

# Inspirational Stories

## Worship Thoughts



- \* PowerPoint Worship Talks (Quick Time Movies)
- \* Birdlife in Winton
- \* Other spiritual based thoughts to share with students and peers



# TOP 15 THINGS GOD WON'T ASK

*But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19.*

1. God won't ask what kind of car you drove, but will ask how many people you drove who didn't have transportation.
2. God won't ask the square footage of your house, **but will ask how many people you drove who didn't have transportation.**
3. God won't ask about the fancy clothes you had in your closet, but will ask how many of those clothes helped the needy.
4. God won't ask about your social statues, but will ask what kind of class you display.
5. God won't ask how many material possessions you had, but will ask if they dictated your life.
6. God won't ask what your highest salary was, but will ask if you compromised your character to obtain salary.
7. God won't ask how much overtime you worked, but will ask if you worked overtime for your family and loved ones.
8. God won't ask how many promotions you received, but will ask how you promoted others.
9. God won't ask what your job title was, but will ask if you performed your job to the best of your ability.
10. God won't ask what you did to help yourself, but will ask what you did to help others.
11. God won't ask how many friends you had, but will ask how many people to whom you were a true friend.
12. God won't ask what you did to protect your rights, but will ask what you did to protect the rights of others.
13. God won't ask in what neighborhood you lived, but will ask how you treated your neighbors.
14. God won't ask about the color of your skin, but will ask about the content of your character.
15. God won't ask how many times your deeds matched your words, but will ask how many times it didn't.



# THE GIRL NO ONE TALKED TO

By Jennifer Leigh Youngs

Last year there was a girl at our school who hardly anyone talked to. I think it was because she seldom showered, and she kind of smelled bad. Her name was Cindy Lindburg. I didn't know exactly where she lived, but it must have been somewhere in the neighborhood because we always got on the school bus at the same bus stop.

Cindy Lindburg didn't have many friends. She always came to the lunch room alone and she left alone. On the bus, no one offered her a seat, and she never asked because she was sort of a shy person. She seemed like a nice girl who had an odor problem.

One day, I was walking up to the bus stop and I saw Carl Littleton making fun of her. I couldn't hear what he was saying, but I saw the way he was laughing and rolling his eyes in his typical poking-fun-at-you way. I also saw how sad it made Cindy. Clutching her notebook to her chest like a shield, she stared at the ground and moved as far away from him as possible without leaving the bus stop entirely. As soon as I got close enough, I glared at Carl to make him stop laughing, even though I knew he probably wouldn't. He didn't. So I walked over and stood closer to Cindy so she wouldn't feel quite so bad. It was just one of those times when you just knew someone needed someone to be a friend.

I didn't think she'd say anything, but she did. Her eyes peeked up from staring at the ground and as though she thought I'd be embarrassed if anyone heard her speak to me, she whispered, "Hi."

"Hi," I said. Then, as loudly as I could, I said, "Don't pay any attention to Carl. His parents have been unsuccessful in teaching him some manners."

Some of the kids standing there laughed. The comment didn't even rouse a smile out of Cindy. By now everyone there was talking with a friend. Quietly, and with a serious look on her face, Cindy said, "I don't know why everyone hates me."

I was surprised at her words. "No one hates you," I told her.

"Then why don't I have any friends?" she asked.

Her question took me by surprise. I thought for a moment. "Well," I began, wondering if I could tell her that maybe it was because she smelled so awful, "I think you're smart and all, and you dress okay, and..."

"So then, what is it?" she blurted.



"Well," I hedged and then figured it's now or never. "Maybe it's because you...." I paused because I almost said "stink" but instead, "don't smell so good."

She looked up, studying my face as if checking to see if I was making fun of her or being mean. I guess she decided I wasn't. She nodded, like she believed what I said was true. Since she seemed to take this well, I added, "I think you'd probably make more friends if you took more baths." She looked away and, worried that I might have gone too far, I shrugged and added, "It's just a thought." (My mom says that sometimes when she gives me advice.)

Turning back to face me, Cindy took a deep breath and said, "Thank you." I was so relieved, and the next moment the bus arrived, and all the kids started piling on.

"If I save a seat for you on the bus tomorrow," she asked, "will you sit with me?"

"Sure," I said.

I'm happy to report that Cindy did take more baths from that day on. And it wasn't too long before she started to make friends at school. I was one of them.

I made a difference for the better in Cindy's life. And got a new friend to boot!

Courtesy of *Taste Berries for Teens*, Health Communications, Inc., Deerfield Beach, FL, 1999.



# BEING POLITE TO GOD

By Vesta J. Farnsworth

Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord. Leviticus 19:30.

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. Hebrews 13:8.

We would feel greatly honored if a king should visit our town, and we were invited to come before him and speak to him.

But if we were told that besides coming to him we might ask for anything we wanted most, and that he would grant our request, how we would study in order to know what to ask!

We would think of what we should wear, and just what to say when in his presence. We would be very anxious to do nothing that would displease him. When before him, we would be thinking of him and of his goodness in being so kind to us.

But really and truly we have the privilege of coming before the King of kings, the greatest Monarch that ever lived. He has invited you and me to come to Him just as often as we wish. If there is anything we want, He has sent us word, "Ask and it shall be given you." If we do not understand just what would be best, He will not give what we ask, but instead, will give something better, and we shall know that it comes because we asked Him.

Earthly kings are only men, like other men. They could not help us if we were dying, for they themselves must die. But this great King, of whom we are talking now, will never die. He has power to do anything, and, still more than that, He wants us to come before Him and ask for what we need, and to believe that He loves us.

Yes, the King is Jesus. And when we come to Him for favors we call it praying. You know just how careful we would be if we were to appear before the king of England or any other great man, but isn't it strange that some people, when they are before this greatest of all kings, seem to forget, or not care very much how they act in His presence? Have you ever thought about it this way?

Isn't it too bad that some boys and girls will even laugh and whisper when others are talking to the King, or may look about the room, or may be thinking of other things and caring nothing at all for what is said? Though He has invited them to ask whatever they please, they are so careless they will not even think what they need most.

Let us remember that God is greatly to be feared. No man can look at His face and live. When Moses was told to come near and talk with Him, he said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." It made him tremble to come near to God. Although we do not see Him we should never dare treat Him with disrespect in His house or when we kneel in prayer.

Though the Lord is so great yet He knows us tenderly, He calls us His children and delights to give us good things. He hears the prayer of the weakest child if it comes from a sincere heart.



Please read this little poem and learn to repeat it. Perhaps it will help you to be more polite to God.

### Reverence

If before an earthly king  
We were called to stand,  
Humbly would we bow the head,  
Humbly fold the hand.

Had we done some sinful thing,  
And defied his laws,  
Gladly would we welcome one  
Who would plead our cause.

Should we look about and laugh,  
He would think that we  
Did not care if all our crimes  
Should forgiven be.

Thus when to the King of kings  
One shall lead in prayer,  
Humbly let our listening hearts  
The petition share.

Foreheads bowed and hands at rest  
Should our posture be,  
While from wandering thoughts and plans  
Heart and mind are free.

*Our Little Friend*



# "GOSSIPITIS"

Judge not, that ye be not judged.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets. Matthew 7:1, 12

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. Exodus 20:16.

Gossiping is a common fault. Perhaps it is because we are all so much interested in each other that we like to talk about one another. How wonderful it would be if every time we did that we said kindly things. What if we praised the virtues of people we know instead of dwelling upon their faults? No one, perhaps, is so faultless that his life and actions are above criticism. But there seems to be a particular wicked pleasure many people get in discussing the weaknesses or unfortunate aspects of other people's character. Some people are so given to this bad habit that they might be said to have "gossipitis."



It is a sort of contagious disease too, for it spreads very rapidly. It has been known to infect a whole community in a few short weeks. When it reaches an epidemic stage it usually amounts to a community scandal. There are very few, if any, of us who have escaped some of its symptoms at some time or other. No matter how we may despise and loathe it in others, seldom do we recognize it in ourselves.

The progression of this social disease goes something like this: A startling bit of unexpected news is heard, and we run to the phone or next door in order to ask the exciting question, "Did you hear?" The person to whom the news is relayed then thoughtlessly repeats the tale to someone else, possibly not getting the facts just straight. Unintentionally the story is garbled and changed as it is passed from one to another, so that by the time it has spread to the edge of town it is in what the moving-picture industry calls technicolor.

This aspect of the disease is not nearly so bad, however, as the malignant type, in which someone's character is assailed and his reputation injured. The source of this type of "gossipitis" is usually in the mind of someone who has conceived a dislike for another, or who thinks he has been injured by another. In order to "get even" he picks flaws in the person who has won his ill-will, stressing trivial acts and ascribing selfish or unworthy motives to them. The story is picked up even by parties who have only a casual interest in the matter and passed on as the very truth. What untold harm has been done to perfectly innocent people in this way!

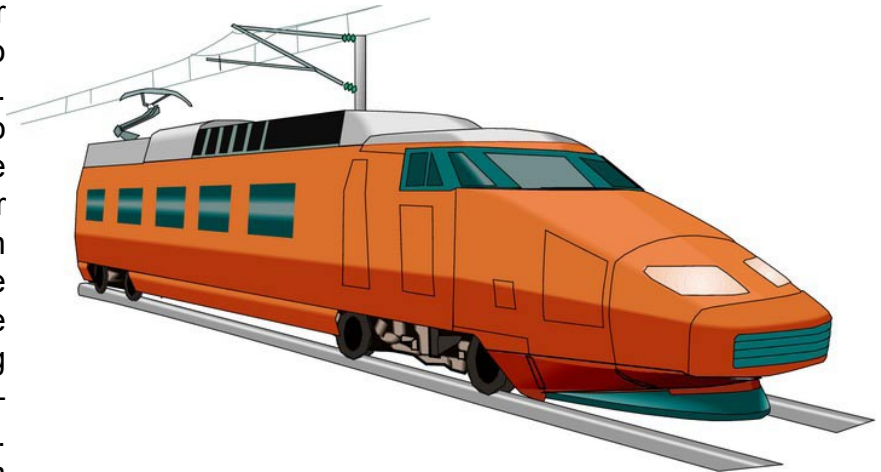
Before we pass on such stories about another, would it not be a good plan to put ourselves in his place and judge whether or not we would like such a thing to be said about us? But, you say, if it is true, what harm is there in repeating it? Well, certainly, it is all the more important that we do not repeat a story of evil if it is true, and it is all the more to our credit if we put a curb on our desire to spread it. For if there is no foundation to a story, though it may inconvenience the one

about whom it is told for a time, when the truth is known, such a person is vindicated. But for the poor fellow who has made a serious mistake and needs help, such a story of his failure might blast all hopes for his recovery to the esteem of his friends.

One of the ancient philosophers said, "No man is my friend who will either permit my name to be rudely handled in his presence, or so handle it himself; and if he repeats gossip while disbelieving it himself, then he is ten times my enemy."

If we hear some surprising bit of news about another that shocks us, would it not be the kind thing, if we knew him well enough, to go to him and ask whether the report is true? If it should be true, then we should plead with him to take whatever steps are necessary to set his reputation right before his fellows. Perhaps things are not as they seem, or there may be circumstances which he would reveal to us that would make us sympathetic with him and desirous of helping him. Usually there are angles to every tale about another, which, if known, would change the whole judgment of the public in regard to the person or people involved.

Let us think of a few examples of how this terrible disease of "gossipitis" works. A prominent church pastor wanted to present some educational films to his church young people. A local motion-picture manager was agent for these films. It was necessary to go to the theater office to select them. The pastor and his son went to the theater and were shown to the projection room. Some member of his church saw him and his son entering the theater entrance. He spread the story around that the pastor made a practice of taking his boy to picture shows. The pastor was distressed at the gossip. He found it necessary to make a public explanation.



In a crowded club car of a railroad train, a Christian young woman was sitting alone until, at one station, an older woman got on and found the empty seat beside this girl. In an hour or two, the older woman signaled to the porter to bring her a drink from the club car. He came back with a bottle of beer. She asked the young lady whether she would hold the bottle until she could find her money in her handbag. The girl, wanting to be courteous, did so, although with much reluctance. Somebody passing in the aisle just then recognized her, and spread the story to her friends that she was seen drinking beer on a train. If it had not been for the high character of the young woman involved, many might have believed the story, and her reputation would have been much damaged. Fortunately, she was such a refined and spiritually-minded person that no one would believe the story.

Such stories only prove how wicked reports are made out of innocent circumstances. Of course, it also shows how careful we should be not to give anyone a chance to spread such stories about us. The Bible tells us to avoid the very appearance of evil. Our reputation is what we make it,



and we cannot be too careful that we are not caught in situations or circumstances that cannot be explained. There is a wholesome sermon in this poem by Benton P. Stebbins:

'They say'-ah, well, suppose they do:  
But can they prove the story true?  
Suspicion may arise from naught  
But malice, envy, want of thought;  
Why count yourself among the 'they'  
Who whisper what they dare not say?

'They say'-but why the tale rehearse,  
And help to make the matter worse?  
No good can possibly accrue  
From telling what may be untrue;  
And is it not a nobler plan  
To speak of all the best you can?

'They say'-well, if it should be so,  
Why need you tell the tale of woe?  
Will it the bitter wrong redress,  
Or make one pang of sorrow less?  
Will it erring one restore,  
Henceforth to go and sin no more?

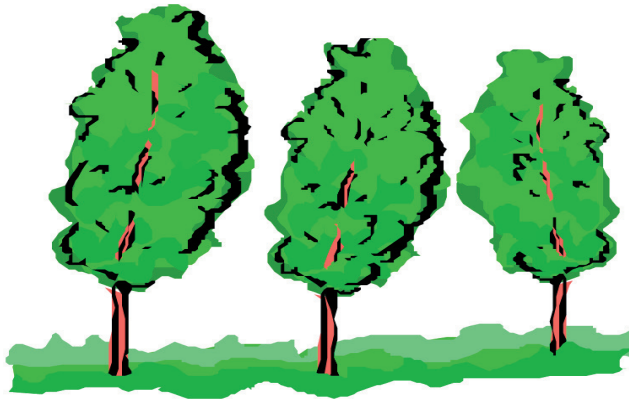
'They say'-oh, pause and look within;  
See how your heart inclines to sin.  
Watch! Lest in dark temptation's hour  
You too should sink beneath its power.  
Pity the frail-weep o'er their fall;  
But speak of good or not at all.

"Gossipitis" is a disease—a disease of the heart and mind and will. Perhaps its best antidote is given to us by Jesus, our perfect example: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." When we obey that command we shall be showing kindness in its most noble form.

*The Youth's Instructor.* Adapted.



## Parable of the Three Trees



I wanted to share this special story with you. Like a lot of things in life, it's much easier said than done, but this is where faith and perseverance comes in.

Once there were three trees on a hill in a woods. They were discussing their hopes and dreams when the first tree said, "Someday I hope to be a treasure chest. I could be filled with gold, silver and precious gems. I could be decorated with intricate carving and everyone would see the beauty."

Then the second tree said, "Someday I will be a mighty ship. I will take kings and queens across the waters and sail to the corners of the world. Everyone will feel safe in me because of the strength of my hull."

Finally, the third tree said, "I want to grow to be the tallest and straightest tree in the forest. People will see me on top of the hill and look up to my branches, and think of the heavens and God and how close to them I am reaching. I will be the greatest tree of all time and people will always remember me."

After a few years of praying that their dreams would come true, a group of woodsmen came upon the trees. When one came to the first tree he said, "This looks like a strong tree, I think I should be able to sell the wood to a carpenter." and he began cutting it down. The tree was happy, because he knew that the carpenter would make him into a treasure chest.

At the second tree a woodsman said, "This looks like a strong tree, I should be able to sell it to the shipyard." The second tree was happy because he knew he was on his way to becoming a mighty ship.

When the woodsmen came upon the third tree, the tree was frightened because he knew that if they cut him down his dreams would not come true. One of the woodsmen said, "I don't need anything special from my tree so I'll take this one" and he cut it down.



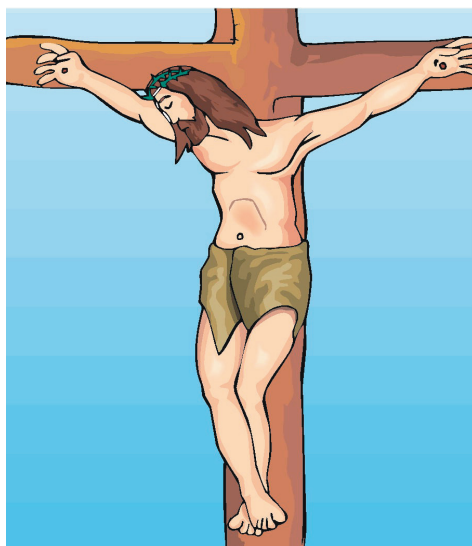
When the first tree arrived at the carpenters, he was made into a feed box for animals. He was then placed in a barn and filled with hay. This was not at all what he had prayed for. The second tree was cut and made into a small fishing boat. His dreams of being a mighty ship and carrying kings had come to an end. The third tree was cut into large pieces and left alone in the dark.

The years went by, and the trees forgot about their dreams. Then one day, a man and women came to the barn. She gave birth and they placed the baby in the hay in the feed box that was made from the first tree. The man wished that he could have made a crib for the baby, but this manger would have to do. The tree could feel the importance of this event and knew that it had held the greatest treasure of all time.

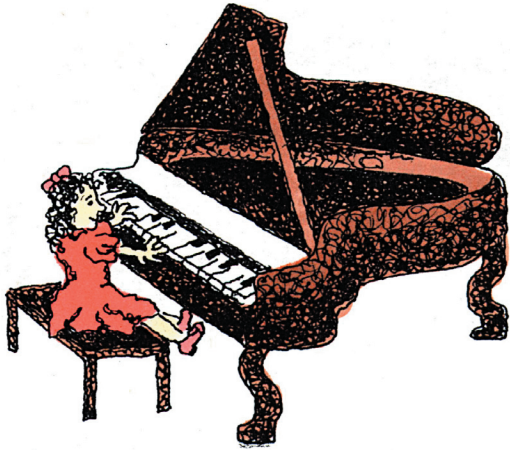
Years later, a group of men got in the fishing boat made from the second tree. One of them was tired and went to sleep. While they were out on the water, a great storm arose and the tree didn't think it was strong enough to keep the men safe. The men woke the sleeping man, and he stood and said "peace" and the storm stopped. At this time, the tree knew that it had carried the King of Kings in its boat.

Finally, someone came and got the third tree. It was carried through the streets as the people mocked the man who was carrying it. When they came to a stop, the man was nailed to the tree and raised in the air to die at the top of a hill. When Sunday came, the tree came to realize that it was strong enough to stand at the top of the hill and be as close to God as was possible, because Jesus had been crucified on it.

The moral of this story is that when things don't seem to be going your way, always know that God has a plan for you. If you place your trust in Him, He will give you great gifts. Each of the trees got what they wanted, just not in the way they had imagined.



Courtesy of: <http://www.rogerknapp.com/inspire>



## The Little Girl and the Piano

A little girl wanted to become a great pianist, but all she could play on the piano was the simple little tune, "Chopsticks." No matter how hard she tried, that was the best she could do. Her parents decided after some time to arrange for a great maestro to teach her to play properly. Of course, the little girl was delighted.

When the little girl and her parents arrived at the maestro's mansion for the first lesson, they were escorted by the butler into the parlour, where they saw a beautiful concert grand piano. Immediately, the little girl dashed over to the piano and began playing "Chopsticks." Her embarrassed parents started across the room to tell her to stop, but, as she played, the maestro entered the room and encouraged the little girl to continue.

The maestro then took a seat on the piano bench next to the little girl, listening to her play. After a moment he began to play along with her, adding chords, runs, and arpeggios. The little girl continued to play "Chopsticks." The parents couldn't believe their ears. They were hearing a beautiful piano duet, played by their daughter and the maestro, and amazingly enough, the central theme of it was still "Chopsticks."

At times you may feel like you're a nobody, that you will never accomplish great things. But think of that little girl. All she could play was "Chopsticks." Nobody wanted to hear "Chopsticks." It was an embarrassment to her parents and annoying to everyone else. Yet the maestro encouraged her to keep on playing.

God knows what you can do. He created you with gifts and talents. Sure, compared to some people's abilities, your gifts and talents may seem like "Chopsticks"—not very original and not very spectacular. But God says, "Keep on playing, and make some room on the piano bench for Me." God is able to take the little that we are able to do and turn it into something beautiful for Him.

Adapted from *Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks* by Wayne Rice, © 1994 Youth Specialties, Inc.

<http://www.munachi.com/stories>





# Believing

Author unknown, source unknown

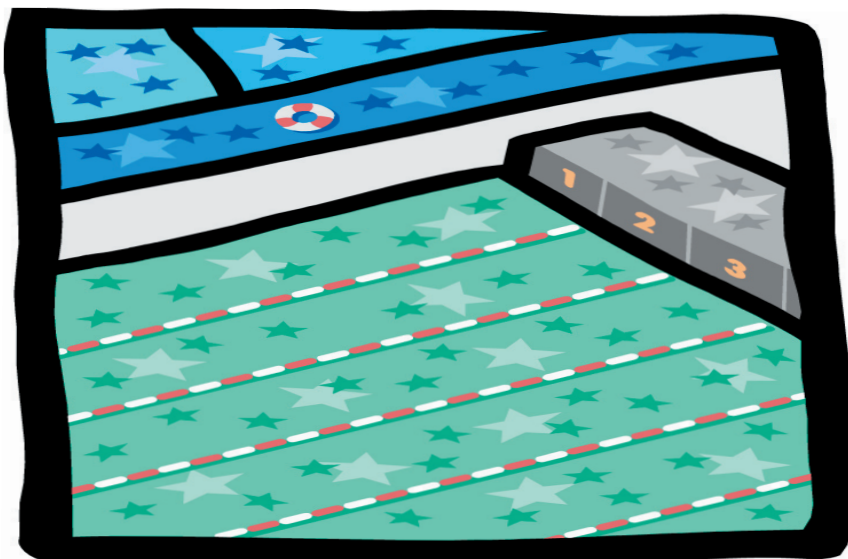
A young man who had been raised as an atheist was training to be an Olympic diver. The only religious influence in his life came from his outspoken Christian friend. The young diver never really paid much attention to his friend's sermons, but he heard them often.

One night the diver went to the indoor pool at the college he attended. The lights were all off, but as the pool had big skylights and the moon was bright, there was plenty of light to practice by.

The young man climbed up to the highest diving board and as he turned his back to the pool on the edge of the board and extended his arms out, he saw his shadow on the wall. The shadow of his body was in the shape of a cross.

Instead of diving, he knelt down and asked God to come into his life. As the young man stood, a maintenance man walked in and turned the lights on. The pool had been drained for repairs.

Courtesy of: <http://www.inspirationalstories.com>



## Cat-a-pult

Author unknown, source unknown

Ever have a cat up a tree? Ever seen a catapult? The following was received from a missionary in Romania. God's care, creativity and timing is awesome!

Suddenly a bright idea struck the pastor! By tying the wispy branches of the tree to the bumper of his car and slowly driving forward, he could bend the top branches enough to reach his terrified, precious kitten. Carefully, the brave rescuer executed the brilliant plan. However, just as the pastor reached for his furry friend, the rope snapped and the wide-eyed, frozen kitty flew through the air as though catapulted into space. What to do? After a fruitless search the dejected pastor gave the care of his former companion into the hands of his creator.

While shopping not many days later, the pastor bumped into the grocery cart of a woman from his church. Knowing her reputation for disliking cats, he commented on the fact that she had cat food in her basket.

"You'll never believe what happened!" replied the woman. "My little girl has been begging me for a kitten for months and I continually responded that we have no need for a cat. She has such love for animals, and one day when she again asked for her very own cat, I told her that I would not get a cat for her, but if God gave her one, she could keep it." Satisfied with the answer, my daughter ran into the backyard, got down on her knees, closed her eyes tightly and prayed, "Dear God, please send me a kitty of my very own to love and care for. Amen."

"She opened her eyes and what do you think she saw? A little kitten with paws outstretched flying through the air. It landed right in front of my daughter and has been part of our family ever since!"



Courtesy of: <http://www.inspirationalstories.com>



# Cookies

Author unknown



A small boy at summer camp received a large package of cookies in the mail from his mother. He ate a few, then placed the remainder under his bed. The next day, after lunch, he went to his tent to get a cookie. The box was gone.

That afternoon, a camp counselor who had been told of the theft, saw another boy sitting behind a tree eating the stolen cookies. "That young man," he said to himself, "must be taught not to steal."

He returned to the group and sought out the boy whose cookies had been stolen.

"Billy," he said, "I know who stole your cookies. Will you help me teach him a lesson?"

"Well, yes, but aren't you going to punish him?" asked the puzzled boy.

"No, that would only make him resent and hate you," the counselor explained. "I want you to call your mother and ask her to send you another box of cookies."

The boy did as the counselor asked and a few days later received another box of cookies in the mail.

"Now," said the counselor, "the boy who stole your cookies is down by the lake. Go down there and share your cookies with him."

"But," protested the boy, "he's the thief."

"I know. But try it, see what happens."

Half an hour later the camp counselor saw the two come up the hill, arm in arm. The boy who had stolen the cookies was earnestly trying to get the other to accept his jack-knife in payment for the stolen cookies, and the victim was just as earnestly refusing the gift from his new friend, saying that a few old cookies weren't that important anyway.

[Courtesy of :http://www.munachi.com/stories](http://www.munachi.com/stories)



# A Hug

## The Hug!



It's wondrous what a hug can do.  
A hug can cheer you when you're blue.  
A hug can say, "I love you so,"  
Or, "Gee, I hate to see you go."  
A hug is, "Welcome back again."  
And, "Great to see you! Where've you been?"  
A hug can soothe a small child's pain,  
and bring a rainbow after rain.  
The hug! There's just no doubt about it-  
we scarcely could survive without it!  
A hug delights and warms and charms.  
It must be why God gave us arms.  
A hug can break the language barrier,  
and make your travels so much merrier.  
No need to fret about your store of 'em,  
the more you give, the more there's more of 'em.  
So stretch those arms without delay  
and give someone a hug today!

-Author unknown-



<http://www.rogerknapp.com/inspire/hugpoem.htm>



# WHERE THERE'S A WHEEL . . . THERE'S A WAY

Bird Life in Wington  
by John Calvin Reid



In my travels here and there in the world of imagination, I came one day to the country called Bird Land. There I chanced upon the town of Wington. Wington is very much like a number of towns with which you may be acquainted, and its church life not very different from that in the church of which you are a member, but for one thing: all of the inhabitants of Wington are birds. Most interesting birds they are indeed; and I was surprised to find how many of their ideas and habits are like our own. The birds of Wington, I am convinced, are almost human.



We shall begin with Mr. Mockingbird. He is one of the very best members of the First Birderian Church of Wington. For one thing, he is the most gifted singer in the choir. Quite remarkable is the fact that he can carry one part as well as another. He can jump from low bass to high soprano and back again with no effort at all. He is just as willing as able, too, and always on hand. So, if some other members of the choir is absent because of a cold in the bill, or ruffled feathers, or late sleeping, Mr. Mockingbird smiles, hops right in and does his best. I do not know how the First Birderian Church would get along without him.

He is a good worker in other ways too. Would you believe it? He makes it his habit to spend one night each week flying from tree to tree inviting other birds to church.

Last week he chirped first at Mr. Crow's door. Mr. Crow was not in a very good humor because, well, just because Mr. Crow never is. He didn't invite his visitor to hop in and roost a while. But Mr. Mockingbird appeared not to notice the cold reception, and pleasantly invited Mr. Crow to come to church anyway. Then Mr. Crow said, trying hard to look very important, "Thank you, Mr. Mockingbird, but I really cannot afford to be away from my work on Sundays. I am in the funeral business, you see, and nowadays one never knows when the phone may ring." "Besides," he added, trying to look quite pious this time, "I have always felt that one could pray just as well at home, or for that matter out in the country on the end of a dead limb."



Mr. Mockingbird was thinking, "Well, if he prayed as much as he wants me to think he does, he would not have such a glum look on his face."

Then, Mr. Crow asked one of those sharp questions such as birds sometimes ask when their conscience is beginning to hurt them. "Mr. Mockingbird, you do not think that one has to go to church in order to get to heaven, do you?"

He supposed that would silence Mr. Mockingbird for good, but he had an answer ready. "For myself," he said, "I'm going to choose the front door. I know it is open, and I'm not sure about the others."

With that, he moved on down the street to the home of Mr. Duck, and again gave his friendly invitation. And what do you suppose Mr. Duck said? "Quack, quack, quack!" which in our language means, "Hypocrites in the church!"

But the real reason he did not want to go to church was that he had planned to go swimming on Sunday. And do you know, as he waddled down to the edge and pushed off into the lake, I believe he knew, deep in his heart, that he was the biggest quack of all.

But Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow did accept Mr. Mockingbird's invitation. They said that they had just moved into Wington, did not know many birds as yet, and since Mr. Mockingbird had been so kind to call, they would be glad to come and would bring their children too.

And they did! When Mr. Mockingbird looked out from the choir next Sunday, there they were, the whole Sparrow family! Can you understand why Mr. Mockingbird's solo that morning was the best he had ever sung? Perhaps the words had something to do with it, for there was a line, "The sparrow hath found a house where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King, and my God." But I think still more, he was inspired to sing unusually well because the Sparrows were present.

Later, Pastor Penguin announced as his text, "Not even a sparrow falls to the ground without your heavenly Father's continual watchful care." After the service, as Mr. Sparrow shook hands with Mr. Mockingbird and thanked him for his solo, he said, "I was glad when you said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.'"



# MOONSTRUCK!

Bird Life in Wington  
by Calvin Reid



Bill Whippoorwill and Hoo-Hoo Owl are getting very, very tired of being in the hospital, but Dr. Snowbird says they will have to stay at least two weeks more. The accident was quite serious. Both of Bill's legs were broken, while Hoo-Hoo suffered a fractured skull and a broken wing.

I suppose the trouble really began on that Sunday evening about six weeks ago when Bill and Hoo-Hoo were watching the moon rise. It was full that night and ever so big and bright as it slipped over the hill.

"Wouldn't it be nice if we had the moon with us all the time?" asked Bill. "I do hate those dark, gloomy nights when the moon doesn't come. It's so hard to see the gnats and mosquitoes that sometimes we don't have enough for supper."

"If we could catch the moon," suggested Hoo-Hoo, "We could hang it in that big tree there beside our nest. Then we wouldn't have any more dark, gloomy nights."



"Why don't we?" asked Bill. "It isn't far. Just beyond yonder hill."

With that, Mrs. Owl and Mrs. Whippoorwill, who were sitting nearby, laughed aloud.

"My, my!" said Mrs. Whippoorwill, "What will you children think of next?"

"But Mother, can't we fly over there and catch the moon? We will hurry back. Hoo-Hoo can take hold of one side, and I can take hold of the other, and we'll bring it home with us. Then, you and Mrs. Owl can hang it in the tree, and every night our yard will be pretty and bright, as it is now."

"Bill," said Mrs. Whippoorwill, "the moon isn't just beyond that hill. It is thousands and thousands of miles away."

"Also, it weighs several billion tons," added Mrs. Owl, "a rather heavy load for two little birds."

"Yes, and another thing," said Mrs. Whippoorwill, "there is no air up there where the moon is, so even if you could fly that far, you would not be able to breathe."

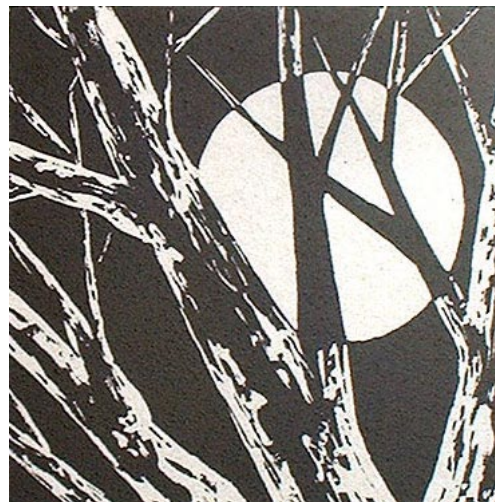
"So, children," said Mrs. Owl very, very gravely, "you must never, never try to fly to the moon. It's too dangerous to even think about!"

Next evening, as it began to grow dark, Bill said to Hoo-Hoo. "Our mothers don't know everything. Sometimes they act like old fogies. I don't believe the moon is that far away."

"I don't either," said Hoo-Hoo. "Anybody can see that it comes up just on the other side of that hill. I get so tired of mother saying, 'Don't do this,' and 'Don't do that.'"

"So do I," said Bill. "Let's slip over to the top of the hill right now, and when the moon comes up we'll grab it and carry it home. We can put it in the top of the tree ourselves. Then we will tell our mothers it fell down from the sky and lodged up there."

So, away they flew to the top of the hill, which wasn't so far away, and there they sat, side by side on a limb, waiting for the moon to rise. They did not have to wait long, for in less than five minutes, sure enough, the moon appeared. Only it came up over the hill just beyond them instead of at the place they were sitting.



"There it is," said Bill. "Let's go get it." And away they flew, straight toward the moon.

"Look," said Hoo-Hoo as they came closer. "It's coming to meet us."

"Yes, it is," replied Bill, "only there are two moons instead of one. Isn't that wonderful? You can catch one and I'll catch the other."

"I'll take the one on the right," said Hoo-Hoo. "You take the one on the left. My, aren't we having fun? Mothers don't know everything, do they?"

And that's the last word either of them spoke until they came to in the hospital. For you see, the two moons turned out to be the headlights on an automobile which came up over the hill just as Bill and Hoo-Hoo were expecting the moon.

The driver doesn't know yet what it was that hit his windshield, "thump, thump," but believe me, Bill and Hoo-Hoo know. They know another thing, too: that it would not be a bad idea to pay more attention to what they are taught in Sunday School. For, guess what the memory verse was that their teacher taught them the very Sunday before their accident? Yes, you are right! The fifth Commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

I do hope that all the other birds in Wington will be more careful to remember on Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday and Friday and Saturday, the lessons which they learn in church on Sunday!

# BY TOOTH AND CLAW

Bird Life in Wington  
by Calvin Reid



Mr. Hawk was one of the smartest of all the birds in Wington. No one could ever dispute that he was particularly smart in business matters. For this reason, some Birderians thought he ought he ought to be on one of the official Boards of the church. But of course, being smart is not the only qualification for being a good church officer!

To put it in a "bird shell," Mr. Hawk was a "crook," but so clever in his dealings that it was almost impossible to accuse him of actually breaking the law. He lived by stealing from other birds, from those that were smaller or weaker than he, but he was too smart ever to get caught. He made an easy and a good living, and he and his family fared sumptuously every day! Why, it was common knowledge in Wington that chicken was served three or four times a week at the Hawk table. Never to the minister, however. Mr. Hawk did not have much use for ministers.

Well, early one morning it happened that Mr. Hawk and Mr. Buzzard sat for a little while on a limb of a dead tree and talked with one another. There were some birds who felt that Mr. Buzzard had an overdose of religion. He was very solemn and rarely ever smiled. But at least he didn't rob and cheat other birds, as did Mr. Hawk.

"How do you make your living?" asked Mr. Hawk, once they had passed the time of day.

"I just wait on the Lord," replied Mr. Buzzard, in a slow drawl. It was quite evident that he came from Carolina! "He always provides."

"Provides what?" sneered Mr. Hawk. "He provides us with eyes to see and claws to grab. See it first and grab it first! That's the way I make my living!"

"But what would Wington be like if all the birds tried to make a living the same way?" asked Mr. Buzzard.

"Now, don't start talking religion to me," replied Mr. Hawk. "I get quite enough of that on Sunday. I do not care for it on the other six days of the week!"

"So I have observed!" retorted Mr. Buzzard. "It might not be such a bad idea for you to give it a little attention on the other six days!"

After that, Mr. Hawk thought it best to change the subject, so he said, "Have you had your breakfast this morning?"



"Not yet," answered Mr. Buzzard.

"Well, where are you going to get it?"

"I'm going to wait on the Lord," replied Mr. Buzzard, "He always provides."

"Ridiculous!" scoffed Mr. Hawk. "You'll never get any food that way. See Bill Robin sitting yonder on the end of that fence stake? Watch me get my breakfast right now!"

And with a swoop he was gone, darting swiftly down toward the little Robin whose head was turned the other direction and who had no idea that danger was near.

But just before Mr. Hawk laid his claws upon him, Bill caught a glimpse of Mr. Hawk's shadow, and quick as a flash he was gone. Too late, Mr. Hawk saw the sharp stake just below him, too late he attempted to check his head long speed. The stake buried itself deep in his breast. For a second he struggled weakly, then became very still!

And that was the end of Mr. Hawk—and the end of my story. Except two or three minutes later, you might have seen Mr. Buzzard slipping off his limb and floating downward. As he lifted his breakfast off the stake, this is what he said, "It's best to wait on the Lord; He always provides."



# A LITTLE BIRD SHALL LEAD THEM

Bird Life in Wington  
by Calvin Reid



Two little yellow birds were feeling very blue as they flew home from church. It was something Pastor Penguin said in his "sermonette." Of course he had not meant to make any of them feel sad. He had simply reminded them that next Sunday would be Mother's Day and had promised them each a little framed picture of the First Birderian Church if they would bring their parents with them on that day.



Of course, Pastor Penguin knew that in the good old days parents brought their children to church, but in these modern times that plan didn't always work, so he had to ask the children to help him train up their parents in the way they should go.

Naturally, every little bird wanted to win one of the pictures, and the majority of them were quite enthusiastic about Pastor Penguin's idea; but not Sammy and Susie Goldfinch. Because, you see, their parents seldom attended church and Sammy and Susie didn't know what to do about it.

"What do you suppose is the matter with Daddy and Mother?" asked Sammy, "They are not bad parents. And they believe in the church because they want us to go, but they don't go themselves."

"Yes," said Susie, "and they used to go. I was with Mother when she met Pastor Penguin on the street a few days ago. She talked so very nice to him and when he mentioned coming to church she said, "I suppose we have just gotten out of the habit."

"I think I know the real reason," said Sammy. "Mother and Daddy are both so busy that church has been crowded out. Daddy has to scratch so hard to make a living for us, and Mother has so much to do taking care of our nest and keeping the cat away from our tree."

"If that is the reason," said Susie, "there's something we can do about it."

"What do you mean?" asked Sammy.

Then and there they cooked up a little plan—or since they were birds, perhaps I should say they "hatched" it!



Guess what it was.

Well, Saturday afternoon, Sammy and Susie were as busy as could be down in the woods. Playing? No! That was what their mother thought they were doing. But, as a matter of fact, they were working! Scratching for worms and bugs? Yes, but not eating them. Instead they were dropping them into a tin can carefully hidden in some tall grass near the trunk of a well-marked tree. There was another can in which they collected seeds and bread crumbs, for which they hunted far and wide.

They were two tired little birds when they flew in that night for supper. But their eyes were shining and their hearts light.

Their feathers were shining too, because they had stopped their work fifteen minutes early and had finished their Saturday night bath before their mother called them to supper. Even their daddy noticed how clean they were when he started to remind them, as usual, to go wash their faces.

"Too late this time," said Sammy, "we've already had our bath."

"And Mother didn't help us either," added Susie.

And we're clean," said Sammy, holding his head to one side to show his ears.

"And right after supper we are going to brush our bills and go to bed early."

Mr. Goldfinch couldn't stand it any longer. "What in the world has come over you children?" he even laid down a nice fat bug to ask the question. "This is certainly a new schedule for Saturday nights!"

"Yes, and we have a new schedule worked out for tomorrow, too," said Sammy.

What do you mean?" asked Mr. Goldfinch. "Aren't you and Susie going to Sunday School and church?"

"Yes, we are," chirped Susie, "and you and Mother are going with us."

Then both little birds told their parents about Pastor Penguin's request, and Mother's Day and the prize pictures.

"Can't I buy you a couple of those pictures?" asked Mr. Goldfinch.

"What will I do about breakfast and dinner?" sighed Mrs. Goldfinch.

"No you cannot," said Sammy to his daddy. "We want to win them like the other little birds will do."

"And we have the answer to your question too, Mother," said Susie, "if you and daddy will





fly down to the woods with us for a minute after supper."

By this time they were through, so down to the woods they flew for the big surprise—the two cans in the tall grass beside the tree.

"See," said Susie, "a can of cereal for breakfast."

"And a can of meat for dinner," added Sammy. "Now will you go with us and help us win the pictures?"

For a moment Daddy and Mother Goldfinch were silent, hardly knowing whether to laugh or cry.

"Of course we'll go with you," said Daddy Goldfinch. "You have won your pictures and your mother and daddy too!"

"I think we have two of the sweetest and most thoughtful children in the world," added Mother Goldfinch.

That night, Susie added something new to her prayer as her mother and daddy stood beside the nest listening: "Dear God, thank you for such a happy day, and most of all thank you that Mother and Daddy are going with us to church tomorrow."

So, no one is missing from the Goldfinch pew in the First Birderian Church of Wington this morning. All four Goldfinches are so happy together that they plan to try the same schedule every Sunday from now on. The only thing I do not know is which one of the four is the happiest! Something tells me that they're going to enjoy their Sunday dinner too!



# RUFFLED FEATHERS

Bird Life in Wington  
by Calvin Reid



Mrs. Vireo and Mrs. Catbird were such lovely birds in general and each had so many fine personal qualities that it was too bad they should have "ruffled feathers" toward one another. Too bad for Mrs. Vireo and Mrs. Catbird, in the first place, for they were both quite miserable. No bird is ever happy with ruffled feathers. Too bad for the First Birderian Church of Wington, in the second place, because almost every bird knew about it and some took Mrs. Vireo's side, while others were for Mrs. Catbird. And withal, there was no little squawking and quacking in public and still more in private, which is not a nice thing in any church.

I am not sure how it started. Various reports were in circulation, as is always the case when two prominent church members have trouble. One report had it that it all began the Sunday Mrs. Vireo came to church with a new spring feather in her heart. She looked quite stunning, as a matter of fact, but Mrs. Catbird, being "put out" because she had not thought of it first, whispered to Mrs. Starling, "What an outlandish creation! What some old hens will do to attract attention!" Which might not have been so bad but for the fact that Mrs. Crow overheard her and told Mrs. Vireo. "Jealousy!" snapped Mrs. Vireo. After that she didn't care for Mrs. Catbird at all, and always tried to sit on the opposite side of the church on Sundays so she wouldn't have to speak to her.

Silly, wasn't it, to make so much ado over a little feather? But both Mrs. Catbird and Mrs. Vireo were very vain women—I mean birds. So several new feathers ruffled up every time they met, even though their words to one another were as soft and as sweet as honey!

Once they almost made up. There was the Sunday morning that Pastor Penguin preached on the text, "Except ye forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." In the quiet prayer period following that sermon, both of them felt so guilty and ashamed! But afterward, each of them began to think that it was the other's place to make the first move, so neither did anything.

But shall I tell you how they did become reconciled? It was quite early in the spring when something wonderful happened in Mrs. Vireo's nest—three little eggs became three little birds. As Edwin Markham, the poet, wrote:

There are three green eggs in  
a small brown pocket,  
And the breeze will swing  
and the gale will rock it,



'Till three little birds  
on the thin edge teeter,  
And our God be glad,  
and our world be sweeter!

It was certainly one happy day in the Vireo family when those three little birdies pecked their way through their shells and began to say, "peep, peep" to one another.

About two weeks later, while Mrs. Vireo was away hunting her babies a worm, Mrs. Catbird was searching for something soft with which to line her nest, when, to her surprise and delight, she came upon the end of a nice brown string. "Just the thing, a piece of string," she sang, and away she flew with the end tightly clasped in her bill. Then she began to line her nest, pulling in more and more of the string as she did. But at last she was not able to pull any more, for somehow the string had become tight. So away she flew, following along the string to find out what was the matter.

About thirty feet away she came to—what do you suppose? Mrs. Vireo's nest, or rather what had been her nest, for now it was almost a total wreck. You see, Mrs. Vireo had built her nest out of the other end of the string and Mrs. Catbird, although of course she did not know it, had been ruining the Vireo nest as she fixed her own. The three little Vireos had fallen to the ground, spraining their ankles as they did so, and were almost frightened to death.

What did Mrs. Catbird do? She flew to her nest to bring the string back and just as fast as she could she set to work to rebuild Mrs. Vireo's nest. Then down to the foot of the tree, where by this time the three little Vireos were shaking from the cold. She invited them one by one to hop up on her back, and thus carried them safely back to their nest again. Then she sat down on the nest and spread her wings over them so they wouldn't catch "birdmonia." And do you know, when she did that, so much love welled up in her heart that her ruffled feathers all smoothed out again. When Mrs. Vireo came back and heard what had happened, she was so relieved to find her children safe, and so grateful to Mrs. Catbird, that her feathers smoothed out too, and this is what she said, "Mrs. Catbird, if you will move your nest over here in this tree close to ours, you can build with the other end of the string. I am sure there will be enough for both of us."

And that is what happened. So the Catbirds and the Vireos have been the best of friends ever since. Their little birds play together almost every day and I am sure they will never make the mistake their mothers did. Yes, Mrs. Catbird and Mrs. Vireo still come to church, and best of all they come now in the right spirit.



# MISERABLE COMFORTERS

Bird Life in Wington  
by Calvin Reid



Mrs. Cardinal is in the hospital, as a result of an airplane accident, and has had a relapse. She was doing quite well until Friday when Mrs. Owl and Mrs. Pelican made a call. That night she took a sudden turn for the worse, and the doctor is quite concerned. He has put on a special nurse and issued a strict order, "Absolutely no visitors." Mrs. Owl and Mrs. Pelican cannot understand it, because they know their visit cheered her up no end.



They arrived at the hospital just after lunch when the patients were supposed to be resting. It was best to go early, they had agreed, so their visit would not be rushed. Upon their arrival, they did not inquire at the desk, but started down the hall, peering into every room. Naturally, this was embarrassing to a number of patients, but Mrs. Owl and Mrs. Pelican didn't mind.

Finally, they came to a door marked, "No visitors, please!" "This must be it," said Mrs. Owl as she pushed open the door. "Yes, here is Mrs. Cardinal, but I do believe she is asleep. Do you think we should waken her?"

"Yes, of course," replied Mrs. Pelican. "She would not want to miss our visit. Besides, she has nothing to do all day but sleep."

By this time they had shed their coats and pitched them on the bed. "Just us," said Mrs. Pelican, "we dropped by to cheer you up. My, but you have a lot of flowers; your room reminds me of a funeral parlor."

"You're a lucky bird," said Mrs. Owl, as she settled down in a chair with her arm resting on the side of the bed, with the result that she shook it every time she moved, "to be lying up there in a nice soft bed where you can get a good rest. That's where I ought to be. No one knows how I've suffered lately. But I just can't take time to go to bed. Some birds can, but I can't."

"You couldn't possibly feel as bad as I do," Mrs. Pelican broke in. "I am so nervous, and I've completely lost my appetite. Last night we had fish for supper. Mr. Pelican seemed to enjoy it, but all I could possibly eat was a shrimp cocktail, a bowl of oyster stew, four or five perch, three crab cakes. Then I just forced myself to eat a piece of pie for dessert. The little I did eat gave me indigestion. I really don't have the appetite of a Sparrow."

"More like the appetite of an Ostrich!" thought Mrs. Owl, but she didn't say it.



"But let us talk about your aches and pains rather than ours," continued Mrs. Pelican. "Was it only one wing you broke when you collided with that airplane?"

"Do let us see the wound," said Mrs. Owl before Mrs. Cardinal could answer, pulling back the cover as she talked. "My! it does look bad. Do you suppose gangrene has set in?"

"I don't like the way the way it is bandaged," said Mrs. Pelican. "Who is your physician anyway?"

"Dr. Snowbird," replied Mrs. Cardinal, weakly.

"I thought so," said Mrs. Pelican. "You remember poor old Mrs. Grosbeak was a patient of his!"

"Her death was such a shock," said Mrs. Owl. "Mrs. Pelican and I called on her two days before she passed away, and we had no idea the end was near. She looked no worse than you do, my dear."

"Yes, and she had failed to make her will," added Mrs. Pelican. "I am sure you have attended to that, Mrs. Cardinal. Just think how unhappy you would be in the next world if Mr. Cardinal's second wife should get all your property!"

At this point the two callers were interrupted by the arrival of the nurse with Mrs. Cardinal's supper tray.

"Don't tell me it is supper time," said Mrs. Owl. "How time does fly. Who would have thought we have been here three hours! Well, we just must go. Don't be disappointed if you don't feel like eating all of your supper. Hospital food is terrible."

At the door, Mrs. Pelican turned back. "You are very wise to have this 'No Visitors' sign on your door," she said. "It should keep out a lot of undesirables. Some birds can be so thoughtless."

"It really makes one feel good to do a 'bird scout' deed each day, doesn't it?" said Mrs. Owl, as they walked down the hall.

"It certainly does," replied Mrs. Pelican. "Next week perhaps we can do another by attending a funeral together."

Strange, isn't it that Mrs. Owl and Mrs. Pelican are the only two birds in Wington that do not understand why Mrs. Cardinal had a relapse!



# LEARNING TO FLY

Bird Life in Wington  
by Calvin Reid



"I do not know what is the matter with Baldy," said Mrs. Eagle to Mr. Eagle. "He's four weeks old tomorrow and he won't even try to fly."

"What does he say when you ask him to try?" asked Papa Eagle.

"He says he's afraid he will fall. Says it makes him dizzy to look down. He screams, he cries, he does everything but flap his wings. My patience is completely exhausted."

Later that evening, Mr. Eagle said to Baldy, "Son, what do you want for your birthday tomorrow? How about an airplane?"

"No, I don't like airplanes."

"Why, son?"

"Because they scare me."

"Don't you want to learn to fly?"

"No, I'm afraid I might fall."

"But mother and I both fly and we don't fall."

"Yes, but I'm sure I would. I don't want to fly."



Mr. Eagle sat thinking for a moment. he couldn't understand why a son of his should be afraid to fly. he felt Baldy must have some reason for this fear. "Son," he said, "have you ever seen anyone get hurt by trying to fly?"

Baldy hesitated, then said, "That's the way Bushy Squirrel sprained his ankle."

"What do you mean?" asked Mr. Eagle.

Then Baldy told him the whole story, as now I tell it to you.

Bushy Squirrel had come over one afternoon to Baldy's nest when both Mr. and Mrs. Eagle were away. After a while Bushy said, "My daddy is the best climber in all the world. He can climb the highest tree in the forest."



But my daddy can fly over the tops of all the trees," said Baldy. "He can fly away up almost to the sun."

"That's nothing," said Bushy, "flying is easy but climbing is hard."

"If you think flying is easy, why don't you try it," said Baldy. "I dare you."

Of course Bushy had never seen his father or mother fly. He had heard them talking one night about flying squirrels, and he didn't like to pass up a dare, so he said, "All right, here I go. Watch me!"

And with that he jumped off the limb, spread out his feet, swished his tail and headed straight for the ground! Probably he would have been killed but for the fact that he landed on a big limb about twenty feet below. He grabbed it with his claws and held on for dear life.

He was so frightened that that he lay quite still for several minutes before he dared to move, and baldy Eagle was almost as scared as he was. Both of them decided then and there that they would never, never try to fly again.

That is the story Baldy told his daddy. When he had finished, Mr. Eagle said, 'Baldy, why didn't you tell us before?'

"Because," said Baldy, "Bushy didn't want anyone to know. he was afraid that his mother might shut him up in a hole in a tree for being a naughty boy. Am I going to be punished for daring him to fly?"

"No, son," said Mr. Eagle, "because I am not going to dare you to fly. You see, squirrels were not made to fly but eagles were. Bushy does not have wings, but you do. If you spread them out and flap them, they will hold you up. Come on now, I dare you!"

"I can't Daddy, I'm afraid I might fall." And Baldy was about ready to cry.

Then Mr. Eagle did a very strange thing, a thing that looked quite heartless. he pushed Baldy out of the nest and right off the edge. Down, down he started to fall, and then for some reason he hardly knew, he began flapping his wings and what do you think? he stopped falling and started to rise instead.

"That's the way, son," called Mr. Eagle. "keep on flapping your wings. Let's see you make it back to the nest."

Up, up, a foot at a time came Baldy, until he was almost to the edge of the nest. But he couldn't make it. His strength was gone and he was out of breath, and now, again, he was falling, falling, just as fast as Bushy Squirrel fell when he tried to fly. Baldy thought it was all over for him, when all of a sudden he felt something soft under his feet and realized he was sailing out into the air.

"Here I am, son," said Papa Eagle, who had swooped down under him and caught him on his wide back. "Now I'll show you how much fun it is to fly," and they sailed out into the open and



across the river and over the top of a mountain and up toward the blue of the sky. When they were almost back home again Mr. Eagle said, "Son, I think you have learned a very important lesson. Our fears are our worst enemies. They frighten us and make us unhappy. And the only way to get ride of them is to face them and to do the very thing they tell us not to do. That is why I pushed you out of the nest. You would always have been a coward and unhappy inside unless you had tried to fly."

"I am not afraid now," said Baldy, "and I am rested, too, see?" And with that, he spread his little wings and sailed off his father's back, and they flew on home together side by side. As they landed on the edge of the nest, Baldy said, "I have changed my mind. I do want an airplane for my birthday tomorrow."

"And you shall have it," said Papa Eagle, "your mother and I are so very proud of our brave little son."





# DON'T BE A GOOSE

Bird Life in Wington  
by Calvin Reid



I think *Gertie Goose* has learned her lesson. But it was almost too late! My, but she had a narrow escape!

You see, *Gertie* was in love, or she thought she was, with *Willie the Wolf*. And who could blame her? For *Willie* was a 'bird-killer,' if ever there was one. He had the best looking brown suit, and when he smiled, those pearly-white teeth of his seemed to say, "I love you so much, I could eat you up right now." He had a brand new sports car too—a red convertible coupe with white sidewall tires, and say, how *Willie* could whistle!



It was that whistle that introduced him to *Gertie*. She was standing on a downtown street corner waiting for a bus to take her home one afternoon, when *Willie* drove by. Of course he whistled. He whistled at all the girl birds, that is, all the pretty ones, and *Gertie* certainly wasn't ugly. She liked to be noticed too, so when *Willie* gave her his wolf whistle, she smiled, then dropped her head as if she were shy.

With that, he circled the block and came back around to where she was. This time, instead of whistling, *Willie* simply pulled his car up beside her, flung open the door and said, "Hubba, hubba, hop in birdie, I'll give you a lift."

Wasn't that nice of *Willie*? *Gertie* thought so, at any rate. So she was utterly amazed at her mother's attitude when she arrived home.

"Mother, guess what?" gushed *Gertie* as she rushed into the house. Then she proceeded to tell *Mrs. Goose* how she had met *Willie*, how he had offered to drive her home, what nice manners he had, what a stunning car, what beautiful teeth, how nicely groomed his finger nails were. *Gertie* could hardly catch her breath for raving about him. "He's simply divine, Mother, and he asked me for a date next week!"

"He's more devilish than divine," said Mrs. Goose. Then she proceeded to tell Gertie the truth about the Wolf family. "Now, daughter," she said as she finished, "I don't want you to be a snob. By all means speak to Willie when you meet him on the street. You must be courteous to him at all times, but you must not go on rides or have dates with him, because, well just because he's 'wild.' You know what I mean by that. And almost always, soon or later, young birds get into trouble when they go out with wild animals."

"Oh, mother," said Gertie, "you're so old-fashioned. Why can't I do what other birds my age are doing?"

Well, did Gertie Goose break her date with Willie the Wolf after hearing what her mother said? Of course not! One evening a few days later she told her mother she was going to the movie with a girl friend to see Donald Duck in "Sink or Swim," but instead she met Willie at an agreed-upon street corner, and away they flew in his stunning car.

"My parents are so old-fashioned," said Gertie, "When I'm married, I do hope I don't waddle like mother or quack like my silly old dad."

"Stick around me, baby, and you won't need to worry long," said Willie, and he smiled from ear to ear, showing every one of his pearly-white teeth.

"Where are we going?" asked Gertie. "Aren't you taking me to the movie?"

"I should say not," said Willie. "I'm taking you to a night club that will stand you on your head."

"What's the name of it?" asked Gertie.

"The-Goose-Hangs-High," answered Willie, and again he grinned from ear to ear. He seemed to enjoy showing his teeth.

Well, that is almost the end of the story and it was almost the end of Gertie. For at this famous night club, as it turned out, several of Willie's wild friends were waiting for him. They were waiting for Gertie too, for it seems Willie had promised to bring them a nice tender fowl for supper. So, as soon as Willie and Gertie entered, they began licking their chops and looking hungrily at Gertie.

Gertie turned to Willie, expecting him to protect her, but instead he winked at his pals, then whistled. With that they all made a grab for Gertie. For a minute feathers were flying in every direction. Then, somehow, Gertie managed to break loose, and up she flew to a wooden beam near the roof.

"Bring me a ladder," called Willie, and again he grinned, but this time his teeth were anything but pretty to Gertie. As Willie started up the ladder, Gertie noticed an open window not far away, so with a swoop she was gone and straight home as fast as her wings could carry her.



"Mother, mother, I understand now, and I'll never disobey you again," sobbed Gertie, as her mother tucked her in bed, after Gertie had told her story, "and please don't tell anyone what happened."

Her mother promised, but the other birds heard about it anyway because Hoo-Hoo Owl was sitting in a tree beside "The-Goose-Hangs-High" night club and saw the whole affair through one of the windows. So now when Wington parents want to warn their children against doing something wrong, instead of saying, "Don't be silly," they simply say, "Don't be a Goose." As for Gertie, she hasn't been seen out of the house to a party or a movie or even to play in the yard for six weeks. She's waiting for her feathers to grow back!



# LEARNING THE HARD WAY

Bird Life in Wington  
by Calvin Reid



Meet Archie Kingfisher! Archie is in a good humor this morning. But such has not always been the case. He knows now that losing your temper does not pay. But, like quite a few other little birds, Archie had to learn the hard way.

As you know, the Kingfisher family lives on Riverview Avenue. Next door on one side are the Cranes, and on the other side are the Snipes.

A few days ago one afternoon, Archie, Sammy Snipe and Jerry Crane flew up the river on a fishing trip. They had good luck and before long were on their way home, each with a nice fish in his bill. Archie was particularly proud of his; so proud in fact, that he sailed over close to Sammy and said, "Mine is the biggest."



As he did so, out of his bill, of course, slipped his fish and down "kerplunk" into the river. Archie was right behind it, diving as fast as he could in an effort to reach it before it touched the water. But all he got was a good ducking. He was not hurt, of course, but my, how mad he was! When he arrived home he was crying and sputtering so much his mother could hardly understand what he was trying to say.

"Now, now, Archie," she said as she spread him out in front of the stove to dry. "Losing one fish is not so bad. There are plenty more in the river. You can go back and catch another one. But losing your temper is very, very bad, my little son," she continued. "Remember, when you are angry you cannot think straight, and you cannot see straight. You must learn to control your temper. If you do not, one of these days it will get you into trouble."

Like a great many little birds I know, Archie heard what his mother said but did not pay much attention. He just kept on sulking, which made him feel quite miserable inside. And with his lower bill stuck away out, his face looked quite horrible.

But he had almost forgotten to be mad by the next afternoon when he started up the river to fish again with Sammy and Jerry.

"Archie," said Sammy, "you were one funny sight yesterday afternoon when you dived after your fish."

Jerry added, "I'll never forget the expression on your face when you came up out of the water." Then both of them laughed.

Of course they were just teasing, but Archie did not like to be teased and all of a sudden he was angry again. And with that he started off in another direction, just boiling inside. That explains what happened next.

He had flown only a little way from his friends when he spied a nice big fish swimming slowly down the river.

"Here is my chance to get even with those two smart guys," he muttered, and without taking a second look, dived straight toward the fish!

When he came to, he was lying flat on his back with Sammy and Jerry standing over him, dashing cold water in his face.

"What happened?" he asked as he opened his eyes. "That is what we want to know," said Sammy. "You dived straight down toward this cake of ice on which we are floating."

"I saw a fish," said Archie.

"It must have been this piece of paper frozen in the ice," said Jerry.

Sure enough, right beside where Archie lay was an icy piece of paper about the size, shape and color of a fish.

Well, fortunately Archie was not hurt very much. His collision with the cake of ice only knocked his breath out of him—and let us hope, also his ugly temper!



After resting a little longer he was able to fly back home with Sammy and Jerry. His mother thought it best not to lecture him this time, because as he came in the door he said, "Mother, I know now what you meant when you said, 'when you are angry you can't think straight and you can't see straight.'"

So she spread him out in front of the stove again, rubbed his chest with camphorated oil and said nothing.

We are all glad Archie learned his lesson, but it is too bad he had to learn it the hard way, isn't it?

# FEATHERS FOR WORMS

Bird Life in Wington  
by Calvin Reid



"But we cannot afford it. You must think money grows on trees!" Mr. Isaac Barn Swallow was speaking.

"But we just must keep up with the other Barn Swallows," answered Rebekah; Mrs. Isaac Barn Swallow, that is.

"All of the other Barn Swallows are lining their nests with down," and with that she pulled her handkerchief out from under her wing and started to cry.



"All right, all right," said her husband, "I will see what I can do, but feathers are very expensive this year."

Mr. Isaac Barn Swallow was no bird's fool when it came to business matters. Also, he was very industrious. "The early bird catches the worm" was his motto. So the next morning, by the time the other birds came to the barnyard to dig for breakfast worms, he had already collected a supply and had opened a little restaurant under an oak tree in the middle of the barnyard.

On the outside was an attractive sign, "Swallow at Barn Swallow's." Mr. Barn Swallow stood in the door and called to the passing birds, "Worms for feathers. Get your breakfast here. Why waste your time and soil your fingers digging? Barn Swallow's worms are guaranteed to be slick and boneless."

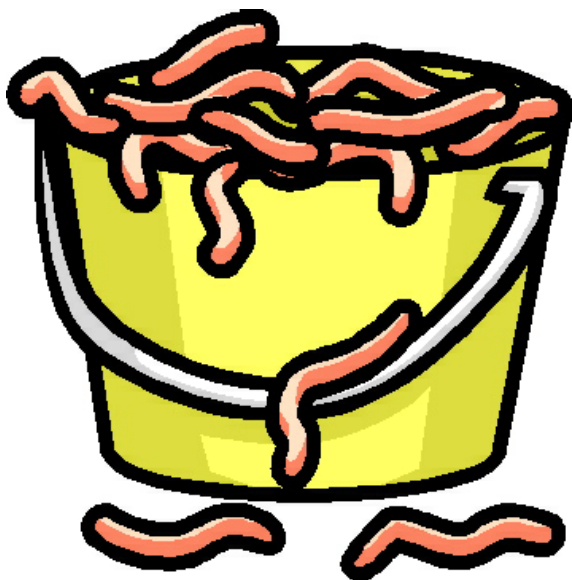
"How much are your worms?" asked Speedy Skylark as he paused in front of the door. Speedy's real name was Joseph, but since he was so fast and quick on the wing, his schoolmates called him "Speedy." However, Speedy was anything but quick and fast around his home; in fact he was lazy. So lazy that he just hated to dig his own worms for breakfast.



"Two for a feather," answered Mr. Barn Swallow. "How many will you have?"

"I'll take four please," answered Speedy. Turning he plucked two feathers, one from each wing, and handed them to Mr. Barn Swallow. He gobbled down his four worms and hurried away to school.

"Two feathers don't matter," he said to himself. "It is so much easier to trade feath-



ers for worms than to dig for them. I'm so glad Mr. Barn Swallow has opened a restaurant."

Of course, Speedy did not eat there every morning. Sometimes he dug his own breakfast. But there were quite a few mornings when he roosted late or felt lazy. At such times he would rush over to Mr. Barn Swallow's and exchange two or three more feathers for worms—until after a month or so he did not have so very many feathers left. Still, Speedy did not think it mattered very much. At least that is what he thought until yesterday.

Yesterday was the day of the big Wing-Meet, with school birds from all over Skyland County gathered for the races.

The Wington School was in first place with 256 points, up to the very last race—the 100 yard flash. Speedy had been selected to represent the Wington School in that particular race because he had won it the year before. It was generally agreed that no bird was more swift and quick on the wing than Speedy. The Wington cheerleaders were very confident as they called for 15 whistles for Speedy, as he and six other birds lined up in the maple tree at the end of the stadium.

"Ready," said the referee, "on your limb, go!"

Speedy darted forward with all his might, expecting to be in front all the way. To his amazement, three other birds were ahead from the start. Halfway to the goal, two others passed him. That left only Pete Buzzard behind. Pete was a graceful bird on the wing but was considered one of the slowest flyers in Skyland County. But, just short of the finish line, Pete sailed past Speedy, leaving him seventh and last in the race and throwing the Wington School from first place to third in total points.

"What was the matter?" said Baldy Eagle, the coach, to Speedy after the meet. Speedy could only hang his head. Deep in his heart he knew what the matter was.

That night he could not sleep for worrying. Then there came to him what he thought was a wonderful idea. The next morning he was up bright and early and out digging worms, even before Mr. Barn Swallow arrived. When Mr. Barn Swallow did appear, Speedy rushed up to him.

"Look, Mr. Barn Swallow," he said, "I have a box full of worms. How many feathers will you trade me for these? Please sir, I want my feathers back."

"Trade you feathers for worms? Said Mr. Barn Swallow. "Why, you silly little bird, my business is to trade worms for feathers, not feathers for worms." With that he turned and

walked away chuckling, leaving Speedy alone and broken hearted.

So he carried his worms home to his mother and then told her the whole story.

"I am so sorry, Mother. What shall I do? Will my feathers grow out again? Will I ever be able to fly as I once did?"

"I do not know," Mrs. Skylark answered slowly. "We can only wait and see, my son," she concluded. "You must remember that God has given us some things which he expects us to guard and keep at all times. If we fail to do that, and we allow them to get away from us, we can never buy them back again—not at any price."

Poor Speedy Skylark! Mr. Barn Swallow was right. What a silly little bird, to trade his beautiful, wonderful feathers that God had given him—for worms!





# HIDDEN TALENTS

Bird Life in Wington  
by Calvin Reid



"I am worried about Downy," said Mrs. Woodpecker to her husband one night as they were getting ready to roost.

"What seems to be the matter?" asked Mr. Woodpecker.

"He is so discouraged," replied Mrs. Woodpecker. "As you know, he had his heart set on being in the Wington Glee Club, but the music director gave him an audition today and discovered that he is a 'monotone' and told him he was wasting his time trying to learn to sing. It is all the harder for him because two of his playmates, Henry Warbler and Johnny Mockingbird were accepted in the Glee Club. When Downy arrived home he said to me, 'I suppose I just don't have any talent, Mother. Why is it that we Woodpeckers can't sing like other birds?'"



"What did you tell him?" asked Mr. Woodpecker.

"I tried to explain to him," she replied, "that God has given different talents to different birds, and that everyone does have some talent with which to praise God. One of these days, I assured him, he would discover his talent. In the meantime, I told him he must be patient and not allow himself to be jealous of the other birds."

"You are a very wonderful mother to our little son," said Mr. Woodpecker. "I am afraid I have not been spending enough time with him lately."

The next morning at breakfast Mr. Woodpecker said, "Downy, I am coming home early from the office today. How would you like to go with me for a flight into the park?"

Of course Downy thought that a wonderful idea. So, that afternoon about four o'clock, they started out together. Mr. Woodpecker pointed out the different kinds of trees to Downy and told him how certain bugs and insects laid their eggs under the crevices of the bark. He showed Downy how to find the grubs and to dig them out with his bill.

"There is no use tearing up the bark unless you know a grub is under it," said Mr. Woodpecker. "The thing to do is to tap on it two or three times like this. Then be very still and listen. If a grub is underneath, he will be frightened by the sound and you can hear him move. Then quickly you can peck away the bark, like this, and get him."



"Oh, Mother," exclaimed Downy when they arrived home, "we had the best time in the world. Daddy has promised to take me again."

And he did. Twice every week Mr. Woodpecker and Downy went flying and grub hunting together in the park.

Then came what was long remembered in Wington as the *Great Scourge*. It happened in the spring. Insects seemed to come from everywhere. They bored into the trees, hid under the bark, ate up the sap and the trees began to die. For a time it was feared that all the trees in the park would perish. All the birds of Wington, young and old, were called upon to work in the park every afternoon in an effort to save the trees.

On a certain day, the Metropolitan Park Commission staged a contest and offered a gold medal to the school bird who, in one hour, could find and kill the greatest number of grubs.

Of course there were a number of birds who were quite expert in finding the grubs, among them the Nuthatch children, the Flickers and the Chickadees. But Downy's little friends, Johnny Mockingbird and Henry Warbler, were able to find only five each. They spent most of their time chipping away bark but finding nothing underneath. Downy, on the other hand, as his daddy had taught him, would tap on the bark here and there and listen for a second. Then, if he heard nothing, he would move on to some other spot. When the hour was finished, Downy had found and captured 122 grubs. No other bird had passed the 100 mark.

And who do you suppose presented Downy with the medal provided by the Park Commission? None other than Mr. Cardinal, the director of the school band. As he handed it to him he said, "Downy, as I watched you working in the park today, I noticed what wonderful rhythm you have when you peck on the bark. You are just the bird we need to play the trap drum in our school band and to lead us in our marches. Also, that suit you are wearing is just perfect for a uniform. I shall expect you at rehearsal tomorrow night."

Then it came to pass that Downy Woodpecker discovered that he had not one talent but two. Of course he has lots of fun playing the trap drum in the band, but he never allows that to interfere with what he considers his first talent, namely digging the grubs out of the trees in the park. Just how important that talent is you may judge for yourself when I tell you that Downy's father has recently been appointed Superintendent of the Wington National Park. So Downy works with his father on the trees every afternoon—gets paid for it too—and is saving his money to go to college and study forestry.



# A NEW PARTNERSHIP

Bird Life in Wington  
by Calvin Reid



For a number of years, Mr. Heron and Mr. Gull each had a fish market downtown on Bay Street.

Mr. Heron specialized in fresh-water fish, grasshoppers and frogs; Mr. Gull, in salt-water fish, oysters, clams and shrimp. Mr. Heron liked to fish in rivers or quiet lakes; Mr. Gull preferred the ocean. That explains why he called his market the "Atlantic and Pacific Sea Food Company."

Mr. Gull had a monopoly on the oyster and clam trade because of a process he had discovered and patented for opening the shells. His method was to carry the oyster or clam high into the air, then to drop it on a big flat rock down below—and presto! There it was on the half-shell, ready to serve.

Mr. Heron and Mr. Gull were friends after a fashion. But being competitors, each was somewhat jealous of the success of the other. To read the fish advertisements printed in "The Wington Flyer" you would have supposed that the chief aim of each was to get ahead of each other, and if possible, to put him out of business. But, fortunately all that is now past history.

A little more than a year ago, Pastor Penguin preached a special sermon on Stewardship. "Our food," he said to the birds, "the trees in which we build our nests, the sunshine, the air which supports us when we fly—all things which we enjoy are God's gifts. In return He expects us to show our gratitude by giving back to Him at least one-tenth of our time, our talents and our earnings. "Try it," he pleaded, "and see for yourselves what a difference it will make!"

Mr. Heron and Mr. Gull happened to fly home together after service that day. They were quite friendly, as a matter of fact, on Sundays. It was only on weekdays that they felt somewhat jealous of one another.

"For a long time I have been thinking about tithing," said Mr. Heron. "Pastor Penguin spoke the truth. In view of all that God does for us, it is only reasonable and right that we should return to Him ten percent."



"I feel the same way," replied Mr. Gull. "Frankly, I am ashamed that I have not had the courage and faith to try tithing before. If one-tenth is the amount which rightly belongs to God, I owe Him a good deal in back pay."

"Mr. Gull," said Mr. Heron, "perhaps we should not discuss business matters on Sunday, but why don't we go into partnership? I have quite a few customers who inquire for oysters, shrimp and clams, and no doubt you have some who ask for frogs and grasshoppers." Thus began "The Boop-Boop-Wad-Em-Chew Fish Company."

Within a week a partnership agreement had been drawn up, and in it was one article which provided that one-tenth of all their earnings should be set aside for God's work. They have had a wonderful time through the year discussing how to divide that ten percent and where to send it. Some has been given to the support of the First Birderian Church; some to foreign missions. For as Mr. Heron said, "While we fish all the year around here in America, what about the birds who live in the Arctic regions?" Some was sent to the Hospital for Crippled Birdies; some to the Birderian Home for the Aged; and a special gift to finish the new window in the Wington Church. Both Mr. Heron and Mr. Gull have been pleasantly surprised at how much they have had to give since they began to set it aside systematically month by month. There have been other interesting surprises too.



For example, when the new stained glass window was finished and dedicated a few weeks ago, guess what they saw in one corner? The picture of a fish!

They were so amazed they went straight to Pastor Penguin and said, "We are embarrassed. We did not expect you to advertise our business just because we contributed to the window."

Pastor Penguin smiled and then told them that for many years the fish has been a Christian symbol. He explained that the word for fish in the Greek language is IKTHUS (spelled with 5 letters). "Each of those letters," he said, "happens to be the first letter in five important words in our faith. 'I' like 'J' for Jesus; 'K' for Christ; 'TH' for Theos, God; 'U' for Uios, Son; 'S' for Soter, Savior. Put these five words together and they form a little creed, short enough for all of us to learn and understand--'Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior.' You see," concluded Pastor Penguin, "that makes the fish almost as sacred a Christian symbol as our Cross."

"Well, well," said Mr. Heron as he flew home with Mr. Gull, "I have learned something new. From now on, every time I weigh out a fish for a customer I will be thinking of that little creed—"Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior.""

"Yes, and don't forget, every tenth fish belongs to God," added Mr. Gull.

"I learned that last year," replied Mr. Heron. "Pastor Penguin was right. It makes all the

difference in the world to be in partnership with God, and on His own terms."

"We have had a good year, haven't we?" said Mr. Gull. "But for one thing, it would be perfect."

"And what's that?" asked Mr. Heron.

"Our income tax return," sighed Mr. Gull. "I was working on it last night and do you know what I discovered? The government allows fifteen percent deduction for contributions to church and charity, and we have been giving only ten percent."

"That is a mistake," said Mr. Heron. "Imagine being forced to send money to those bird-o-crats in Washington, which we might have given of our own free will to the church."

"It's Pastor Penguin's fault," said Mr. Gull. "If he had been on his toes he would have asked for fifteen percent instead of ten. We will have to speak to him about it next Sunday!"



# *Without the Power of God*

by Rondi Aastrup

There's an old Jewish proverb that says "God gives burdens; also shoulders." Five words offering paradoxical truths about God; five words offering an emphatic definition of God.

"God gives burdens." Taken alone, these three words could very well make a person want to run away from God rather than stay with Him. And many, looking at their own lives, might even blame God for allowing tribulation to fall upon them. They look so long at their troubles that before they realize it, they can see nothing else but an unjust, merciless God and a world no longer fit to exist in.

It's a good thing the proverb doesn't stop there. Instead, it goes on. "God gives burdens; also shoulders." The shoulders He has given us are the shoulders of our family members and friends, our colleagues, mentors (teachers and pastors), and of God Himself. They are the shoulders we see ahead of us as we listen and learn with—and from—each other. They are the shoulders we sense behind us as we listen and learn with our families and friends. They are the shoulders we feel next to us as we listen and learn with our colleagues. And they are the shoulders we feel under us, lifting us up as we listen and learn from the still small voice which comforts us: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28

Isn't that a beautiful promise? I am grateful every day that my God has provided so wondrously for all of my needs. For the past couple of weeks I've been thinking about the enormous responsibility that comes with working with kids. Sometimes that responsibility seems like a burden that is overwhelming, almost paralyzing. And I've been thinking how impossible it will be to do this without a good team, without some powerful shoulders working side-by-side with me. That knowledge has made it easier to sleep at night, has made the thought of this school year bearable for me...and I hope for you, too.

Paul tells us in Galatians 6:2 that we are to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ—the law of love—of caring for your brother, your sister. But while you are being there—being a shoulder—for someone else, let God be there—be a shoulder—for you, and let Him work with you. The Psalmist tells us to give Him all our cares (Ps. 55:22). And Peter says to "Cast all your anxieties on Him, for He cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7)

So, God gives burdens. But also shoulders. You see, without the last half of the proverb—without the power of God working in our lives—we can do nothing. Our burdens would so weigh us down that we would not be able to move. But with those shoulders,



both human and heavenly, there is power. Power to be and to do. Power to change and be changed. Marshall Kelly, former Bible teacher at Pine Forge Academy and dear friend of my father's talks about this power of God, and how it transforms us. Listen.

[\[Click here to play Marshall Kelly's Without the Power of God.\]](#)

When he finishes, continue...

Yes, God gives us burdens. But also shoulders. Let God be your shoulder today.

