



*Children's
Beautiful
Bible
Treasures*



BOOK III
- 101-150 -



Children's Beautiful Bible Treasures

--By CQ

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Choosing the 12

Jesus spent a night in prayer on a mountain. He needed to choose 12 special men who would be His close team of co-workers, travel companions and all-the-way followers and disciples. Jesus asked His Father in Heaven to help Him make the right choices and to select the men

that would be best for the job. There were many who wanted to follow where Jesus went, some of the time, but Jesus needed those who would be willing to follow Him fulltime. They would need to leave their homes and relatives, their jobs and all their possessions.

They would need to have their mission of learning from Jesus, and helping Him to tell others about God's Kingdom as their new job, and Jesus and their fellow disciples would be as their new family during this time. Who should be on the close team of stay-with-Jesus followers? Through His time of prayer that night, God His Father showed Him which of the many followers should be chosen to be on His special team of twelve.

When Jesus descended the mountain He selected His team:

Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Thomas, Matthew, James (the son of Alphaeus), Thaddeus, Simon, Judas, Nathaniel (also called Bartholomew).

There was nothing extra special about these men in the physical. They all had sins, problems, and human weakness. They made all kinds of mistakes. Yet, Jesus loved and forgave them anyway, and gave them a chance at a new life with Him. These men made the right choice to follow Jesus and stick with Him, even when things were difficult or when others were making things hard for them.

They loved Jesus, and loved hearing His words most of all. Jesus' words filled them with faith and joy. Later on, some of these men and a few others, wrote down many of the things Jesus said, so we can all learn from His words as we read them in the Bible. We who love Jesus and want to follow Him too, can pray and take time to listen to Him, and He can speak His Words to our hearts.

These disciples got to see many wonderful miracles, and were involved in helping others with God's power, too. They knew that Jesus was the one God had sent to Earth to bring salvation. Simon Peter said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."



Life and Living Water

One night, a Pharisee named Nicodemus came to talk with Jesus. He had many questions that Jesus helped to answer. Jesus explained that receiving His gift of salvation is like starting a new life. Just like a baby is starting their life on Earth when they are born, so it is when people receive Jesus into their life and are forgiven and are filled with God’s Holy Spirit—it’s like the start of a new life. They are then God’s child and start to learn new things.

Just like a baby learns to walk and talk, people who receive God’s gift of love can then learn how to do things in new ways—new, Godly, loving ways. As they learn from God’s Word what to do and how to be, it’s like a child learning and studying things. And just as a child needs exercise, those who are the children of God can exercise their faith through prayer and trusting in His loving care.

Just like a child needs good food to grow, so do those who are born again into a new life as God’s child need spiritual nourishment through reading God’s Word, and listening to Jesus.

Jesus talked with many different types of people. One day He spoke to a woman who had gone to draw water from the village well. Jesus and His disciples had to travel through the land of Samaria and were hungry and thirsty. The disciples went to the village to buy food while Jesus sat and rested by the well. A woman then came to get water from the well, and Jesus asked her for some water.

At first she was surprised that He was talking with her, but it surprised her even more when she heard what Jesus had to say. Jesus told her about the “living water” of Heaven, that He could give her. He also knew things about her personal life that no one had told Him. How did He know? She realised from the things Jesus was saying, that He was the Messiah. She knew something was special and different about Him, and didn’t want to wait a second more to tell others about Him.

The woman ran so fast to the village —leaving her water pot beside the well, so she could go as fast as possible. She went to tell everyone that she met the Messiah, and He was right there that day!

People saw how enthusiastic she was, and came quickly to meet Jesus. They were so eager to hear what He had to say. The people of the village begged Jesus to stay with them for awhile. Jesus, with His disciples, stayed there for two days, talking with them and bringing them God’s message of love and His words of truth from Heaven.



Comforting and Restoring

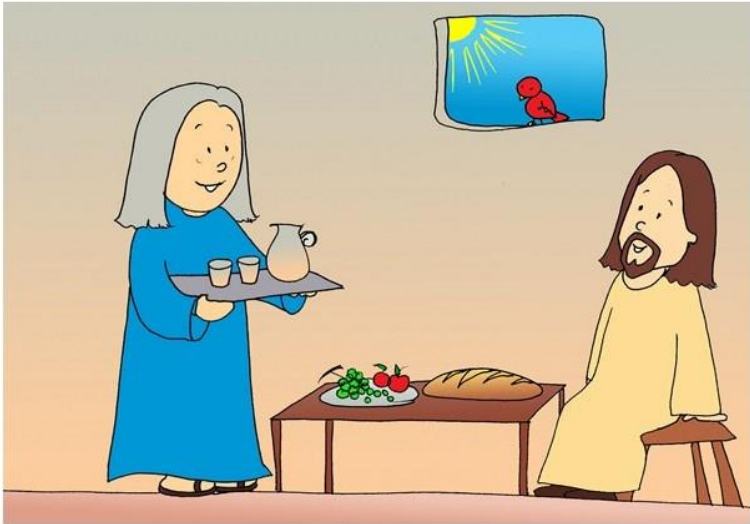
There was a certain nobleman who's son became very ill. Desperately he began travelling and looking all over to find Jesus. When the nobleman found Jesus he told Him about his son and asked Him to please heal his son.

Jesus agreed to, and then told the nobleman to go home because his son was now healed. Did this father believe that without Jesus actually visiting his house He could heal his son? Yes! He chose to believe, and begin his trip home again. It took about a day or two to make it home.

The next day in his travels the nobleman was met by some of his servants who joyfully told him the wonderful news, how the day before—the same time when this man was talking with Jesus—that at that very hour his son began to recover. Everyone was happily surprised at how fast the boy had been healed. It happened the second that the father had believed what Jesus said and started on his walk home.

Another time some rulers came to Jesus with a message. There was an important Roman man who had been kind to the people, and his servant was very sick. He wanted Jesus to heal his servant. The Roman Centurion believed that Jesus could do the miracle and just say it, and the servant would be healed. He knew Jesus' healing power was strong to help and heal, no matter where He was. He knew Jesus didn't need to be in his house or be right there beside his servant. Jesus could heal anybody, anywhere, anytime! He just needed to ask Jesus to help, and it would happen the moment Jesus said so.

This Centurion had a lot of faith, and Jesus was so glad to hear of someone with such great faith. Jesus told those around how pleased he was to hear of the faith of someone like that. Then Jesus gave the word, and the Centurion's servant was healed.



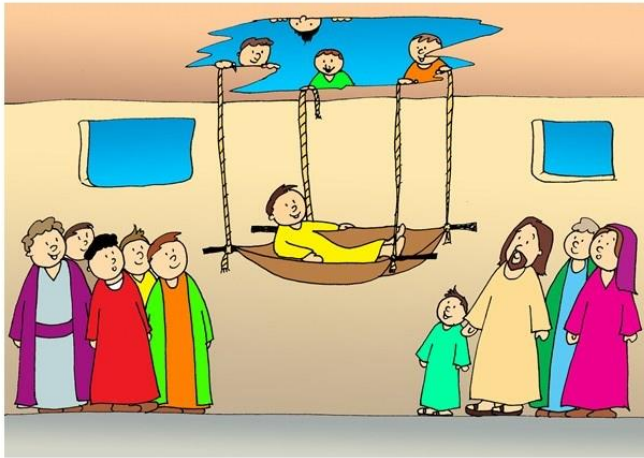
Fever Cured Immediately

There was one woman that what so sick and was nearly going to miss something that she enjoyed—getting to talk with and serve Jesus when He visited her house. This woman was the mother-in-law of Simon Peter, and Jesus and His disciples came for a visit.

She was sick with a fever when they arrived at the house. She felt so hot and couldn't do anything but lie in bed feeling very unwell. When this woman saw us there in her house it was very difficult for her as she couldn't even get up. She would miss out on talking with them, and enjoying the visit.

When Jesus saw her sick with the fever and felt how hot her head was, he touched and healed her. Immediately she got up and felt so strong and energetic she was able to right away start preparing food for her guests. She wanted them to feel welcome and to enjoy their visit. Serving her guests was what she was happy doing.

Wherever Jesus was, news was spread around and many people would come to find Him. The needs of the people were many. By sunset that day many people who needed healing were brought right to the door of the house they were in to be healed by Jesus. He cared about them and had compassion on them. He touched and healed each one that came to Him that evening.



Four Men and a New Idea

There was a man who couldn't walk, who couldn't get up and do things with his friends, and he needed lots of help and care. He had to lie down on a bed or blanket all day.

One day, four of this man's friends heard that Jesus was in a certain house. They knew Jesus could heal their friend, if they could find a way to get him there. So they all held a corner of the bed blanket he was resting on, picked it up and carried their friend to the house.

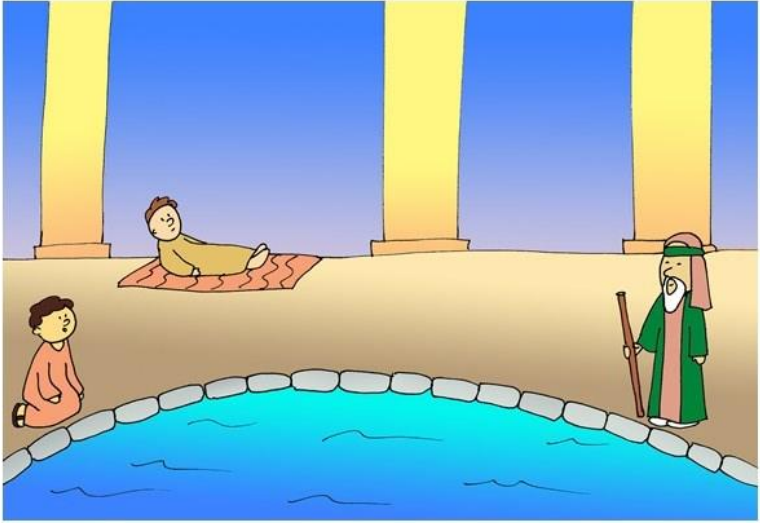
However, when they arrived they found out that there were many people crammed into that small place, all wanting to talk with and listen to Jesus as well. It seemed there was no way they could get through with their friend, to bring him to Jesus. It seemed impossible.

Then they got a new idea. They weren't going to disappoint their friend or go away saying, "We just can't." Up the stairs to the house roof they went, and then began to break away some of the tiling of the roof! Those in the house were wondering what was going on, and it was a funny sight to then see something coming down through the roof! It was a blanket with a man on it, being lowered down.

They had faith and determination. They knew Jesus could heal their friend. Jesus was glad to see their faith in action, and He told the man who was sick of the palsy that his sins were forgiven and he could be healed and get up now. Jesus told the man to get up and take up his bed and walk home! And he did! How wonderful it felt to walk! Healing felt so very good, and his friends were overjoyed to see the miracle. They were glad they had done what they could to help, and had believed in Jesus' power to heal.

There was a man who was sick with leprosy—a painful disease. Everyone kept away from him, so they wouldn't catch it as well. He very much wanted to be heal. He had heard that Jesus was visiting the area, and he had faith that Jesus could do the miracle and heal him. He searched for Jesus and begged Him for healing.

Jesus had compassion and then did what no one else could do—Jesus touched him and healed him. The healing power of Heaven cleansed and healed his sickly body, and the love and kindness that Jesus showed, gave joy to this man's heart.



Helping and Healing

There was a man sick and unable to get around for 38 years. He was so desperate for healing that he was nearly always beside a special pool, it was called Bethesda and had five porches. It was a place where people sometimes were immediately cured. God would bring people relief at times there through sending an angel of healing to them.

At a certain time, when the water was filled with God's healing power, whoever entered the water first was cured. So this man thought this was his only hope of healing. The problem was that he couldn't just jump up and be the first one, even if he wanted to, as he couldn't move around on his own.

One day, Jesus walked passed there and talked with this man. Being unable to move around and to be hurting and sick was a very difficult thing, and he'd endured it for so very long. It was time for healing and for the start of a new life.

Jesus then healed this man instantly, and he had the faith to try and stand up when Jesus said to. As the man obeyed he felt healing and strength come all over his body. It was the best feeling he'd ever had. Every part of his body changed from being sick and weak, hurting and disabled, to being invigorated and filled with life and renewal.

Another time Jesus healed a man that had a problem with his hand. This man hand couldn't use his hand as it was curled up and weak. Jesus told him to stretch out his hand, and he did. At that moment it was made completely normal, like his other hand. He was so amazed and thankful!

He could now do things like, pick up a child and swing them around playfully. He could build something out of wood much more easily. He could give a hug. He could hold the plough strongly to do farming. He could lift and help to carry big things. He could clap his hands!



Mountain Meetings

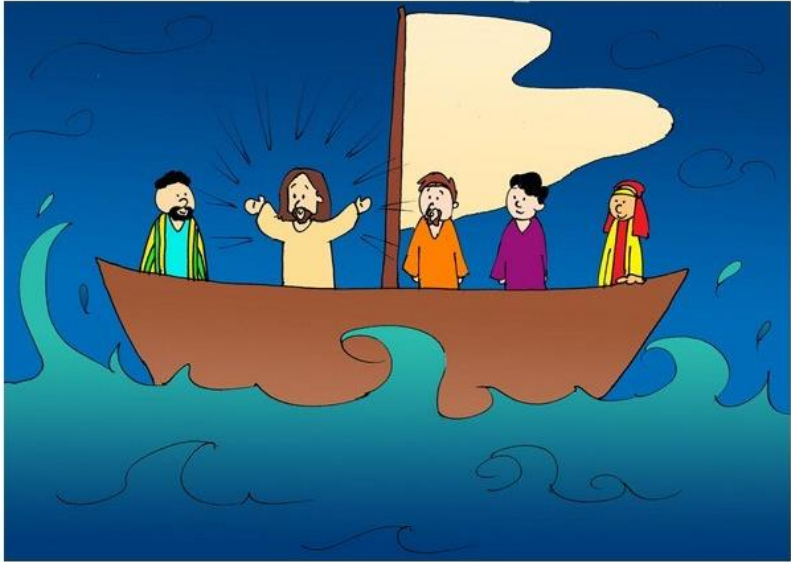
One day, after talking with and healing the many people who were gathered, Jesus and His disciples then climbed up a mountain. Not everyone followed them all the way up. It was a hearty climb for those who were able to keep up. Jesus sat down with His followers and shared some special words from Heaven.

It was in this place away from the thronging crowds and busy market places, the bustling streets and noisy towns, that Jesus was able to teach some wonderful concepts from His Heavenly Father. The words He said at that time were remembered and written down in the Bible, and have benefitted people ever since.

Jesus said that just as the birds and the flowers are provided for, so can you be as well. He knows where you are and what you need, and as you ask for help, He will give you just what He knows is right. We don't have to worry but can trust in our Heavenly Father's care and supply of our needs.

Jesus said that those who know Him are to be as lights that shine out to others the truth and beauty that He gives us. Jesus spoke of brotherhood, friendship and love. He said to behave with kindness and to show love and care--not only to those who are nice to you, but even to those who don't treat you well. It would then demonstrate God's true love that can love anyone one, no matter who they are or what they have done. This would show that you are one of God's children.

Showing kindness to those who haven't treated you well is a difficult thing that only God can help you to do, but it can also help to change people, through your example of kindness, forgiveness and loving care towards them. Jesus said that love would be rewarded, and God would see all that you did and would hear what words you chose to say.



Stilling the Storm

One night, after helping people all day, Jesus and His disciples got into a boat to cross the lake. Jesus was very tired and fell asleep as the boat sailed on in the night. Even though Jesus is the son of God, He still had a physical body while on Earth that needed rest.

However, as He was sleeping, those in the ship weren't having things so easy. There was a very boisterous storm that started up with strong wind and wild big waves. It was very unsafe for water travel. But Jesus knew they would all be fine, because His Heavenly Father was watching over them.

While He was resting, even in the midst of the storm, His disciples were having a rough time, not knowing what to do and what was going to happen next. They woke Jesus up pleading for help. Jesus knew this was just a test and problem that needed to be prayed away.

Jesus stood up and took action to rescue everyone from the danger. He rebuked the storm and prayed for peace, saying, "Peace be still!" Instantly a calm came over the water and the wind was gentle again. The storm had stopped—and very suddenly.

Jesus' disciples had never seen such an amazing thing! Jesus just talked to the wind and the waves, and the weather instantly changed and all was calm. It really amazed them and gave them proof that Jesus was God's son, and had the authority even over the waves and wind. Going through the storm and then seeing Jesus' power to save and help them, strengthened their faith.



Twelve Years

Jarius was a ruler, an important man in his city. He had only one child, a daughter that he loved very much. One day his girl became very sick. It seemed she would not live for too much longer. Jarius knew that Jesus was the only one who could help him. He was very desperate to find Jesus and for his daughter to receive healing.

When Jarius at last found Jesus and squeezed his way through the thick crowd, he begged Jesus, down on his hand and knees, to please come and heal his daughter. Jesus agreed to go, even though many others were wanting His help and attention just then too.

While Jesus was walking to Jarius' house, there was a woman that had been sick and weak for twelve years. She believed that Jesus had the power to heal her, if only she could touch Him. Even though there were many people crowding all around Jesus as He walked, she squeezed her way through until at last she could reach Him. She touched the edge of Jesus' clothes, and because she had faith, she was instantly healed! How wonderful it felt to be strong and healthy. Jesus was glad that she had faith. He smiled and spoke kindly to her.

When Jesus and Jarius had nearly reached his house some messengers came to say that it was too late—that his daughter had already passed away. They thought that Jesus could only heal her, but couldn't restore her life. But Jesus said not to worry, that it was just as if the girl was sleeping.

When Jesus stood by the girl's bedside



Power to Preach

Jesus sent his faithful followers out into the places that He was going to visit. He wanted to make sure that the people in those towns and places knew that He was coming, so they could get ready. To do that job, they needed special permission or power from God. They were going to encounter all sorts of troubles that people were suffering, mostly illness and disturbance from evil spirits.

They needed to tell the spiritual trouble makers to leave, and they needed strength and power to tell the truth and to pass on whatever God wanted them to say, wherever they went.

When Jesus' followers arrived in some town, some people chose to make a place for Jesus and His disciples to stay when they came, and others chose to help provide plenty of food for them. And most of all people chose if they wanted to hear the good news that Jesus had come to Earth to tell them.

Those places that chose not to receive Jesus and His disciples, and didn't wish to listen to the fresh words from Heaven that Jesus came to tell them, missed out on a very special event—the visit of the Son of God. They also missed receiving many miracles that could have happened there. But Jesus didn't come to punish those who didn't want Him and what His disciples came to give them, just to offer it.

Today everyone still needs choose whether or not they wish for Jesus, in His spiritual and invisible form to be with them. They have to choose to listen to Jesus whispering His Words to them. Those who receive Jesus in this way—through the Words from His speaks from Heaven, and through His faithful followers, will be ready for the coming of Jesus when He comes again to gather people to come to His Father's land.

When Jesus sent His followers out to prepare people for His coming He told them to travel light—to take nearly nothing but the Words they were to tell. They obeyed Jesus' travel instructions and left everything else behind, only taking the clothes they were wearing. When they got back from their special mission trip Jesus asked them if they had all that they needed. And they did! Whatever they needed as they told others about Jesus, was provided for them—or they simply didn't have a need for it. God had cared for them very well, and can do the same today for us as we also do whatever Jesus asks us to do. He will care for and provide for us, no matter where we are or what job He's asked us to do. All we have to do is obey, and God works out all the rest. It's a fun and exciting way to live, being a special messenger for Jesus.



Feeding Thousands

What a big and hungry team of people were sitting on the grass waiting. What were they waiting for? Some food. It had been days since most of them had anything to eat or even drink. What was so important to them that they had to leave the comforts of their homes and suffer hunger in order to get it? Healing—as most of the people had ailments of all sorts, and Jesus was the only one who had the power to give them the miraculous healing that they needed. But more than healing of body, they also were so very hungry to hear the fresh and loving words from God that Jesus was telling them. They would rather sit and listen to what Jesus came to tell them, than be in their house eating and resting and trying to make themselves comfortable, or tending to their many duties.

When the word was given that they were all to sit down on the grass, as some food was to be shared, they were very surprised, and very glad indeed. But where was the food coming from? That they didn't know. Of course there were no big delivery vans and food transporting vessels showing up. All that was available was a few loaves and fishes, and a prayer. But a prayer from Jesus to His Father is all that was needed to produce enough food for all to have more than enough.

This happened at least twice, when there were a whole lot of people—thousands! And each time, no matter how many hungry people needed a meal, Jesus supplied enough for them all. Just a bit of bread and fish shared and given to Jesus was all that was needed; plus a prayer to request a very special miracle of food multiplying, and a team that obeyed each of Jesus' instructions. So if you too are hungry for the gifts from Heaven, stay close to Jesus, listen to His Words and then do what He tells you to do in order to receive what your body also needs.



Walking on the Water

Even though Jesus was the Son of God, He didn't have wings to fly first to this place, and then to another. He had to use His body to get around, much in the same way that you do—getting around with His own two feet, but He didn't have the transportation methods and availability that you do.

If the only boat He had to go on over the sea was out in the middle of the water, Jesus had to get there somehow. He couldn't fly out to it like an angel. Well, of course angels could have picked Him up and plopped Him right on to the boat. But that wouldn't have shown as much faith as stepping out on the water and trusting His Heavenly Father to hold Him up above the wild waves, and walk upright through the fierce wind, and doing so in the darkness of the night, lighted by the angry flashes of lightning.

On the sea Jesus walked, being upheld miraculously. But that wasn't the only miracle that it took to get Him to the boat, the boat also had to be protected in the storm, and that was no easy feat. No human could keep that boat load of passengers safe, as it seemed even nature, wild nature, wanted to stop them and overturn that precious load trying to make it courageously over the water. There was nothing they could do to control the weather and the waves. Rowing the boat wasn't working, as the wind was against their best efforts. They needed help, desperately.

Even if they were trying to do what Jesus had asked them to do, to "Go by ship to the otherside," it took much loving intervention and invisible angelic help to make it possible for them to do whatever they were asked. The enemy of truth, and faith, and love, was doing all in his power to stop these faithful followers of Jesus. But He defied the lie that said there was no one who could help them now, that they were stuck in a sea of tribulation and wouldn't make it to their destination.

God's representative walked over, bringing the Spirit of God with Him, to both get Him and His team across safely, if they had faith. And so into the boat Jesus went. And that is when something amazing and special did occur. The boat that these men had been so laboriously rowing, suddenly was at the other side of the water, right at the land's edge. Imagine if you had been rowing hard for hours in the night, not resting, and it seems you'll have to keep going for hours more, and then all of a sudden your boat is at the land and you can rest a bit before the day dawns?

When you do what you can or what you should, then special miracles can occur to bless you for your God-loving efforts.



Good Ground

When a sower went out to sow, some seeds fell on stony or hard ground, other seeds fell where weeds and thorns were growing, but these wouldn't grow right, because they didn't have the soil nutrients that they needed. Only those seeds that were on the good ground would flourish and bear fruit.

What is your heart like when it hears something new from Jesus? Do you push it away as if it's not true? Or perhaps you like what Jesus tells you, but only until someone else mocks it and tries to tell you it's not true, and perhaps even punishes you for believing such a doctrine. Or are you much too busy thinking about the things of the world and the things you wish to get, that there is little time to actually think about, and much less do anything about what Jesus told you?—So there was little good in even listening, as your life and heart are trying to please the world most of all.

Or is your heart more like a soft and well-kept garden, where fowls of doubt are chased off, rocks are removed from the upturned, and well-watered soil, weeds are pulled, and the sun and rain can help the seeds grow?

When Jesus speaks to you, do you listen, receive, remember and then do something to take action? This is good. Then your heart is ready for the really special messages and truths that He wants to tell you, because they won't be lost, but cherished and will cause good to come into your heart. And when your heart is filled with the good fruits of God's loving Holy Spirit you can then nourish and help many others.

It doesn't mean that a good heart and good ground for God's seeds to grow in, the seeds of faith and life and joy, means that only good things will happen to you. But it means that you are doing good for God's Kingdom, and thus you will be blessed in numerous ways, receiving all the good things that Jesus wants to bestow to each of His dear followers who love Him and wish to please Him.



See, Hear, Talk

Many people wanted to follow Jesus, for they saw something was happening, something big was sweeping through. But not too many were willing to give up everything and be a fulltime follower. Sort of like just going to a restaurant for a one time meal and being satisfied, or being part of the work force that gets the food from the farmers and brings it to the place that will enable others to be fed, at any time of any day. It's the difference between just enjoying the gift, or labouring to share the gifts.

This is what Jesus' team of constant followers did. They were part of the gift giving team, not just being on the receiving end. But there were some followers who did receive a gift, a big gift, a gift that could enable them to live a normal life like the others, and make a living and have a family, yet they chose to also be givers instead.

A blindman, named Bartimaeus, who had the faith to receive sight, then put feet to his faith and followed after Jesus once he was healed. He cast off his old garment, and sold the place he used to sit to be given to, and walked away from that the instant he was enabled to. He wanted Jesus, not just the gift to enable him to do whatever he thought up.

He made a big deal about calling, and continuing to call out to Jesus, until he was at last talking with Him. Then when he received his sight and was no longer blind, he showed by his action that it was Jesus who he wanted most, and followed after Him. He didn't just take the gift of sight and use it for selfish purposes.

People who make a big deal about something amazing that happened to them, rather than forsaking their old life and following Jesus, having given up everything in order to preach the gospel and help heal others too, sometimes can make a mess of things. It starts to be all about what people can get from God, rather than what they are now responsible to give to God—primarily their time and life to be a fulltime follower. People have to choose to either love and follow Jesus because they are thankful for His special gifts to them, even if people trouble them for it, or to just follow the ways of the world and gather more things for themselves. It's a choice that each one has to make.



A Coin in a Fish

When there is a need, and you pray for supply and funds, then you need to do whatever God shows you is best. Miracles usually require the steps of faith, prayer and action—according to what Jesus shows and tells you is best to do.

When Peter told Jesus about the tax collectors questioning him and asking for money, that was like his prayer. Then Jesus told him what to do.

“Go let down a fishing line and catch a fish,” Jesus told Simon Peter. “Take the first fish that you catch and open its mouth. There will be a coin in its mouth, that will be sufficient for paying both your tax and Mine.”

Simon Peter exercised his faith and did what Jesus said, and then the miracle happened. A coin was in the fish’s mouth, and sufficient for the money that was needed.

So if you are in need of finances, why not do as Peter did, and ask the Lord what to do about it. He can show you just the way to get the help you need. Jesus can show you what job to do, or who to ask, or where to go, or He can just make it appear suddenly too! –Like it did in the fish’s mouth after Peter did his part to obey what Jesus told him to do. Pray, trust, and obey, and you’re sure to have what you need, when you need it.

Jesus will help provide what is needed. He loves taking good care of you. Sometimes you need to wait to get something, but don’t worry, it’ll all work out, as you keep praying. And in the most difficult or impossible situations, that’s when He like to do the neatest miracles. Jesus is always looking for a chance to do a miracle in your life. Just pray, have faith, do what Jesus shows you, and then see the great way He can provide your every need and help you carry on.



Choosing What is Important

Zacchaeus turned to wealth to ease his sad heart. He had taken more money from people than he should have. He thought that the more riches he had the better he would feel, but that never happened. It only made things worse, and made people despise him and never want to be around him.

When Zacchaeus knew that Jesus was walking through the city that he lived in, Zacchaeus was very interested to see Him. The only problem was that he was too short to see over everyone else's heads to get a good view. And no one would be willing to move out of the way for him. There was only one thing to be done. He found the nearest tree and climbed up.

It looked rather funny to see this man who was the size of some children, dressed richly, peeking out from the branches of a tree to get a good look at Jesus. But Jesus didn't laugh, as He knew Zacchaeus was sad and lonely and in need of encouragement so he could be kinder and more caring.

"Zacchaeus," Jesus called out to him as He stood near the tree. "Come down! I'm going visit your house today!"

Zacchaeus hardly knew what to say. It was beyond what he could dream of happening! A very fast little man zipped down from the tree and was delighted to have Jesus as his host.

To his house Jesus and his disciples went, and it was the first friend Zacchaeus had in a long while. He could tell that Jesus was not interested in money, and only wanted to cheer him up and teach him some tips to a happier life.

By the time Jesus left, Zacchaeus was a changed man, and before too long the town around him was changing too. Zacchaeus decided to be a giver, rather than a taker. Zacchaeus chose to give away half of all that he owned to the poor people around. In addition to that, he promised that anyone he had been dishonest and greedy with, he give them back four times what he took. That was very kind and generous.



Rich Young Ruler

Once a very wealthy young ruler came to Jesus, as he had felt that sad and empty feeling in his heart. Why? He had everything he needed. He was a good man—or so he thought. He tried to do what was right. So why didn't he feel that joy in his heart? This important man came to ask Jesus how to have eternal life, how to go to Heaven and be part of God's kingdom. Jesus knew that it would be best for this man to live for the things of Heaven, to hear

God's Words, and to use his life to help others. So Jesus invited him to come along and be a disciple too! Jesus told this man, "Go and sell all that you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me."

Oh! That was one of the hardest things this man could imagine doing! It was a sad choice that he regretted, that he made the selfish and worldly choice to hold on to those things that can be seen and counted and felt. He could not bring himself to give all that he owned away to the destitute people, and to become poor also and instead follow Jesus. He would have a rough life, and be persecuted also, but he would have joy in his heart and make God really happy.

Jesus told a story about a rich man who had a great harvest one year. In fact he had so much that his old barns couldn't hold all the food his farm had produced. So what was he to do? It would have been the perfect time to give some of it away to the many who lived nearby that didn't have sufficient. The Heavenly Father had made it grow so that the people of land would have enough food. However, if the one who received this gift of the extra food—wasn't filled with wise and loving actions, then those who God wanted it to be for would never benefit from it. Well, this rich man had all that he needed and far more—on Earth, that is. But when it was time for him to leave this world, when he died suddenly, he found out that he was suddenly very poor. And when he faced God, he wasn't too proud of his selfish actions and deeds.

It's a foolish way to live while on Earth—to only stock up supplies for yourself. Your life could end in an instant, and you could be suddenly talking to Jesus face to face, and it's too late then to give away what Jesus told you to share, or to help tell others about Him. All your stuff on Earth is no longer yours, but goes to others on Earth. And people on Earth can't see or hear you speaking clearly to them, so you can't do all that much to lead them to Jesus. Those who are rich in Heaven are those that lived lives filled with love for Jesus and others, and a life rich with faith in Jesus and demonstrated by praying and calling on Him for help. Those that you helped to tell about Jesus and are in Heaven as a result will be your friends forever! Your rewards for giving all you could to Him and to others on Earth will be so many more times over anything you gave in the first place. You'll be eternally glad for the gifts of love you gave to Jesus and others for Him.



Love and Forgiveness

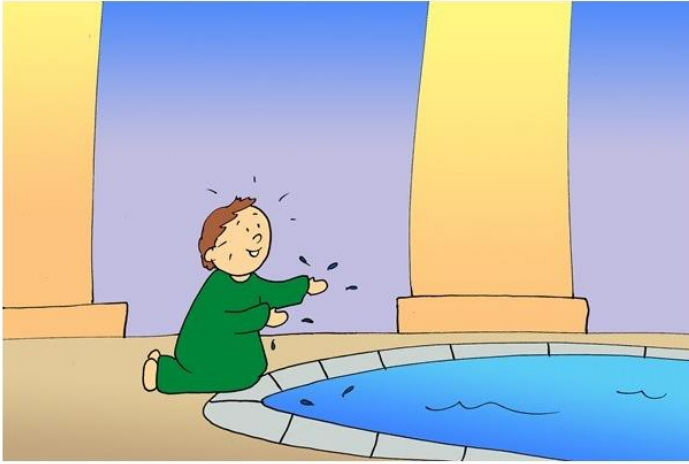
One day Simon Peter asked Me how many times he was to keep forgiving his brother or friend, if they kept doing things that bothered him. Simon knew that I had been teaching them about giving forgiveness rather than getting angry and holding bad feelings inside, or doing things back to the person. He wondered however, how many times was it right to keep forgiving others.

“Should I forgive my brother seven times?” Simon Peter gave as a guess at an amount that would be very generous and kind. I surprised him and said that not just seven times, but rather seventy times seven! That’s a lot of chances to give to a brother or friend or sister who keeps making mistakes, and is sorry for it and asks for forgiveness. Only God’s love can help someone have that much love and kindness.

If you realise that those who have done wrong things will be taught their lessons by God, and you do your best to show love and kindness in your life, you’ll have a much happier time and your heart will be filled with joy.

Jesus told us, His disciples that the main and most important rule for them to keep was to love one another. This would change the world for the better. This would be My presence on Earth. This would be the solution to so many of the world’s problems. Love is the solution and what will help make Earth a bit more like Heaven. When people put loving others as their highest priority, then good things start happening, because God blesses it and makes both those who give love and those who receive kindness from others happier.

Showing love changes the world around you. Maybe not everything will change today or in an instant, but even if you can only do one deed of kindness or say one word of encouragement to someone who needs some cheer, things will be a bit better. This is how people know that Jesus is our leader and the one we are following, if we have love towards each other. If in your actions towards individuals you show and tell them that I love them and that you love them, and that God cares about them, then this is the proof to them that you are a child of God!



Faith and Freedom

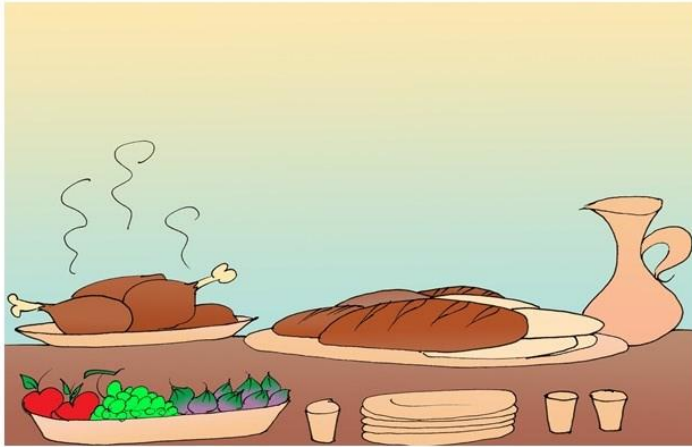
There was a man who was born blind. He had never been able to see anything at all from the time his life started until the day I passed by him, when he was about 40 years old. At last the time was right for him to be healed.

He had been sitting in a certain spot so often that many people knew him. Jesus wanted to demonstrate to all the people who knew this man, that He, Jesus was God's son, and that God could do anything. Jesus made some clay with spit and the soil on the ground, and rubbed it on his eyes, to anoint them and bring cleansing. "God wash it off now", Jesus told him. When the blind man did what I told him to do, he could suddenly see, for the first time ever in his life! He was amazed, surprised, and so very happy! A little later on Jesus went to talk to him, so that the man could see Him, and have a chance to believe that He was the Saviour. This man was so grateful, and believed with all his heart.

One time Jesus was teaching in the synagogue and there was a woman who couldn't stand up straight, but was all bent over. She had been in this condition for 18 years. It was very difficult for her. She couldn't stretch out comfortably in bed. She couldn't look up and see the sky easily. She had to use sticks to try to keep her balance as she walked around. She would have a hard time doing just about anything that required moving around.

Jesus I touched her and said she was loose from this ailment. Right then, for the first time in so many years she stood up straight and tall. She beamed a big smile and was filled with gladness, and tears of joy fell down her face. She felt so very good!

"It's good that I loosed her from being bound up with her body not able to move freely. The Enemy had her bound, and I set her free!" Jesus said, and people who loved seeing Jesus win victories, cheered! Jesus came to bring life and freedom and joy and healing. He wasn't coming to make tons of rules, but to teach people to love God and others. He wasn't coming to give out punishments but to give forgiveness to those who wanted to change and wanted to believe in His love and receive His gift of life and salvation. Jesus loves freedom, when it's the right kind and in the right way—freedom from the Enemy's ways, and setting everyone free to love and obey God and live a life of joy and peace.



Dinner Discussions

Jesus was invited to a meal, and knew that he was being watched carefully. As He sat down to eat He noticed right away a man who was in need of healing. If Jesus were to please His Heavenly Father and do what He came to Earth to do, He would show God's love to this man by healing Him.

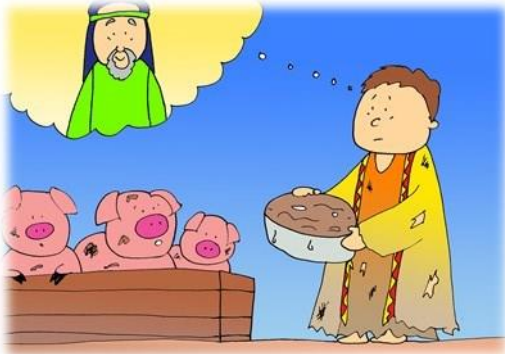
If Jesus was to try to please the proud people in the room who didn't like much of what Jesus did or said, then He would just ignore this suffering man, and pretend that he didn't need help, as it was the day of the week that some religious rulers said Jesus shouldn't do miracles on.

What would Jesus do? Everyone was watching to see. Jesus promptly healed the man and let him go happily on his way, then turned to the dinning onlookers and posed a question. "If your ox had fallen in a ditch on the Sabbath day, would you help him out?"

Their hearts all knew the answer. Of course they would rush to rescue their helpless animal. Animals were not only expensive but were very needed and the source of their survival and livelihood. How much better to help a person in need—no matter what time of day it is, or what day of the week it is.

During one meal, Jesus told a new idea about who to invite to dinner feasts. If the only people being invited to a nice meal are people who are rich, or their friends, or family members only, all the time, then that's not really the best. Because then they will feel they need to give back a nice meal at their house in return for the feast that was given to them. And what happens then? It's not really giving if it's just to people who will give back the same great things or even better things to you again, and you do it with that purpose in mind.

Instead, they should choose a new set of guests to invite when they want to do something generous. They could give to those who can't give back to them at all—those who are poor and in need—and to let the Lord, be the one that gives back to them the reward for their sharing, by the great meals He can invite them to in Heaven. Wouldn't that be more fun? Heavenly meals are a zillion times better than any fancy and deluxe meal on Earth. If you please Jesus by sharing what you have with others who are in need then you'll get God's paybacks which are the best!



The Father's Love

It's easy to think that because you are doing good things and seem to be making all the right decisions, that God must love you more than those who aren't quite as good or righteous as you think you are. But Jesus loves you and others with the same great love.

Jesus told a parable story of a woman that had a set of special and expensive coins. These she took good care of and never wanted any of them get lost. They were her wealth and treasures. However, one day she noticed that a coin went missing! She was very anxious to find it. It was worth a lot! She didn't say, "Oh, well, look at all the rest of my coins that I still have. I don't need to worry about that one missing coin."

Instead she searched and looked and cleaned and didn't stop until she found where it had fallen. When she found it at last she was so glad and told her friends! She could relax now. Her special set of treasures was complete.

You—each one of you—are like Jesus' treasures. You are greatly treasured and cherished and loved by Him. Just because He has many who love and will live with Him forever doesn't mean that it's enough. Jesus doesn't forget about the others who are still in need of His salvation. Those that are like the lost coin are a concern to Jesus. He thinks about them, prays for them, tries to send people to show them that Jesus loves them. When at last one of His lost treasures change from their waywardness and lets Jesus hold them—just like the lady held her special coin—I am very, very glad! God will only feel totally relaxed and happy when everyone has come to know His love and has turned and walked towards Jesus and is able to come home to Heaven.



Obedience and Gratefulness

As Jesus was walking along the road He heard a group of ten men calling out for Him to help and heal them. These men were sick with leprosy. It was a very difficult affliction to have, and made things not only hard for them, but very sad too. It was so contagious that those who had the skin disease of leprosy could no longer live around other people, or even stay in their house with their family. They had to move away and stay separate.

When these ten men heard about Jesus and His power to heal, and then they saw Him walking nearby, they were so glad for this bit of hope! With all their might and strength they yelled out for Jesus to help them.

Jesus heard them and wanted to heal them right away. Since they had faith in His power to heal, then He could give them healing. In order to be allowed to live in the town normally again, once someone had leprosy, the priest would need to see if they were healed and to declare that they were clean and fine. Jesus told them simply, "Go show yourselves to the priest."

When Jesus told them this, they weren't yet healed, but that was their step of faith and obedience that they needed to take in order for them to receive the miracle of healing. Without hesitation and in full faith these men started on the road to the town to meet the priest and to declare that they were healed. And as they began walking that direction they were healed! What a great rejoicing was heard as they started running, laughing, yelling, and praising God!

One of them however, stopped walking, turned around and ran back to Jesus. Kneeling down he praised and thanked Jesus for giving him healing. Jesus was glad that the others were healed and happy and that they'd obeyed right away what they were told to do in order to be healed. That made Jesus happy. But when this man came all the way back, just to say, "Thank You," it showed Jesus that He was even more important to this man than his own health, or his family, or all the things he was hoping to get to do. He treasured Jesus' love and care and concern for him more than anything else.



A Good Shepherd

Jesus told a story about a shepherd that had one hundred sheep in his care. That may seem like a lot of sheep, and that perhaps if one is missing it might not even be noticed or make much of a difference. However, a good shepherd loves and cares for each one of his sheep and will do whatever it takes to see that they are well fed and healthy, and kept safe. When the shepherd was counting his sheep he found out that one was missing. He still had 99 sheep, but that wasn't enough for him. He wanted all his sheep to be safe and protected and well cared for. Each and every sheep mattered to him.

What was he to do? Well, there was only one thing on his mind—he must find that lost sheep and bring it back into the safety of the fold. He set off right away, leaving the others in the fold and began his search. The shepherd didn't say, "Oh, I'll just take a quick look around, and then come back if I don't see it right away. I'm tired and cold and want to rest."

A good shepherd realises that his sheep is also tired and cold and isn't able to properly take care of itself. He knows that a lost sheep needs a shepherd to rescue him. So the good shepherd just kept searching until at last he found his lost sheep. He wasn't going to give up until the sheep had been found. His fold and flock of sheep weren't complete until all, every last one of them, were there safely home with him again.

Jesus is like the shepherd, and we are like the sheep in this story. Jesus loves and cares for each one of us. He's so glad when we stay close to Him, because then He can take good care of us. But if we have wandered off and have gotten into the wrong things, please know that Jesus anxious and eager for us return. He will just love us and be so glad to see us again. He won't be mad at us when we return to Him, because forgiving and loving and caring for us is what Jesus does!

Stick with Jesus and He'll give you the best things. This life now is only a tiny part of what is ahead. In Heaven you'll get to enjoy so many new and wonderful things. Let Jesus be your guide, Heavenly caretaker, provider, eternal friend and good shepherd!



Lazarus

Have you ever had a friend, a true and good friend of yours die? I have. It's not something you ever wish to have happen. But it does make you appreciate the friends and people that you still do have around you, or who make life easier for you in some way.

When people go it can leave a great big gap in your heart or life, and that can be real tough, until you get that empty feeling filled up again with something new. Imagine all the holes that are made by all the people in the whole world passing away, suddenly and wonderfully getting filled up again with new joys. That is what it will be like in the world and realm to come. Death will be swallowed up in victory, and no more will the voice of mourning be heard in the new land where all wrongs are made right.

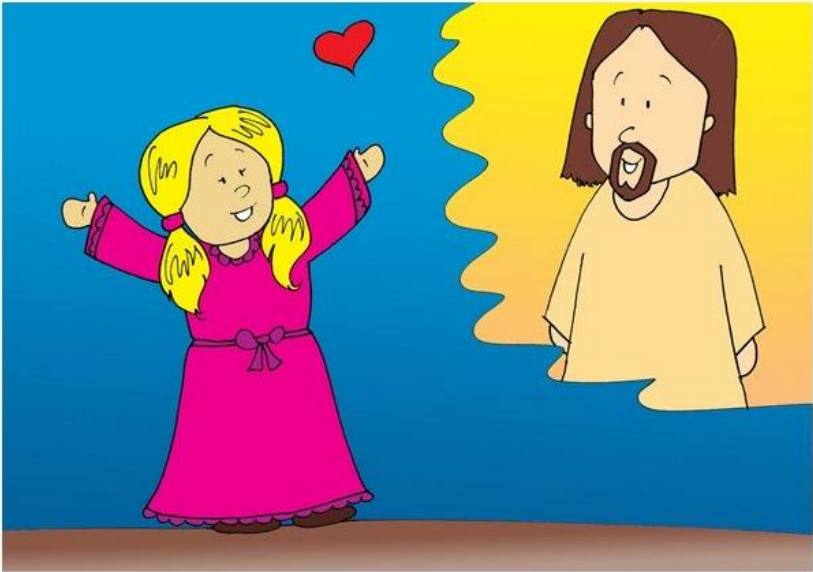
It will be like watching a video that is being played backwards and making all the mess disappear, and everything be all nice again. That is what is going to happen one day. It's going to be one victory celebration after another, when all things begin to be put back together again, and all that is ugly is renewed and refreshed and made beautiful again. There will be so much to be thankful for. You'll be new and feel new too, and won't ever die.

When My friend Lazarus died it was a solum and sad occasion, but one that brought greater victory in the end. Why? Because it made so many hungry for the truth and wish for the glory of God to shine through the very awful moment. And it did! The people were ready to embrace a new reality, a new thing! Where the dead come back to life, and the tears of joy wash away the tears of mourning, and where faith springs up in full force where once there was dead hopes.

So just as the true story of the resurrection of My friend Lazarus shows, that God is the God of life and can restore it anytime, so can anything that is dead or dying in your life—be it believe or your physical body—also be upstarted again in full force.

How did you think Lazarus felt once he rose again by the power of the Holy Ghost? He felt he could run a race of a million miles. His heart was so glad to be reunited with his family, because it meant that I truly was the Messiah and the saviour of the world, and could do anything. And with that kind of power aiding and assisting him, so could he also be invincible, and do whatever he was empowered to do.

It won't be long now until full joy will be yours, forever, for you have trusted in My coming and will receive the joy of your salvation.



Heavenly Communication

What is prayer, do you know? It's quite likely that you don't, because it's so simple most people think it's something entirely different.

Let's say what prayer is not:

--It's not something that you do out of habit without really thinking about what you are saying or doing. But it takes focused concentration and letting your thoughts be led by something other than what is around you, or that you might naturally be led to think about.

--It's not just going through the motions or saying this or that in a perfectly scripted way, like memorised lines. But rather thinking about the one you cherish more than any, and trying to speak in a way that will uplift them, and teach those who might be listening in on your prayer, a bit of what this Being is actually like; that through your words others will get to know a bit more of what God is like, and He will be cherished by others as well.

--Prayer is loving Me to the point of giving Me your time and focus, so we can talk about things that really matter to you, and I can tell you things that really matter to you, even if they aren't anything that you were previously thinking about. We can have a two way conversation, and afterwards things will be different, for I can change and make things better for you and others.

--Prayer is a life line to Heaven, where you can receive what you need to keep living and giving life to others. And while you are on the line to Heaven, that is to say talking to the King of the Universe, you will receive spiritual inspiration, like a battery that gets charged. While you take time in prayer, you not only receive the needed items or gifts from Heaven, but you also get recharged and strengthened so you can keep going stronger and faster.



Jesus and the Children

Do you know that you are very special to Jesus? He loves you so very much. One time when the disciples and others around Him wanted to know who was going to be thought of as the greatest and most important in God's kingdom, Jesus answered them in a special way. There was a little child with his mother nearby. Jesus showed everyone this child and said that children were a good example of what God wants people to be like. "Be like a child," Jesus said, "and then you can go to Heaven, and you'll be an important person there."

How can adults be like children? What was it that they should do? To love God as their Father, to have faith that He will take care of them. To be humble and know that they needed God's help and forgiveness and care.

Just being thought of as an important person on Earth wouldn't make you the way that God thinks is great. He likes the love and joy and simplicity of the children. They make Him very happy.

When mothers brought their children to see Jesus He was so happy to see them. He loved the children so much! Jesus told everyone around to move aside and make it easy for the children to come and see Him. There were many people around, and those who thought they were probably a bit more important than young little ones.

Jesus told everyone that the most important thing to do right then was to let the children come to Him. He enjoyed seeing their smiles, he cared about them, and wanted them around. Jesus loved the children very much. He blessed them and showed them how important they really were.

You, too, are very special and loved by Jesus. Even though you can't see Him with your eyes now, just yet, still He is around you and says to you, "Come to Me." You can talk with Him in prayer and know that He will be near to you and take care of you.



Generous Gifts

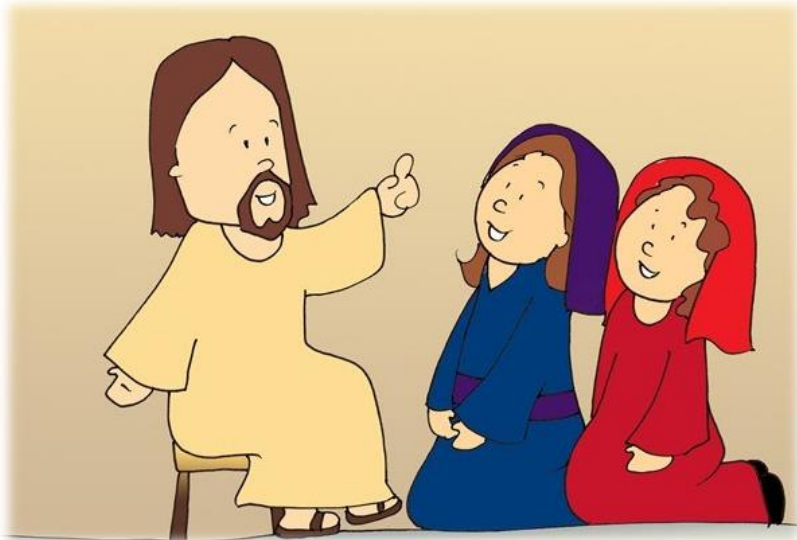
Do you have anything that is real special to you? Perhaps it's a gift that someone you love gave to you, and you've kept it safe in a special place? There was a woman called Mary, who had something like that. It was a bottle of sweet smelling, fancy and very expensive perfume oil. She kept it safe, and made sure it never got broken. It was made of clay, and could break if it got dropped. It as special to her.

One time when Jesus was having a dinner with a man called Simon, who was a religious man, she came into the room to see Jesus, and bring a gift. Can you guess what it was? Yes, it was her very specially saved perfume. She knelt down at Jesus' feet. She didn't come in all proud and say, "I'm so great!" She had humility and wanted to know Jesus loved and forgave her for the wrongs she had done.

Mary was weeping and washing Jesus' feet with her tears, wiping them with her long pretty hair, and poured her special perfume on Jesus. That was the way she chose to show that she loved Him. She didn't worry about what all the proud people around would think of her. How Jesus felt and being near to Him, was the most important thing to her. He was more important than her special things, and more important than all the others around.

Mary did the right thing sharing her special gift with Jesus, as soon He would be leaving the Earth to see His Father again. It was the last chance that she had to show Jesus her love in a special way. Jesus loved her and said He forgave her, and she was so happy. Mary felt more joy than she ever had in her life. Her heart felt light and joyful, and determined to follow what Jesus had said for people to do.

Another woman gave a gift to God—it was the last two coins that she had. Jesus saw it when she gave them, and was pleased to see her faith. She knew that if she gave to those serving God, as her gift to God, that He would give her in return all that she needed. When you give and share with others because you love God, then neat and special things happen to you, and you are happier than if you only always kept things for yourself. In the end you have more, as a result of giving.



Important Things

It's important to care for people and to show them kindness. There is something, however, even more important. Do you know what it is? It is taking time with Jesus—to talk to Him, to listen to Him, to be still and quiet, to pray, to read His words, to have time with Him as a friend.

There will always be people to help and plenty of jobs that need to be done. There will be no end of meals that need to be cooked and dishes that need to be washed. There will always be things that need to be fixed, and cleaned, and put away. To even have the joy and the strength to do what needs to be done, as well as to get God's blessings and the supply of your needs, you need time with Jesus.

Did you stop today for a few minutes to say "Hi" to Jesus, and to see if He had anything to tell you? It's the most important thing you can do in a day. And you will be able to give and share with others, help and care for people, do your jobs easier and with more joy, if you do.

One time Jesus was visiting with some friends of His—Mary, Martha and Lazarus. Mary just wanted to sit and to listen to whatever Jesus was saying. Martha felt alone trying to do all the work of serving the meal to Jesus and his disciples. She asked if Jesus could please tell Mary to come and help her. Rather than agreeing that this was important, Jesus told Martha that it was more important to Him to have people listening to His words, and spending time with Him. Helping was a good thing, but taking time with Jesus first of all was the best, and would make them the happiest.

What do you think Martha did after that? What would you have done? I bet it felt good to just relax and stop worrying about all that needed to be done, and to just spend time with Jesus, hearing His words.



Marvellous Moments on a Mountain

It was nearing the time when Jesus was soon going to leave the Earth, and be with us all in a new way—as the powerful Son of God who is usually invisible, and can be everywhere at the same time. While He was still on Earth He spent as much time as He could talking with His disciples. He needed to get them ready to be His witnesses, to go in to all the world to preach the Gospel to all they could reach with His message of salvation and love.

One time Jesus took three of His closest followers for some time away, to talk, to pray, and to see something very special. Up the mountain they climbed, until they found a resting place. When the disciples looked up they were shocked at what they saw. Jesus looked so very different. He was changed for a little while, and instead of looking like a regular man, He was so very bright, and white with light all around Him and shining from Him. Then some Heavenly visitors—Moses and Elijah—appeared to talk with Him too.

The disciples got to have a peek at what the Son of God, Jesus, might look like, when He wasn't in human form. They really didn't know what to say. It was all quite amazing. Then their further surprise, something else happened. All of a sudden, above them in the sky there was a special cloud, and out of the cloud there sounded a booming voice—the very voice of God, and He said: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”

God was telling them that Jesus was His son, in a very clear way. God said the most important thing to do was to listen to whatever Jesus had to say. The disciples fell down, and put their faces to the ground, and really didn't know what was going to happen next. Jesus came over to let them know that everything was alright. He touched them and they looked up again and saw only Jesus there.

It was a special honour and privilege to get to see and hear what they did, and the disciples obeyed what God said to do—to always listen to Jesus, as He was God's son, and had important and wonderful things to tell them. Do you listen to Jesus' words too? It makes God happy when you do!



Hosanna

Jesus was going to be going to Jerusalem, and after news had spread about some of the amazing miracles He did, the people were very excited to have Jesus passing their way. Jesus told two disciples to please go and get him a young donkey, as He was going to ride it into the city. He told them where to find it, and told them to bring the donkey, and what to say to its owner if he wondered why they were taking it.

“The Lord needs it,” they told the man who asked them why they were untying the donkeys. He was very happy to share it with Jesus. It was the first time that the young colt had given someone a ride. What a special person to get to carry! The disciples put some coats and clothing on the donkeys to make the ride softer, and be like a saddle.

As they walked along, the people gathered around and walked along side of them too, and were very happy and excited. People were praising God loudly, saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Hosanna in the highest!” And to make the pathway extra special people decorated it by cutting down big palm branches and placing them on the road. Others put cloth and coats on the pathway for the donkey and colt to walk on.

It was a like a royal parade and a big welcoming party, for Jesus the king. The children were having a great time too, praising God and getting to see Jesus. When they reached Jerusalem, some people were wondering what was going on, and what all the excitement was about! –Celebrating Jesus was the reason! When they got to the temple people came to be healed by Him. He answered many questions, and taught them about God’s way. He told stories and parables to the people. It was a great victory celebration, celebrating that He’d come to Earth at last.



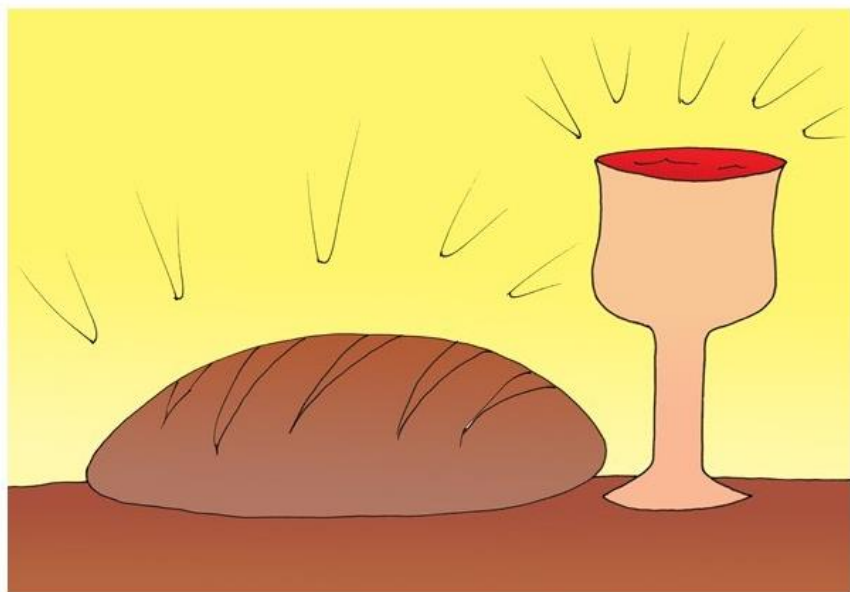
Love and Humility

Every year there was a meal and time of remembering God's care, called "The Passover." The disciples wondered where to have it. They often were travelling around, and didn't have a house to call their own, and appreciated people's offers to help. Jesus said to go into the city and they'd see a man carrying a pitcher of water. They were to follow him to his house, and ask the owner about a room for Jesus and His disciples to use.

It happened just like Jesus said. When they went to the house that the man with the pitcher went to, the man in charge said there was a large upper room they could use. So the disciples started right away and got everything ready—the food, the drinks, the water to wash with, the seating and tables arranged, and did whatever was the custom to do for that special meal, cooking everything just right.

When they were eating, Jesus demonstrated to them what it meant to be a true disciple and truly important. —What they were to do, in order to be as Jesus wanted them to be. Jesus wasn't going to be with them for much longer—in fact this was His last meal together with them. He told them that they needed to take care of each other, and show that they were His disciples by giving love, and acting in humility. The people considered the greatest to Jesus would be those who acted in the most kind and helpful ways.

Jesus then took a bowl of water and a towel, and went around washing each of the disciples' feet. This was normally the job for a servant. Jesus said to be as servant to each other, rather than just thinking they were so important, and wanting others to serve them. Those who helped others in whatever way was needed, not acting in pride, but humble, were really the greatest, and behaving in the way that Jesus most wanted them to.



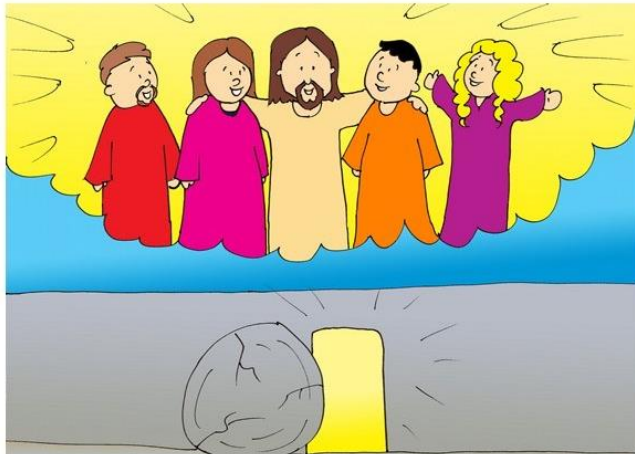
In Remembrance of Him

While Jesus was eating a special meal with His disciples He took some bread and prayed. He broke it and passed it to all His disciples, telling them to each get a piece, and to think about Him as they did. Just like the loaf of bread was one big piece, we are all one big team together with Jesus. He then took a cup of wine and prayed, and passed it around to the disciples, for all to take a sip. Jesus said to let the wine remind us of His gift of love to the World—forgiveness to all who ask, and life forever with Him in Heaven.

After the meal they went for an evening walk. It had been a big day, and they were all pretty tired. Not having a house or place to call their own, they did as they often did, and settled for the night in the garden, pulling their cloaks around them, and sleeping under the stars. Jesus wasn't going to go to sleep, however, He needed time to pray.

It was difficult to think about the hard time that people were soon going to give Him—treating Him roughly and speaking unkind and untrue words. Jesus prayed with all his heart, to do whatever His Father knew was best, and would bring forgiveness to all. Jesus wanted some of his disciples to stay awake with Him, and to pray also, as He was feeling so heavy hearted, but they were just too tired. Then God sent an angel to Jesus' side, who comforted Him, and He felt encouraged and strengthened.

Jesus knew that the joy He would receive, as we loved Him in return, and were His friends forever, was going to make Him so very glad. It would be worth it, for all eternity. The sad time would be short compared to the joy that He and we all would have. Jesus did the job, all the way. He fulfilled all that the prophecies said would happen. He did His Father's will, and He didn't give up, because He loved us all so much.



Jesus' Gift of Love and Life

When Adam and Eve made the wrong choice in the Garden of Eden to disobey and eat the fruit of the tree that was forbidden, that's when sin, and the punishment for sin came into the world. God said that those who disobeyed Him wouldn't be allowed to live forever anymore. It was very sad for God, because He loved each one that He'd created. So He did something only He could do. He sent His son Jesus, to come to Earth and to take the punishment for our sins away.

Jesus came to Earth to live and give His life and love. His main reason for coming to Earth was that He'd forgive each one in this world, if they would believe in Him as God's son. For many years people had been waiting for a special person from God to be sent, they knew that through Him, their sins would be forgiven, and they would be granted the privilege of living with God forever. Jesus was this special person, who'd come at last!

It wasn't an easy job that Jesus had, coming to Earth, and some people didn't even want Him around. Jesus loved everyone—even those folks! For awhile it looked like they had taken Jesus away, and put an end to His life on Earth. It was a sad and difficult day, but good was to come.

Jesus is God's Son and lives forever, and no one can ever stop Him. His disciples and friends missed Jesus for a couple of days, when it seemed He'd never be around again. Then He appeared again, alive and powerful, to show everyone that His mission was complete—that the gift He came to give each one on Earth was ready for anyone to have, that wanted it.

His going away for awhile, and giving his life was all part of the plan. Everything was actually happening just as it was meant to. Through it Jesus had amazingly, wonderfully taken our punishment for us, and could now give each one of us forgiveness of sins and the gift of life forever, if we'd believe and ask Him for it.

Of course we don't live on Earth forever, and we still have consequences and troubles for doing wrong things while here. However, since Jesus gave His life and brought God's gift of forgiveness to us all, those who believe it, and receive it through prayer, can live with God forever.

No one lives a life without mistakes, but if you believe that Jesus is God's son, and that He came to Earth to forgive you and give you God's love, then you can become God's child too, and be part of His big Heavenly family. Jesus is alive forever and He has the power to give you life forever too, even when your time of Earth is over. Heaven is bursting with joy and love, and all who pray and believe in Jesus' love and receive His gift of salvation, can look forward to a Heavenly life forever!



Jesus is Risen—He Lives Forever!

Knowing what God said in His Word is important. It helps you to not be too sad when things are hard—because you know He will help you. The disciples didn't remember what the scriptures had said—that after Jesus would be taken from them, and give His life all the way, for the forgiveness of all our sins, that He was going to rise again, and see them again. They missed Him so much for a few days, while he was gone from them, His body in a grave.

A few of the women had gone to the place where he was buried to bring sweet smelling oil and spices. They wondered how they would manage to roll away the large stone from the entrance. They were in for a surprise. Angels had rolled it away, and were sitting down ready to talk with the ladies. "Why are you looking for Jesus in this place? He's alive! You won't find Him in here! Go tell everyone that He is risen, and will see them all soon!"

Mary Magdalene saw a man that she thought was the gardener, and asked Him about where Jesus might be—but to her surprise, it was Jesus! How glad she was to see Him again! Jesus told her to tell the disciples that He was alive again! The women ran off to tell the others the exciting and joyful news. It was the happiest day of their life!

Peter and John came running to see what the ladies had been talking about. They found the stone grave empty too! It was very amazing. Could it be true, that Jesus had risen? They were soon to see Him themselves! How wonderful it all was!



Walking and Talking

With Jesus' new Heavenly body He could do some amazing things that we can't yet do while we are still on Earth. The day He rose, He chose to appear to two of His disciples who were walking along the road—but in disguise. He looked just like a different person.

The men were sadly talking about how they missed Jesus. Jesus came and walked with them—but they didn't know it was Him! He asked them why they were so sad, and they explained it all to Him. Then Jesus reminded them about the prophecies from many years before, that were written down in the Old Testament Bible scrolls—how it promised that Jesus would rise and be alive forever.

The two disciples went into a house to have a meal, and invited this man to come in with them. When they sat down to eat, Jesus took the bread and prayed and broke it and passed it to them. At that moment they all of a sudden realized it was Jesus!—And He vanished right then and there.

They were so happy to have seen Him and amazed that He was with them. The two men went quickly to tell the other disciples what had just happened. Then as they were with the others in the house, telling their amazing story of Jesus' surprise visit, all of a sudden, without the door opening, bing! Jesus appears in the house, for all there to see! "Peace be unto you!" He says, greeting His disciples.

At first they didn't know what to think, it was pretty amazing how He appeared suddenly. Jesus reassured them and said that it was really Him, and He ate some food there with them. They were so happy to see Him again, and hear what He had to say to them.



Breakfast on the Beach

Most of the disciples were there in the room when Jesus appeared to them. One man called Thomas wasn't there at the time, and only heard about it. It was hard for him to believe that Jesus really was alive and could just appear and vanish, visiting in new and special ways. About a week later, Jesus appears again to them all, and this time Thomas was there. Even though they couldn't see Jesus with their eyes some of the time, He knew just what was happening and what Thomas had said.

Jesus came and talked to Thomas, "See it really is Me!"

Thomas believed then, because he saw and recognized Jesus. Jesus said, "It's great when people can believe in Me even when they haven't seen Me with their own eyes."

Another time Jesus appeared to them was at a beach. He cooked them some fish and bread for breakfast—because they were hungry. Peter and some others chose to go fishing during the night, but had caught nothing. In the morning a man called from the shore asking if they had caught any fish. He then told them to cast the net on the right side of the ship. They did, and a multitude of fish were in the net. All of a sudden they knew it was Jesus on the beach telling them these things.

Peter and the others came quickly to the shore to see Jesus, and brought the fish. They all had breakfast by the warm fire with Jesus, while He talked with them. He told Peter, "Feed My sheep"—to tell others about Jesus, and to give them God's words and truth and love, to be like a care taker, for those who wanted to follow Jesus, the Chief shepherd.



Clouds

For 40 days after Jesus rose, He continued to appear to His disciples and talk with them, and give them instructions. Jesus' disciples were pretty surprised at some of the amazing things Jesus could do with His Heavenly body!

On the last day that He was with them, in a way that they could see Him, He walked with them up a mountain, and talked with them. Jesus told them what their important new job was—to tell everyone around the world about Him, and the way to salvation!

As they were talking, all of a sudden, Jesus started to rise from the ground, floating up higher and higher, till He reached the clouds, and then disappeared from their sight. Instead of seeing Him, there were angels there, telling the disciples that Jesus was going to come back again, for all eyes to see—and in the clouds too! He'd return one day, in the sky, and all would see Him! But before that could happen, they had a job to do, to tell people about Jesus, so they would be ready!

The disciples were so amazed and happy, when they saw Jesus rising to the clouds. They knew Jesus Christ, the Messiah, had been with them on Earth. Now they were saved, and they could tell the good news to all they met. It was the best news they could ever give someone.

Jesus went to His Father in Heaven, but He wasn't really gone from them—He just couldn't be seen. He told them, "I am with you always." So even if they couldn't see Him, He was right there, ready to help them, as they began their important mission and responsibility—to tell many others about Him.



The Power of the Spirit of God

Nothing can stop the power of God! And when the time was right, He gave a portion of His Spirit to those who were commissioned to go and tell the good news of the way to Heaven—through believing in Jesus. Jesus told His followers to wait in Jerusalem for this special gift of extra power. So they did.

One special day a sound of a big, rushing wind, was heard filling the house! It then appeared as if bits of fire were on each one there! They weren't on fire, but a bit of God's light was seen burning. It was as if they were like lamps, and were ready to light up the world now, telling everyone of Jesus, the light of the world.

He'd told them before to "Let your light shine", and now they had the powerful Spirit of God in them and around them and on them, to help them do it. They weren't shy anymore, or afraid like they had been before. Instead they boldly went out and talked to many people about Jesus. A miracle happened, as the wonderful Spirit of God was helping them, and each of them were able to speak new languages, without having learned them before.

There were people from all over the world at Jerusalem at that time, and they got to hear about Jesus by someone telling them about Him, in their own language. Thousands of people got to hear what they had to say, and believed! What a great day that was! Do you want some power from Heaven too, to help you do what God needs you to? Just ask!



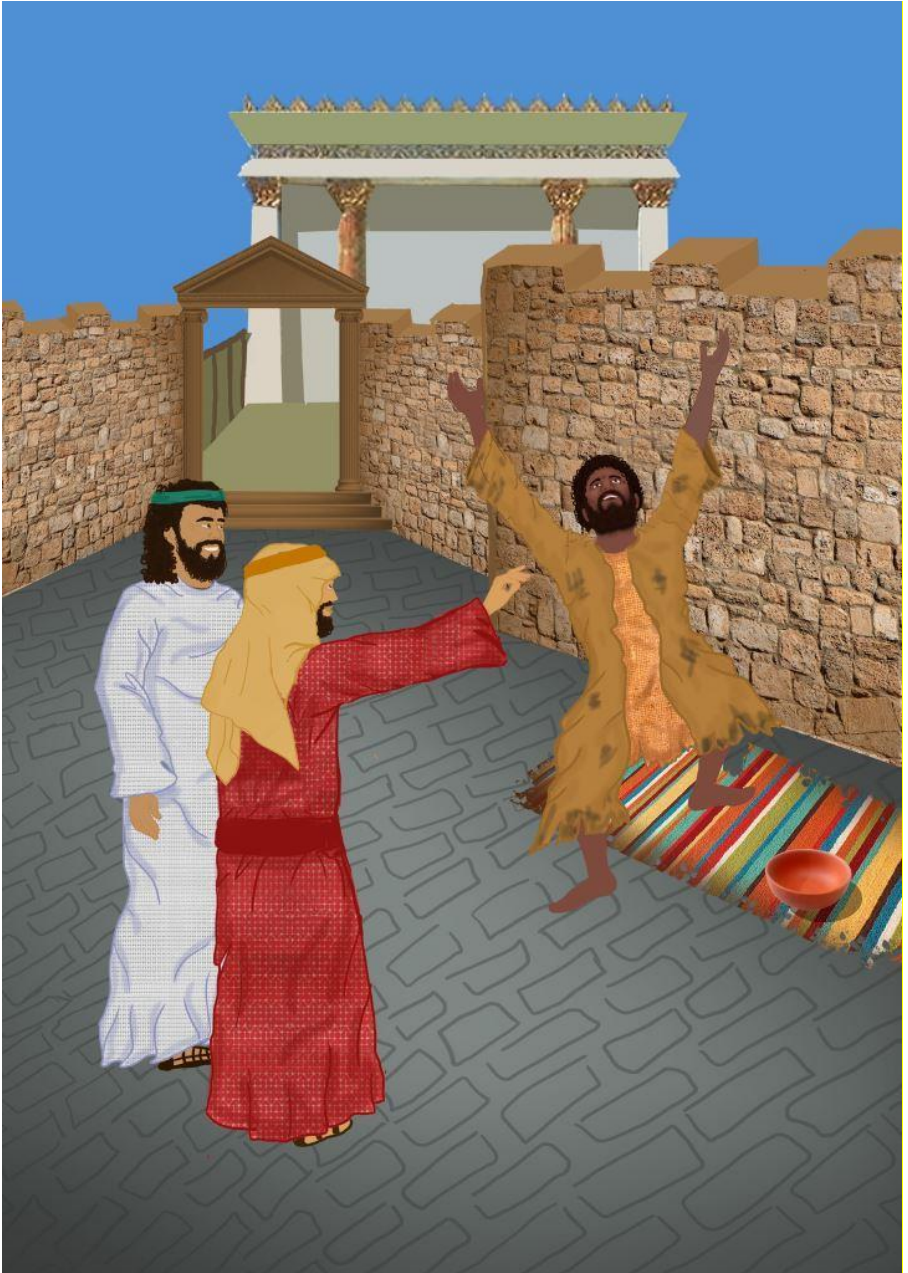
Together

On that amazing day when the disciples of Jesus received the gift of God's wonderful spirit, and many chose to believe and receive Jesus' gift of love and salvation, wasn't the only time they told people about Him.

Every day more and more people heard the good news that Jesus' followers were beginning to spread to all around, and every day more people chose to believe and to join the team. Amazing things were happening every day too. People were getting healed and all kinds of miraculous events were taking place. It was very exciting! God's powerful spirit was helping them to do what Jesus had told them to—to let everyone in the world know about Him!

To do a good job they'd need to work well together. They'd need to listen to one another and to the Lord too. They prayed together, sang hymns together, and lived in loving brotherhood together, just as Jesus had taught them to. Each one shared their things with others who had a need, and cared for one another.

The disciples were like a big new family, made up of God's sons and daughters—people who believed on Jesus, and accepted God as their Heavenly Father. They treated each other like brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, and cared for the children well too.



The Lame Man Walks

Can you imagine not being able to walk? Or perhaps you can't walk, so you can understand what it is like. There was a man who had been a cripple or lame his whole life, and everyone knew him. He always sat in the same place, right at the gate that led into the temple. Every day he saw people going in and out. I'm sure he often wished he could just walk in with everyone. He just had to sit there, asking people to be kind to him and to offer him some money. He couldn't work and get paid, and then be able to buy food, nor could he work on a farm. He depended on the gifts of others. It's all he could do.

One day as Peter and John were passing his way, he asked for a gift of money. They didn't just pass him by, though they had nothing at all to give him, because they had something far better than anything money could buy. Peter and John had the power of Jesus that could heal this man. "In the name of Jesus, rise up and walk" they offered him.

He had never, in his life, been able to walk. He could have laughed and thought they were just being funny, or he could have thought they were trying to make things difficult for him. But instead, he chose to believe. He had faith that Jesus' power could heal him, right then and there. He then made the effort to try to stand up. It was a wonderful feeling that surged through his bones and legs, and he felt the strength to stand and to walk. He was so glad he began leaping and jumping and was able to walk right in through the gate at last, together with Peter and John.

People noticed what was going on, and they recognized this man as the same one they'd just passed who was sitting, lame, beside the gate. How did this happen? They wondered. Peter and John told them it was through the power of Jesus that this man could now walk, and he told them that they too could be forgiven and believe on Jesus, receiving His gift of love and salvation.



Power, Protection & Perseverance

The miracle of the lame man getting healed caused so many people to want to hear and learn of Jesus, that the disciples were there in the temple area teaching and talking all day! There were thousands who wanted to listen to them and who believed.

Some of the priests at the temple who didn't know the truth thought it wasn't right and tried to tell the disciples to stop teaching others about Jesus. The disciples made the decision to obey God instead, and to keep doing what Jesus had told them to do.

They prayed together for God's Holy Spirit to come and give them even greater power to do the job, to help them speak boldly to everyone and to not give up. And it happened! As they were praying the building shook and God's spirit came to give them a renewal of power and strength. Nothing would stop them now! They spoke with boldness to people about Jesus, and many more amazing miracles of people getting healed were happening each day. It was a very exciting time!

God even sent angels to help the disciples when some people were making things too hard for them, and unable to preach. The angels protected them, freed them, and told them to go back and talk to the people in the temple again. Every day they just kept on talking and telling others about Jesus, no matter what. They were so happy to be on Jesus' team and share the good news with all the people they could.



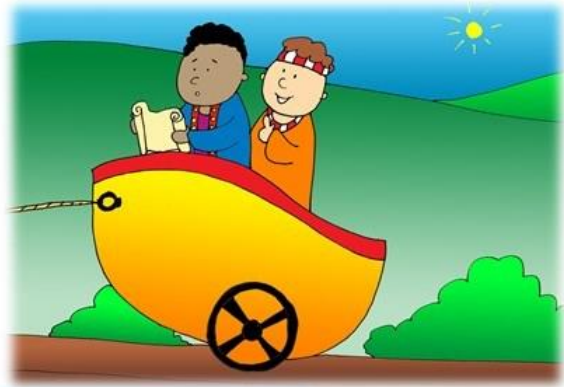
Seven Wise Helpers

With all the preaching and teaching that was going on, there were so many who had chosen to be a part of the disciples' team. They all wanted to help each other and ensure that each had what they needed. Some of the families needed extra help and care, and so a plan was made. Seven wise and faithful men who loved God very much were chosen to be in charge, to see that each one was getting well cared for.

The job of those following in Jesus' way wasn't only to tell others about Jesus and His love, but also to be an example of His love, and how to live in His ways—to do what Jesus had taught them. When they all were caring for each other it was easier to then do the job of preaching the message they were sent to preach, because they had what they needed—food, clothes, houses, water, and those with children got extra care and help.

Stephen was one of the men chosen. He was filled with faith and God's Spirit. He not only did a good job of helping care for the new team of followers, but he was a powerful witness, telling many about Jesus, and God did many wonderful miracles through him too.

When it was nearly time for him to go to Heaven and get his reward for doing such a great job, he was telling people the truth about Jesus and quoting God's Words. The words he spoke were a powerful witness, and many heard about Jesus on that day. Some said his face shone like an angel. Then he looked up and saw the Glory of God, and Jesus in Heaven. It was the happiest day Stephen ever had—giving his best for Jesus right until his last minutes on Earth, and then getting to see Jesus face to face and joining Him in Heaven.



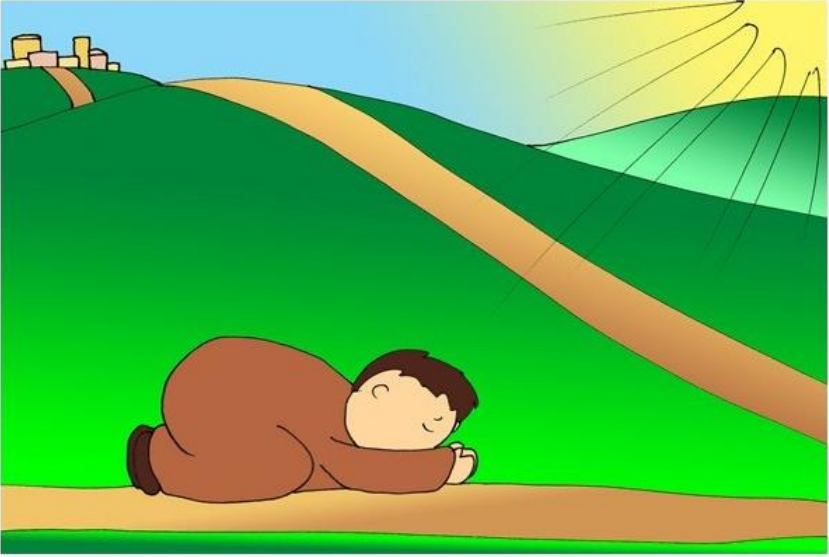
Philip's Amazing Trip

After spreading the good news of Jesus' love and salvation to many in Jerusalem, it was time for the disciples to travel around to preach in other areas and cities. Philip travelled to a place called "Samaria", teaching and bringing God's miracles of healing to the people. Many people there believed in Jesus.

Philip's next mission was to walk towards a desert area. It might not have seemed like the best place to meet lots of people, but he did what God told him to anyway. Then he noticed an important Ethiopian man who worked for a queen, riding by in his chariot. "Go talk to him" God told him. As Philip obeyed and came near, he found out that the man was reading from the book of Isaiah. It happened to be a prophecy about Jesus, but the man didn't understand who it was talking about.

Philip offered to explain it, and with joy the man listened and learned about Jesus. He too wanted to receive forgiveness and salvation. When they came to some water he asked to be baptized, and he proclaimed that he believed Jesus was God's son.

To their surprise, as they walked out of the water, Philip completely disappeared—and found himself in another part of the country, with many cities around and people to talk with. That was a great way to travel! No time was lost walking anymore on a dusty long, desert road. That miracle made the Ethiopian man rejoice all the more at the power of God, and that he had a chance to learn about Jesus.



Saul is Stopped—Paul Preaches

Saul really didn't know the truth about Jesus, and he put all his time and effort into trying to stop the followers of Jesus. This made things very difficult, and made Jesus sad too. So Jesus decided to make a surprise appearance to Saul, and set him straight—and ask Him to join the right team, those that were following the way God was leading. To tell others about Jesus, instead of trying to stop them.

As Saul is going on a trip to Damascus, suddenly a bright light shines on him and he is so taken by surprise he falls to the ground. Then Jesus—a voice coming from the light—asks him why he's doing what he's doing. At first Saul doesn't know who's talking, but Jesus introduces himself, and tells him what to do next. Obediently Saul does just what Jesus said: to go in the city and he'd be told what to do.

Saul is led to the city, as a blind man, blinded from the bright light, and brought to a house to rest. At this time a man called Aeneas, a disciple of Jesus, received a clear instruction from God—to go to certain house where Saul was resting and blind, and pray for Saul's healing. God told Ananias that Saul was now called to also be a disciple of Jesus. It was a surprising message from God, and took some courage to do it—since he knew that Saul wasn't being nice to Jesus' disciples.

Ananias obeyed, found Saul and prayed for his healing. Immediately it was as if scabs fell off his eyes, and Saul could see again. He was then baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit too. He was now ready to go and do as Jesus said to do—to preach and teach as many as he could about Jesus, spreading the truth of God's word and message of salvation. He was a completely new man, and took on a new name: Paul!



Arise

Aeneas was sick in bed for eight years. That's a long time. Everyone around knew about him, and how his illness made him unable to get up out of bed. Peter was taking a trip to all sorts of areas, visiting the believers, teaching and praying for people. When he met Aeneas he told Him of Jesus' power to heal. "Arise, and make your bed" Peter said. Aeneas believed and was able to get up, right at that moment.

This miracle of Jesus' healing power so amazed those living in that city and in the nearby area. All who saw Aeneas healed and well, turned their hearts to God and believed in Jesus' love.

Nearby was a place called "Joppa", and there lived a wonderfully kind lady, who was a disciple, called Tabitha. She was always busy helping others. She used her time and strength and all that she had to help people, giving things to others, and doing kind deeds. She would make coats and clothes and give them to those who had a need. Everyone who knew her loved her and appreciated her.

She then became real sick, so sick it seemed she'd never recover. A team of disciples went to find Peter. They asked him to come right away and to pray for her. Peter traveled back with them and went into the room where Tabitha was. She was so very still, her eyes shut, and it seemed she wasn't alive anymore. Peter had faith that Jesus would heal her. He knelt down and prayed for her to be healed. Then he turned to her and said "Tabitha, arise!"

Tabitha immediately opened her eyes, and Peter took her hand and helped her to get up. Everyone was so very happy to see their friend again. News spread around that Tabitha was well again, and many believed on Jesus when they heard about it.



Cornelius

Peter was very hungry, but the meal was still being prepared, so he went upstairs and rested. God then talked with him and gave him a special message, telling him three times to do something that he normally wouldn't have chosen to do. God said there were three men coming to the house right then to meet him. He was to go with them. They weren't people he normally talked with, but God wanted Peter to tell them about Jesus. Everyone needed to hear about Jesus—everyone in the whole world—no matter what country they came from, or who their relatives were, or what they believed in at that time.

When Peter went down stairs it happened just as God had said. There were three men there wanting to talk with him. What they said was very amazing. There was a man called "Cornelius", and he loved God, and prayed, and tried to do his best to help others. One day while he was praying God sent an angel to him, who told him a very clear message. The angel told Cornelius about Peter, and also where he was living, and that he was to talk with Peter.

After hearing these men's story, and the reason for their visit, Peter agreed to go home with them. He talked to Cornelius and all that were in his house. They all eagerly listened, and believed all that Peter came to tell them about Jesus, and His gift of salvation. Then a wonderful thing happened! Cornelius and all that were there listening, also received God's Holy Spirit, just as the disciples had. They were baptized and became disciples also.

Peter was willing to go to visit some people that most others didn't go and talk with, and then God showed them that His gift of salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit was for all people on Earth. As a result of Peter obeying what God told him to do, other disciples followed his example and many others heard the good news about Jesus.



Peter's Adventure

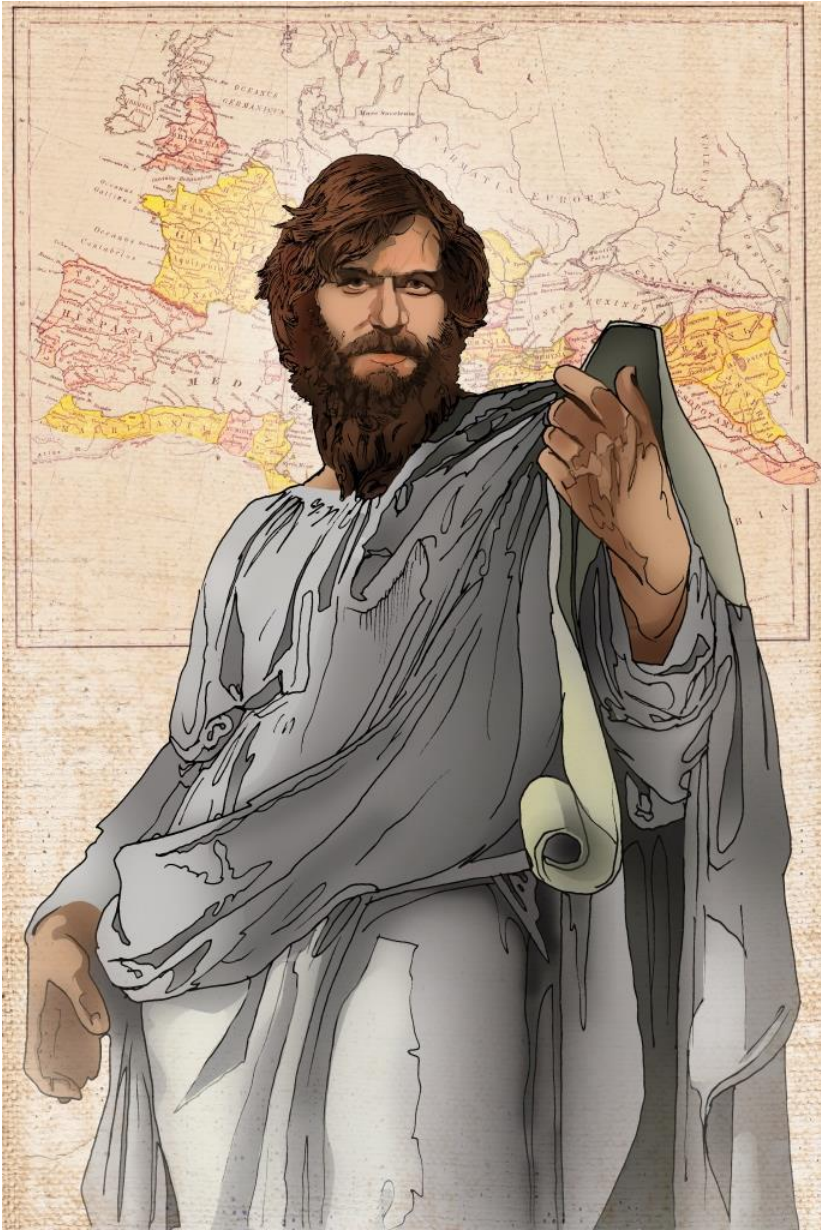
At the time of celebrating Easter, Peter had an amazing encounter with an angel of God, who came to help him. There was a king who was particularly concerned with being well thought of by others. Some people didn't like what the disciples were doing, and wanted them stopped. So to try and make them pleased, this king ordered that Peter not be allowed to preach freely. He put Peter in a place where he'd have to stay for a little while, and not be able to travel around. There were locked doors and many people in charge of guarding and keeping Peter there, until the king wanted him to come out again in a couple days.

All the disciples that heard of it knew that God could do the miracle, and make Peter free again to preach and teach. They prayed for him, and just didn't stop praying! In answer to prayer God sent an angel to Peter, who woke him up, told him to put on his shoes and coat and follow him. Peter obeyed and walked out of there with the angel. The big gate opened all by itself, and Peter and the angel walked on down the street. Then the angel disappeared and Peter realized it wasn't just a dream, but it had really happened!

He walked to the house where a group of disciples were staying and praying for him. After knocking on the door, a young lady named Rhoda came to see who it was. Rhoda was so happy and excited to see that it was someone who seemed to be Peter, she didn't even let him in at first, but told the others. They could hardly believe it!

Peter kept knocking, till at last he was let into the house and could share the exciting story with them, of just how their prayers were answered. Everyone was so happy! Their prayers had been answered. Peter then journeyed on to other places to continue telling people about Jesus.

In the morning, when the king wanted Peter to come and see him, he and everyone else were totally surprised to see that Peter had completely disappeared! It was impossible. No one could have just vanished like that. But God can do things like that, especially when people are praying and doing their best to tell the good news of His love and Salvation to others.



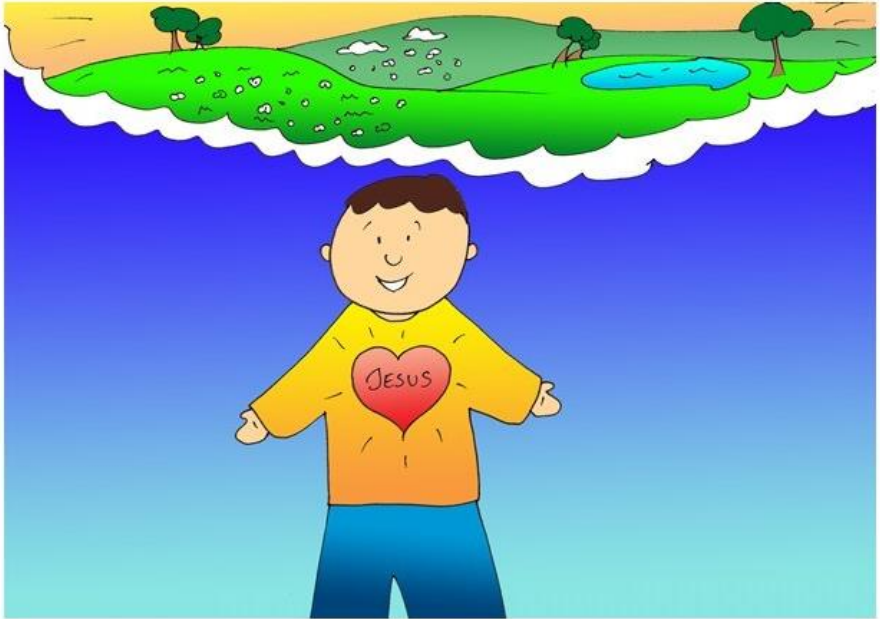
Paul's Adventures

Paul took time to learn and study about useful things when he was younger—like languages, and about lands, and the Bible too. Knowing these things helped him in his job for the Lord of telling many people about Jesus and His love.

Paul was determined to not give up, no matter how difficult things got for him. It sure wasn't easy to be on the go most of the time, not always feeling warm and healthy, or having plenty to eat. He loved Jesus so much, that even when things were hard, he still did his best. Paul wanted to do all he could to tell as many as possible about Jesus' arrival to the world—and His gift of Salvation. He just wanted to get the job done—he wanted to be a winner for Jesus!

Many people all around were told about Jesus, because of Paul's faithfulness to spread the good news. People received healing through Paul's prayers, because they had faith that Jesus would help them. Paul didn't stay in one place for too long, but did a lot of traveling as well, so people in other places could have the opportunity to know about Jesus too. He also wrote as many of God's words down to give to the disciples and believers who lived in far away places.

Paul found out that a good way to find strength to keep going was to keep being thankful, all the time, to be content, to not think he had to have things just a certain way in order to be happy—but just be happy that Jesus loves us all. He kept his mind on the Heavenly reward that we can also look forward to one day, if we do our job on Earth for Jesus faithfully.



Heaven

Heaven is the most beautiful place that has ever been made. And guess who it was created for? Someone very special! –You! And all God’s children who love and obey Him, and who believe in Jesus His son, and have received Him in their hearts and lives.

In Heaven there will be only joy, and happiness, good health, fun times, beautiful places, fancy places to live with golden streets and jewels and gorgeous building materials. You’ll be able to fly and float. You won’t get hurt. You’ll be perfectly well then, able to see, hear, talk, walk, sing, move, and have more abilities than even the best athlete or Olympic champion ever did.

Maybe you wonder why can’t we just go there right now, and not have to stay around on this world, with all the many troubles that exist. –The sadness, sickness, difficulties, pain, pollution and accidents. Well, God loves you and each one on earth so much, and He can hardly wait to make things all nice for you and for others. God wants as many people as possible to get to come to His wonderful, beautiful city that He’s preparing. People need to know about Him, and need to hear about Jesus, and to become a part of His family.

God’s going to wait just a while longer, in order for many people to hear about the good news of Salvation. Things in the world will look like they are getting worse for awhile, but those who know Jesus will be strong and have miracles happen in their lives. And then when the time is right, a wonderful event will take place. Jesus will come back and take us all—all who know and love Him—up to that wonderful place, that Heavenly land. You’ll be so very happy there—especially if you have done your part now, to help spread the good news about Jesus to as many as you can, just like His disciples did. Will you make Jesus happy, and help to tell many about Him? Get ready for the fun and for the prizes and rewards, by doing your best now! You’ll be so glad you did!



The Millennium

The time will come when the world will be changed to be nice, clean and safe again. Animals will all be gentle and friendly. Only good plants will grow. Everyone will have enough to live happily and comfortably. The world will look even more beautiful

. Those who love and follow Jesus now will get to help Him later on. He has a special job for us to do later on—for one thousand years, in a time we can all “The Millennium”. We will help to teach the people on the Earth how to live in love and how to make good and wise choices. Jesus will be the King of the Earth then, and people will all learn to obey Him and do things in the right way that will keep the world and all the people on it living happily.

And one day the beautiful Heavenly City will be where those on Earth can see it! Won't that be amazing? Those who love Jesus now will be allowed to go into that great city whenever they like. They can fly to Earth to help the people living on Earth, and they can go have fun in Heaven too, with all its wonders.

This is only the beginning of the great things that are to come. It won't be long now! Jesus will make everything wonderful, when the time is right! He loves you and everyone so much!