interesting that we appreciate light the most when we are in darkness? If the light had been on, do you think you would have stopped to think, 'Wow, how great! We have light!'?"

Most of the guests shook their heads.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

“So this is the game we are going to play throughout the evening, no matter what else we are doing or what other games we are playing: To appreciate out loud what is still there, rather than only the few things that are gone, or are missing.

“You will notice that some things aren’t around, which I’ve purposely done to help us to practise the habit of looking for the good that is still there. We take so many things for granted and often only pause to comment on the things that are gone, right?”

Everyone agreed that this was most often the case. Larry Laughinglad continued,

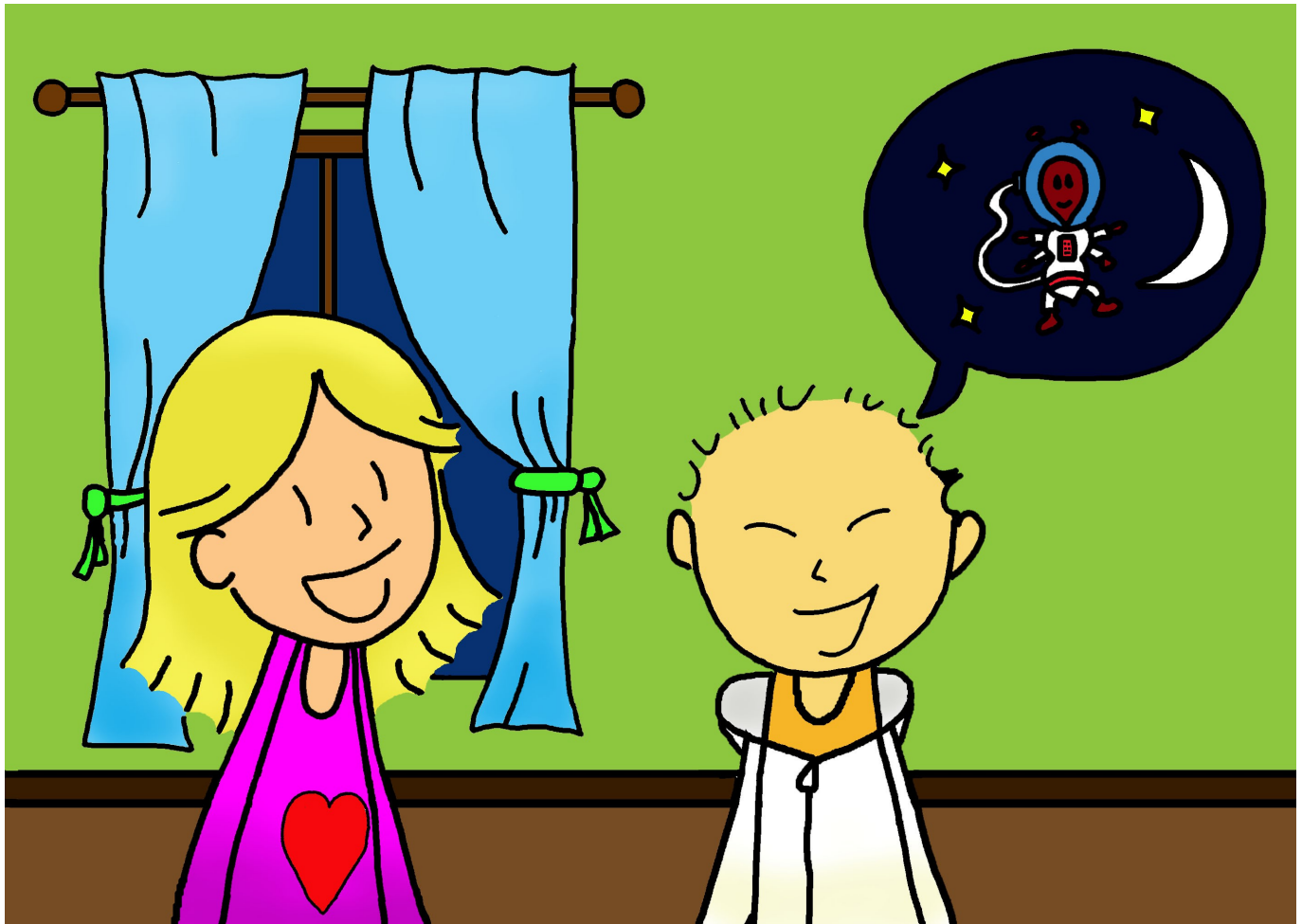


“Let’s see how many comments this evening can be of gratitude for the things that aren’t gone, and how many comments will be just about what we don’t have. Okay?”

People were wondering what was gone or had been hidden away, and with smiles began their meal. It wasn’t long, however, before Tom Truckalong noticed he was the only one that didn’t have the special glass that everyone else had.

Tom Truckalong was about to say something, but caught himself, and instead said, “I wanted to say thanks for setting the table so nicely, and for making sure nearly all the guests had a glass to drink from.”

Larry Laughinglad smiled and said, “You win a point, Tom! You saw what was gone, but stopped to



Proverbs 15:13

A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance:
but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

realise the good and comment on that first. Here is your glass! I was saving it here for you.”

During the meal Larry Laughinglad shared his jokes, and others added some too. They were all laughing and having a great time.

One of the guests got up to use the bathroom and noticed a sign on the sink that said “Out of order.” No water was coming out of the tap. What was he to do?

“Hmm,” he thought. “Is this part of the ‘Notice the Good’ game?”

“Well, I can be glad that there is any water in the house at all, good clean water. This isn’t the only place to find it. Imagine if I had to walk all the way to a far away well, or to pump water a mile or two

away, that might not be so easy. One sink needing repair isn't a big deal or worth complaining about," the guest told himself.

A new thought suddenly came to him. "Why didn't I think of it? I can just use the bath tap. It's right here, and although not what I'm used to or would prefer, it is clean water too!

"When I was only thinking about what I wanted or missed, it was hard to find a solution. But when I stopped to notice the good, and appreciate what I

Hebrews 12:2

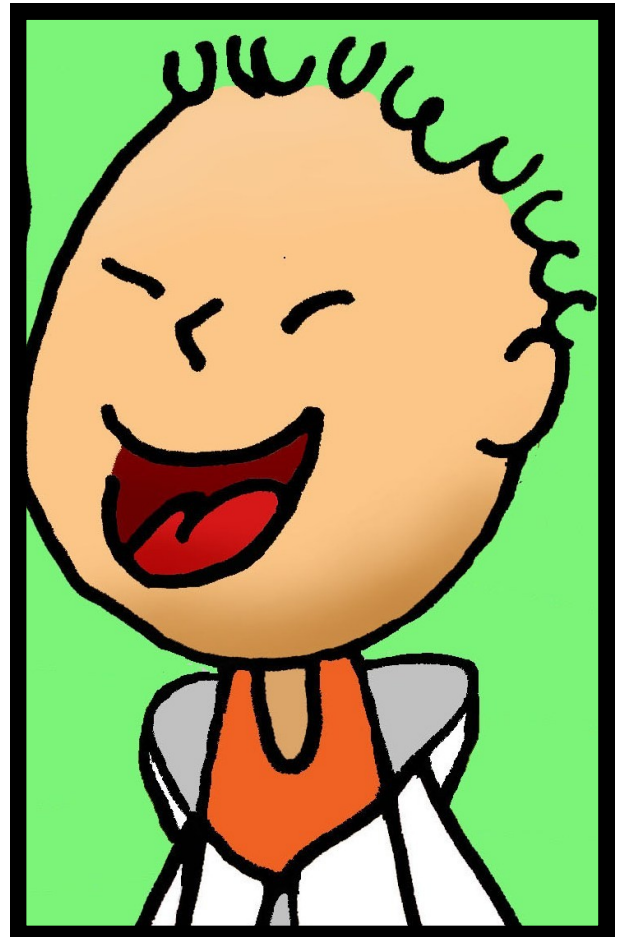
Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

do have, then it made things easier and a solution was found!”

When he returned to the sitting area, Larry Laughinglad knew what the guest had just discovered. Because he returned with a smile, rather than a face showing complaint, Larry Laughinglad said,

“A point goes to Mr. Bell, who found the next missing thing, but chose to be glad anyway!”

Several other things were noticed as the evening continued, but all had



done well to think the good, and notice the good, not just mentioning things that weren't quite right.

As a result of each one's attitudes, everyone had an especially great time. Not only did they try to play the game when things were gone or missing or not as they would have liked, but even as they played their board games.

The team of friends maintained a cheerful attitude and said positive words when others were winning games and doing better than they were. Everyone one tried to compliment and encourage each other.

It was time for everyone to go home, and Larry Laughinglad said goodbye, and thanked Tom for organizing the evening and bringing the dinner.

"And just think, if it wasn't for this," Larry Laughinglad said, pointing to the cast on his leg,

“we might not have had this fun evening! There is always something good in every situation, when we look for it. But usually the good is so clearly in front of us, that we tend to get used to it and miss noticing and mentioning it!”

“Yes,” agreed Tom Truckalong. “Thanks for helping us to remember that. I think we’ll all have a great day tomorrow at the worksite—even though we’ll miss you. We’ll just look for the good as we work, and it will make things go so much better!”

John 15:11

**These things have I spoken unto you,
that my joy might remain in you, and that your
joy might be full.**

A Prayer

Dear Jesus,

You tell us in the Bible to think on the things that are of “good report” and “lovely” and “pure.” Not everything around me is always good and great. I have a hard time enjoying some things that I often seem to be faced with.

Sometimes people are unkind to me, and it takes away my smile for awhile. Sometimes a favourite item is lost or broken, or is no longer around, and it’s bothersome. I get hurt or feel sick in some way, and there are lots of things that I can’t do that I wish I could.

I know that everyone on Earth faces things that aren’t their favourite, or even some things that

are very sad or difficult. There are some people who seem to be happy and are encouraging to others, and kind-hearted no matter what is happening around them, or what they experience.

I wish I could be like that, Jesus, but sometimes it just seems too hard to smile all the time.

I know I don't need to be laughing always, every second, as part of life is to experience all sorts of emotions and situations. That's just the way it is on Earth. But maybe there is one thing I can do, and that's what I'd like You to help me with.

When there is something that is hard for me, I want to learn to form the habit of finding

something good in it—even if there is only a tiny little part of it that isn't bad.

I want to be someone who looks for the good and thinks about the best, rather than mostly noticing the things that aren't good. If I can form that habit, then I think it will help me to not get so down about things.

It's hard enough going through rough experiences, or being hurt by someone, or going without something that I need. I don't need to add to the trouble by letting myself think only about the difficulties and sad things.

If I were to make it a game to look for the good in everything—and I mean everything!—I think I would have a much happier and easier time.



Things wouldn't get to me as much, and I might even be able to smile too, in spite of hardships.

I can't do this on my own, Jesus. Please help me to listen to Your ideas, of what You'd like to whisper to me in those times when I need to see and think and focus on the good.

It might help me get along better with many others who I might normally have a hard time being around.

If I can notice the good things about people, and not concentrate on the things that I don't like or the things that that aren't good, I think I might be able to show more of Your love, Jesus, to others by being a better friend and help.

When Mummy was Growing Up...

(True story)

Ferris Wheels and Flying

I really liked going for rides on the Ferris wheel at fair grounds. It was pretty rare that we went on them, but I loved the sensation of being so high up and seeing all around on the ground below.

Maybe one reason was because it almost seemed like I left all my troubles and little bothers behind, down on the ground, and I got to have a great view of more than just my little self and the things that were right in front of me. It gave me this kind of thrill, like I was flying.

Photo by: Chariane Quille



Philippians 4:4
Rejoice in the Lord always:
and again I say, Rejoice.

We can't always go up high like that, just to feel better, and it only happened a few times in my life. But it's a good example of what we can do in our hearts and minds when we start to get too down and focused only on what's happening around us.

Things may be difficult and not to our liking, or something may be going wrong, but if we remember to look past it or beyond it, and try to get a new perspective on the situation—more from the Lord's way of seeing things, from His high and good view of all that's going on down on Earth—it might help us to be happier.

The first time I remember going on an aeroplane was when I was seven years old. I had gone on one when I was younger, but I didn't remember, as I was just one year old then.



So the flight when I was older was very memorable. I looked out the window at one point in the journey and said to my mummy, “Look! We are at the beach!”

It looked like there was sand everywhere, fluffy sand. She told me that it was actually the clouds, and we were above them.

I hadn't even thought of that, as I'd never seen clouds anywhere but above me—never below! I was seeing them with a totally new perspective.

The sun was shining for us up there, but for the people way down below, on the ground, it was a cloudy day.

So if things aren't just what you wish they were, or something very difficult, bothersome or sad has happened, try to think of something different, something positive, or imagine what things might be like for someone else right at that moment.

Maybe things are harder for someone else. Maybe there's something to be glad about that you haven't thought of appreciating in a while.

(True story)

A Comet and an Eclipse

When I was 11 years old I got to see a comet. It was announced that when it came it would be very big and bright with a very long tail.

However, that didn't happen. In fact, to see it well at all we had to use binoculars. Even then it was nothing more than a fuzzy looking star. But at least I got to see one! Some people didn't get to, so I'm glad I got the chance, as they aren't so common, and are special to see.

There's always something good in any situation! Yes, there is often something a bit bad too, in most situations. It all depends on how you look at it. Maybe it's like watching an eclipse.

Photo by: Jon Berg



Job 41:22b

Sorrow is turned into joy before him.

I saw a solar eclipse once, and we had something special to look through that made the sun not too bright for our eyes.

There was a shadow that slowly covered the sun and then it passed, and things were all bright again.

What if the shadow didn't pass, but had stayed on the sun, keeping it rather dark?

When we focus on what we don't like and what is hard for us, it's like a shadow passing over our sunny and joyful heart, and lingering there.

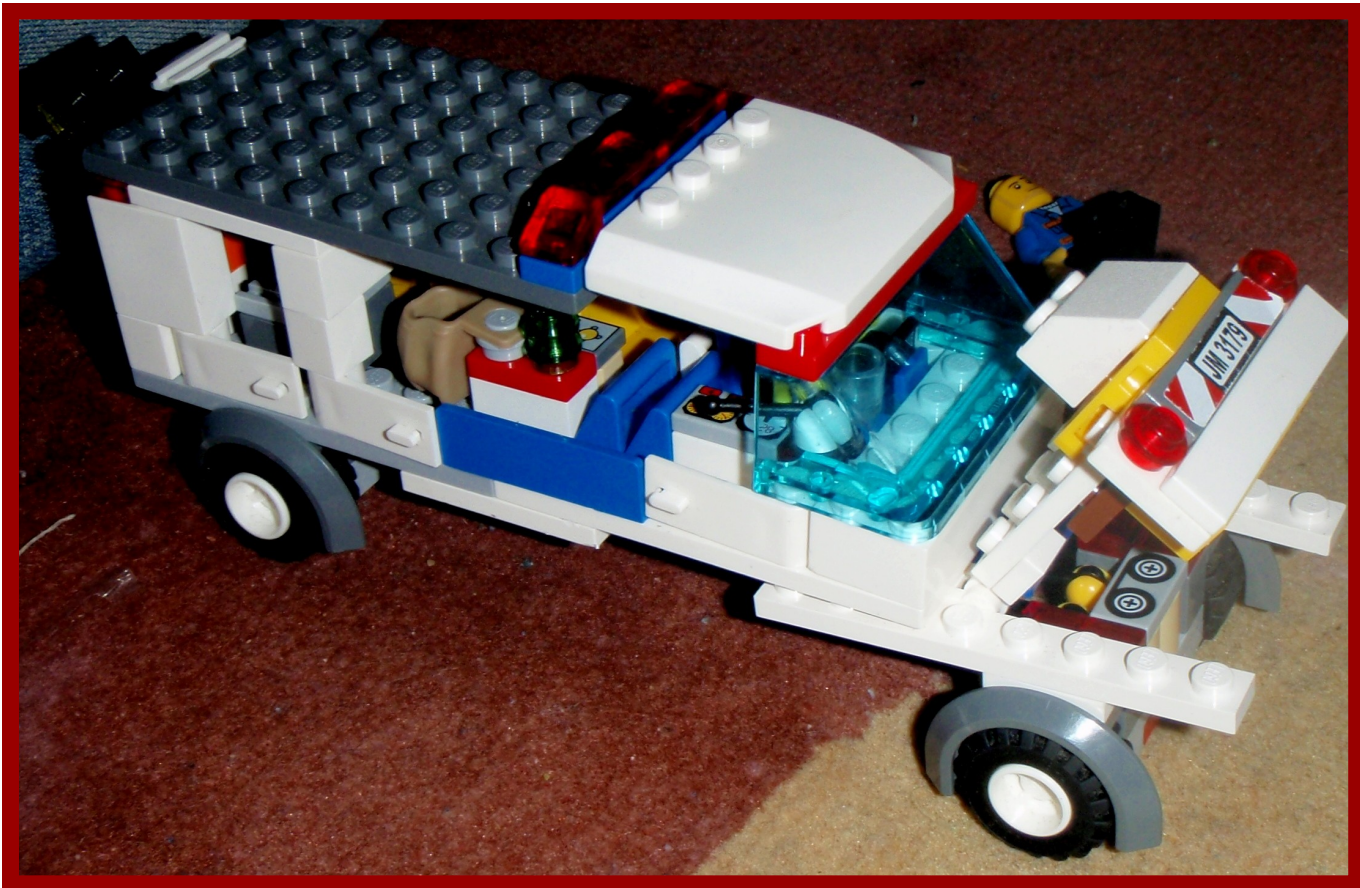
However, if we "look on the bright side" and don't keep thinking about the sad or bad, then the shadow of disappointment or sadness passes by, and we are happy again.

Here's a game to try if something unpleasant happens, and you are having a hard time seeing any good in the situation. It's called the "At Least" game. It's played as soon as something happens that's difficult.

What you do is to quickly say out loud something you are glad didn't happen, or something worse that could have occurred, but it didn't!

For example, your Lego vehicle falls and breaks up, after you spent a lot of time putting it together. Maybe you could say,

"At least Lego is made to be put back together again, and it doesn't mean I have to now throw it away. At least we have Lego at all! I'm glad that I am not blind, so I can easily find the pieces and build it again!"



Psalm 5:11

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

From Jesus to Us

Imagine if ice wasn't cold—there wouldn't be anything to keep your food preserved in your freezer. If there wasn't such a thing as very cold water, snow and ice, well, things might be warmer and nicer in some too-cold places, but there are other things that wouldn't be so great, right?

There would be no ice-cream, no snowmen and snowballs, no ice-skating, no “save it for another day” perishable foods and no extra refreshing water on a very hot day.

Nearly everything that is difficult has something good about it too, that you can try to notice or discover and think about.

People are that way too.



There's no person on Earth that is totally and perfectly wonderful in every way and does everything right all the time. No one does just what you want them to all the time in every situation, and never gets sick or unable to do what you need

them to do. There aren't any people on Earth who never make mistakes, and who are right 100% of the time.

If there is someone who is making things very hard for you or who has hurt you in some way, or has taken something of yours, or accidentally broke something special of yours, or has done things that aren't to your liking, try to look for the good in them.

Maybe not everything is good and perfect, but it won't help you to be any happier if you fill your mind with only the things about them that you don't like.

It might be hard, and it might take some positive thinking and praying to be able to see past those "rocks" in the way. But if you can move those away

from your mind, you might see something that gives you a new appreciation for them.

Did someone take a certain item of yours without asking, and then lose it, so they were then unable to return it? Ouch! That can really hurt, and be pretty difficult to forgive and to see past.

However, think for a moment. Have they done just that, constantly, again and again? Most likely not.

Are they usually the first one to jump in and help when a job needs to be done? Or do they have a nice voice, and enjoy singing?



Photo by: Jon Berg

Or perhaps they don't have a brother or sister or a close friend like you do, and are lonely, and instead of your item that they borrowed, they would have gladly had you to talk with and laugh together with.

Everyone has something good in them, and good things that they try to do, or that they did do before.

Maybe there are things that are making it nearly impossible for them, at the present time, to act their best.

Maybe they are having difficulties that you don't know about, and things are easier for you



Photo by: Naomi

in some ways. Maybe it's time for you to jump in and be the first person today to help them smile. It could change their life or yours too, if they start to be a friend to you instead.

However, it's hard to speak kindly to or smile at someone, unless in your heart and mind you are trying to see the good, notice the best, find the good qualities, and imagine what great things they can and will do if you give them encouragement.

Your positive reactions, actions and words to others will begin by your having positive thoughts about them, first of all.

***What you think will affect more than just your life,
but each and everyone you come in contact with.***

Guard your mind.

Look for the good and focus on it.



**“Keep your eye on the doughnut
and not on the hole.”**

Discussion Questions

“Keep your eye on the doughnut and not on the hole.”

*What does that mean?

*Have you ever had a time when you had something special planned for days, and then it seemed like it wasn't going to work out, but at the last minute it all worked out even better than you had planned? Maybe you were supposed to meet a special friend and at the last minute you weren't able to, but then something else that was even more fun happened?

*Try to remember and talk about a time when things worked out well anyway when an unexpected change came. Do things usually work out, even when changes or unexpected events happen?

*What types of things are particularly hard for you to “be happy anyway” and think positively about?

*Are there any “games” you can play when things are going rough? There’s the “At Least” game that the story talked about. There’s the “Glad” game of looking for the good in everything. Some people play the “Ridiculous” game, and when something is not going well they imagine some far-out, crazy things that it could be like, and they are glad it’s actually not like that!

(For example, if a drink spilled and the cup broke and you are sad about it, and not looking forward to the clean up, well, imagine if that happened in a space station without gravity! Instead of being able to wipe things up, and sweep up the pieces, they would all be floating around the room, and you’d be chasing them around! Aren’t you glad it’s so easy, and not like that?)

*What games can you play to laugh away the sad or negative thoughts and feelings?

Ideas of When to Apply

When are some good times to practice having a positive attitude?

- *Your mum forgot to make the meal you asked for.
- *Your friend wasn't able to meet you at the park as was planned.
- *The clothes you needed to wear today had fallen behind the laundry basket and didn't get washed.
- *The weather changed and you were unable to go on the outing you had planned.
- *Someone else can do something better than you can, and others are saying how great they are, even though you tried very hard to do well.
- *Something that was special to you broke.
- *You are sick and end up missing out on something you've been looking forward to for a long time.

Can you think of some other examples?