

# THE NEW BIRTH EXPLAINED

*for children*



**Fellowship Bible Church**



***THE NEW BIRTH EXPLAINED***  
***for children***

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**Bible Study Guide**

*From the leadership development ministry of*

**FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH MISSIONS**

# Acknowledgments

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The stories and lessons in this book are based on topics from Mile's Stanford's book, The New Birth Explained and were written by Anne Marie Matthews.

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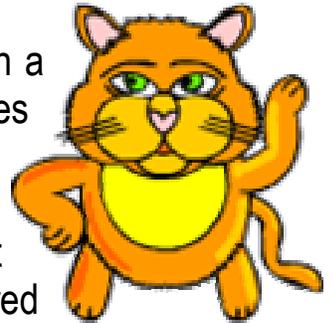
## The New Birth Explained - Children's Version

### Lesson 1: The First Adam

Do you ever wonder why you were born the way you are? Who did we come from and who are we like? Can we change what we are? These are questions that everyone has at one time or another. Let's look into this lesson and find some answers.

#### Story: "Why Am I a Cat?"

There once was a little kitten named "Freckles". Freckles lived on a farm where a lot of other farm animals lived. One sunny morning Freckles yawned, stretched and went outside to play. He found a rope hanging from the gate and swatted it around for a while. But he was tired of that old rope and went to play with the rubber ball in the yard instead. But today the ball just wasn't as fun as it used to be either. Freckles was tired of doing things kittens do. He wanted to see what all the other animals did for fun. So off he went to find out.



As he walked along, Freckles saw the pond with the ducks. Those ducks looked like they were having so much fun. They were splashing and diving in the water.



"That sure looks like fun." Freckles said to himself, "I'm going to be a duck!"

So Freckles ran toward the pond and leaped in the water to join the ducks. The ducks were so surprised. They had never seen a cat jump in the water before!

"What are you doing?!" The ducks asked Freckles.

"I'm going to be a duck like you and splash and dive in the water." He answered. "You ducks always have so much fun."

"You can't be a duck!" the ducks quacked.

"Why not?" asked Freckles.

"Because you're a CAT!" With that Freckles swam back to the shore and got out. He could hear the ducks laughing behind him.

"Oh well," he sighed, as he tried to shake off all the water, "I don't like water much anyway." He couldn't figure out why the ducks liked the water, it only made him uncomfortable and cold.

Freckles moved on to see what else he could find. All of the sudden he spotted some dogs. They were romping around and having a great time.

"That really looks like fun," thought Freckles. "Maybe I'll be a dog. I'd like to wrestle like they are."

So Freckles started running to join the dogs. But before he got there the dogs stopped playing and started glaring at him. Freckles slowed down a little bit but kept coming closer.



As he got closer the dogs started growling at him.

"Why are you growling at me?" Freckles asked timidly. He was getting a little nervous. "I just wanted to play."

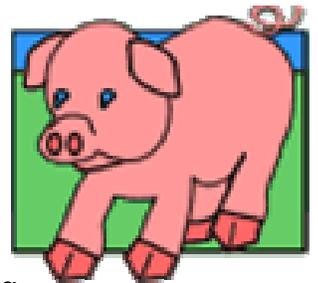
"We don't play with cats," the dogs snarled back. "Oh, well that's all right," Freckles said, "I'm a dog." The dogs kept growling and still wouldn't let him play.

"You're not a dog! You're a CAT!! Now get out of here!" The dogs started barking and coming towards Freckles. So he decided that this would probably be a good time to leave. He quickly raced away before the dogs got nasty.

"Dogs sure aren't very hospitable." Freckles said as he tried to catch his breath. Freckles continued on his journey to find some fun. So far he hadn't been very successful. Just then, out of the corner of his eye, he saw some pigs rolling around in the mud. Now he knew that water was no fun and dogs weren't either, but that mud really looked like fun. This was going to be the most fun. The pigs were squealing and rolling in the mud. Freckles could tell that they were really enjoying themselves.

"I'm going to be a pig," decided Freckles.

Freckles confidently walked over to them and did a big belly flop right in the middle of the cool, mushy mud. He rolled onto his back and over onto his stomach again, just like the pigs. He tried to squeal but only "meows" came out. The pigs were so shocked that they stopped what they were doing and just stared at Freckles.



"What's the matter?" asked Freckles. Haven't you ever seen a pig wallow in the mud before?

"We've seen lots of pigs wallow in the mud," they replied, "but we've never seen a CAT do it!"

Freckles was discouraged, "You mean I'm still a cat?" he asked. "I thought for sure that I was a pig now."

The pigs giggled and said, "Of course, you're still a cat. You'll always be a cat. Nothing can change that." Freckles got up out of the mud. His fur was caked with mud. Then he realized how much he hated mud. He could barely move once the mud started to dry. It was like wearing a big body cast. He slowly started making his way home.

When he got home his mother barely even recognized him. "Freckles I" she cried, astonished, "What happened?!"

Freckles told her all that happened that day, "Well Mom, I saw the ducks playing today in the pond and they were having so much fun. So I decided to be a duck and join them. But I didn't like the water much. Then I saw the dogs playing and I decided to be a dog. But they were really mean and scary. And then I saw the pigs in the mud. They really looked like they were having fun, so I decided to be a pig and jumped in the mud with them. But mom, all the animals told me that I was still a cat. Why am I a cat? Why can't I be one of the other animals?"

Freckles mother smiled as she started to clean his dirty fur, "Freckles, you're a cat because I'm a cat and because your Father is a cat. Your grandparents were cats and your great grandparents were cats and your great, great grandparents were cats. Cats come from cats, Freckles. Cats can't make ducks or dogs or pigs. That's impossible. Once you're a cat you'll always be a cat. You didn't choose to be one, you just are because all of your ancestors were, starting way back from the first cat there ever was. You can't make yourself another animal just by acting like one. Just like you aren't a cat because you act like one. You're a cat because you were born a cat and that's why you act like a cat. That's why you didn't like the water or the dogs or the mud. Cats naturally don't like those things. "Oh, I see," said Freckles, "I guess I won't try to be other animals anymore, 'cause it's impossible. I'm a cat and a tired one too."

### Lesson:

Just like Freckles is a cat because his parents were cats; we are people because our parents are people and our grandparents were people. We all came from the very first person there ever was. In the Bible, at the very beginning, we learn that God created the heavens and the earth, he light and the darkness, the water and the dry land, all the plants and trees, the sun, moon and stars, the birds and the fish, and all the animals. And in Genesis 1:26 it says: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

God made man so that He would have someone to love and so man would love Him back. That man's name was Adam. Adam was made in God's image. This doesn't mean that Adam's body looked like God's. It means that Adam had feelings and a mind like God. This way Adam was the first man to ever live on the earth. God made Adam to be the representative for the whole human race. Everyone else on earth came from him. Everyone that comes from Adam is just like him. You and I come from Adam and are just like him. Just like Freckles was a cat because he was born a cat. We are born just like Adam and we can't loose to be anything else.

## The-New Birth Explained - Children's Version

### **Lesson 2: Satan and the Sinner**

Do you ever do something that you know is wrong but just can't help but do it? All of us do bad things called sin. But why do we do them? We have learned that we all came from the first man that ever lived named Adam. We are just like Adam because we came from him. Could it be that Adam was a sinner and that's why we are sinners too?

#### Story: Wrong Family

Chipper was a little mouse who lived outside in the yard of a nice little house. In that nice little house there lived a sweet old lady. Chipper had been living in this yard for a long time and enjoyed watching the lady. She was always so kind to the people that walked by and would stop and chat with almost anyone. She was a kind, loving lady. Chipper liked living out in the yard but he was noticing that winter would soon come. The leaves were falling off the trees and the wind was blowing. He found himself getting chilly at night because the air was so cold. So he decided it was time to find a warmer home for the winter. And he knew just the place to go - the old lady's house. He was sure that she wouldn't mind. Chipper waited for his opportunity to enter the house. Finally he was able to sneak in the door when the lady left it open one afternoon. The house was so nice and warm. This would be a great place to live.



Chipper started to explore his new found home. He looked in every room and corner looking for the best place to make a bed. He decided that the linen closet would be ideal! So Chipper got to work making a nice comfy bed. He found a sheet and started to tear it into little pieces and spread them out on the floor. He was sure that the lady wouldn't mind. He tore a couple pieces from some soft blankets too, just to make it a little more cozy. Chipper was tired after all that work so he decided to try out his nice new bed and take a nap. Not long after he settled down, he heard footsteps coming toward the closet.

"It's just the lady," he thought, "She won't mind me being here." So Chipper stayed right where he was. Then the closet door opened. He was right – it was just the lady, but he was a little shocked to see her reaction to her new houseguest.

"Aaaaaah!!" she shrieked, "There's a mouse in my house! And it's ruined all my nice sheets and blankets." She quickly went and got a broom and started swatting at Chipper. Chipper scurried out of the closet and to the nearest hiding place - under the couch.

"That's strange, Chipper thought, "she seemed upset, almost like she didn't like me or something." He thought it would be best if he stayed hidden for a while, at least until she calmed down.

He could hear her mumbling throughout the house, "I hate mice. I hate mice. I hate mice."

"She can't really mean it." Chipper tried to convince himself, "She's usually such a nice lady. Maybe she's just having a bad day." Chipper tried to think of ways to make himself more acceptable to the lady. He decided that he wouldn't tear up her blankets anymore. He still didn't know why it bothered her so much. That's just what mice do to make a place to sleep.

After all the commotion settled down Chipper realized how hungry he was. He snuck his way into the kitchen and started rummaging through the cupboards. He found a nice big box of cereal. He was too short to get into the top of it, so he started gnawing and chewing his way through the bottom. Finally he reached the cereal inside and started eating. He ate until his belly was full and then went back under the couch for a nap. Halfway through his nap some hollering woke him up. "That horrible little mouse has been in my kitchen!" the lady shouted as she picked up her cereal box and watched the cereal spill all over her floor from the hole that Chipper had made. "You mean she doesn't like that either?!" Chipper was confused, "A mouse has to eat too. This lady is hard to please. I just don't understand it - she doesn't like anything that I do." Just then there was a knock on the door. Another, younger lady, walked in holding a baby. The old lady was so thrilled to see these people. She took the baby and kissed his little face all over. Chipper was amazed as he watched. How could the lady go from being so angry with him, to being so excited to see this little baby? Why did she accept the baby and not him?

Then Chipper began to realize that he was different from them. He was born into the mouse family and the people family doesn't like the mouse family - especially in their house! The only way he could be acceptable to the lady was if he was born into the people family because she can't stand the things mice do. Chipper saw that it wasn't going to work out for him to live here after all. The lady was still a kind, loving lady; she just couldn't accept mice into her home. So Chipper moved out and went to look for a new home.

### Lesson:

In Genesis 2:16,17 God told Adam that he could eat from every tree in the garden except one, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And if he ate from that one tree he would die. Adam had a choice. He could choose to accept God's will or reject it. Anytime

anyone goes against God's will or what God says it is called sin. In Romans 6:23 it says that the wages of sin is death. Death means separation. God is perfect and holy and never sins. God cannot have sin in His presence. Anyone who sins must be separated from God.

There was an angel in heaven once who was a very beautiful angel. But he decided that he wanted to become great like God and take over God's throne in heaven. This was something that was against God's will - it was sin. Since God cannot have sin in His presence, he cast the angel out of heaven. That angel was Satan. Since Satan couldn't rule heaven, he decided to rule the earth. Satan wanted to become the god of this world. To do this he would have to cause Adam to disobey God.

In the Bible it says that Satan, in the form of a snake, tempted Eve, Adam's wife. And as a result Adam and Eve ate some fruit off of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the very tree that God had told Adam not to eat of. Adam went against God's will, he disobeyed, he sinned. Adam chose Satan's way instead of God's way. God told him that if he did this he would die; he would be separated from God. God was forced to take Adam and Eve out of the garden. They were separated from God because of their sin and could no longer enjoy being with God.

Once they were out of the garden, Adam and Eve had a son. Genesis 5:3 "he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image." Adam's son was just like Adam. What was Adam like? He was sinful and separated from God. Therefore, Adam's son was also sinful and separated from God. He was born that way. Everyone that was born after that was born the same way. This means that you and I were born sinners too; because our fathers were sinners and our father's fathers were sinners, going all the way back to Adam. (Rom. 5:12, 18) We are all born separated from God and God can't fellowship with us because we are sinners.

Satan deceived Adam and Eve and now rules the whole human race. We are born into a family with Satan as our Father. He has blinded everyone and made us enemies with God (Rom.8:7; I Cor. 2:14; Rom. 3:10,11).

We were all born into the wrong family. Because we are in the wrong family we naturally do wrong things. Chipper did things mice do because he was a mouse. He couldn't help it. But those things didn't please the lady. God can't accept us because we were born into a sinning family and God is not pleased with sin. The family we were all born into is condemned by God and ruled by Satan. We have a sinful nature that we inherited from Adam that causes us to sin and be separate from God. In this family we have no hope. Just like the old lady couldn't accept Chipper because he was a mouse, God can't accept us because we are sinners. The only hope we have is to somehow be born into a new family. In the later lessons we will talk about a new family that God gave us to be a part of.

## The New Birth Explained - Children's Version

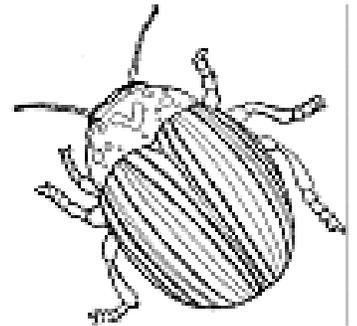
### Lesson 3: The Last Adam

God created Adam and he became our leader. But Adam sinned. Everyone born after him was made like him - sinful and condemned. We are in the wrong family, with a sinful leader. We need to be a part of a new family. We need a new leader.

#### Story: Matilda

Matilda sat in the sun, letting its warm rays soak into her body, as she daydreamed about what to do that day.

"Matilda!" a gruff voice snarling behind her, "Get over here. We're having a meeting." It was Snarlin' Sam. Matilda jumped up and scurried over to join the others. You see Snarlin' Sam was the leader of the Blue-Striped Beetles, and Matilda was a Blue-Striped Beetle. She knew never to cross Snarlin' Sam. He was a mean, nasty beetle, but everyone obeyed him. Nobody ever questioned his orders. He was a very strong beetle. The meeting began.



"Blue-Striped Beetles," Snarlin' Sam began, "we are gathered here today to plan an attack. We are going to destroy those pesky ants that moved in down the path."

Matilda sighed. The Blue-Striped Beetles were always attacking someone. And when they weren't attacking, they were fighting and bickering among themselves. There was never any peace and no one ever said a kind word. The ants had never bothered them before. But that's just the way the Blue-Stripes were - mean and nasty because their leader was. Matilda went along with the plan, after all, she was a Blue-Striped Beetle too.

One day, as Matilda sat along the path she saw something moving towards her in the distance. At first it looked like a bunch of moving speckles, but as it got closer it looked like another clan of beetles. She kept watching. Sure enough - it was. These beetles were different. They had a yellow spot on their backs, instead of blue stripes like Matilda's clan. But that wasn't all that was different. These beetles walked together so closely and orderly; they weren't bickering or biting at each other. It almost looked like they enjoyed each other. Matilda looked at the front of the clan and saw a bigger beetle. She knew he must be the leader of the clan because of his size. He was about the size of Snarlin' Sam, but oh, he looked so much different. This beetle's face was so kind. It was the kindest face Matilda had ever seen. He would smile and speak softly and kindly to the beetles in his clan.

Matilda silently watched as the Yellow-Spotted Beetles walked by. She was too awestruck to even move. The Yellow-Spotted Beetles moved into an area, not far down the

path and set up their homes. Not once did Matilda see any of them argue or yell. Instead they were actually helping each other. Matilda blinked a few times to see if it was real. The Blue-Striped Beetles never acted like these beetles.

The sun that had once been warming her was now slipping behind the trees and settling down for the night. Where had the time gone? Matilda quickly got up and went home. She didn't want Snarlin' Sam to find out that she had been gone.

Back home with the Blue-Striped Beetles was not much fun. It just meant more fights and arguments. Any chance she could, Matilda would sneak away to watch the Yellow-Spotted Beetles. If only she could be a part of their clan. If only that kind-faced beetle could be her leader instead of Snarlin' Sam.

"Maybe if I go to them, they will let me join them." Matilda thought. "It's worth a try."

She walked up to the homes of the Yellow-Spotted Beetles. But she couldn't get into their property because there were Yellow-Spotted Beetles guarding it all around. She even tried to shove her way through them, because that's normally what a Blue-Striped Beetle would do.

"I'm sorry, but we can't let you in," one of the guards said softly.

"Why not?" Matilda asked.

"Because you are a Blue-Striped Beetle and Snarlin' Sam is your leader", was the answer.

Matilda was disappointed. She continued to watch the Yellow-Spotted Beetles whenever she had the chance. The more she watched them, the more she wanted to be a part of them. Matilda had an idea, "If I start to act like them, maybe they'll accept me." She started practicing. "Please" and "thank you" became a regular part of her vocabulary. She wouldn't shove or yell at the other beetles like she used to. It was too hard to practice at home because the Blue-Striped Beetles were never nice and would only make her angry. So Matilda would go out and mingle with the Yellow-Spotted Beetles whenever they left their homes to search for food.

"I'm doing pretty good," she thought. "I think they think I'm one of them." Once all of them started going back to their homes, Matilda followed them. She was sure she'd make it in this time. But at the guards, she still couldn't get in. She didn't say any rude things to them; she even said, "please." But they still wouldn't let her in.

"I'm sorry, but we can't let any of Snarlin' Sam's beetles in."

"How do you know if I'm one of Snarlin' Sam's beetles?" Matilda asked. "I don't act like one of them."

"Well you have those blue stripes down your back and we know that any beetle with blue stripes belongs to Snarlin' Sam." the guards said solemnly.

Matilda was sad. She wanted so bad to have the kind-faced Yellow-Spotted Beetle as her leader but she was still stuck with Snarlin' Sam - all because of the blue stripes on her back. "If only I could have been born into the Yellow-Spotted Beetles family." Matilda sighed and fell asleep.

### Lesson:

We've been leaning a little bit about the man Adam. But did you know that the Bible talks about two Adams? (I Cor. 15:45-49) The first Adam is the man that God created in the beginning - the one that represents the human race. But remember this first Adam sinned. He chose to go against God's will and chose Satan's way instead. Because he did this, he became sinful and all the people born after him were sinful too. When we were born, we all entered into this wrong, sinful family.

God knew that there was no hope for us with the first Adam as our leader, because he was sinful. So God made a new leader - the Last Adam. That Last Adam is Jesus Christ. He is perfect because he actually is God. The First Adam was made from the dust of the earth; the Last Adam is the Lord from Heaven (I Cor. 15:47). The First Adam rebelled and turned against God's will. But the Last Adam came from heaven specifically to do God's will (Jn. 6:38).

Both Adams were tempted by Satan. Remember the First Adam, when he and Eve were tempted by Satan they chose Satan's way and went against God's will. But Jesus, the Last Adam wouldn't listen to Satan - He only obeyed God's will. Jesus refused to do anything that was against God's will - He is perfect and sinless.

We were all automatically born into the family with the First, sinful Adam as our leader. But now we hear about the Last Adam, Jesus, who is a much better leader. A perfect sinless One. Just like Matilda couldn't be a part of the Yellow-Spotted Beetles because of her blue stripes, we can't be a part of God's family because of our sin. How can we change families? Snarlin' Sam was a terrible leader for his beetles. The first Adam is like Snarlin' Sam. The kind faced Yellow-Spotted Beetle was a much better leader, just like Jesus is. How can we have Jesus, the Last Adam, be our leader instead of the First Adam? Later we'll find out!

**The New Birth Explained - Children's Version**  
**Lesson 4: The Mediator**

There is a big gap between God and us. We cannot be friends with God because we are sinful. And why are we sinful? Because, our leader the first Adam was sinful. We need a mediator; someone who stands between two people to bring them together when there is a gap between them. We need someone to stand between God and us and bring us together.

Story: The Big Gap

A long time ago, in a far away land there was a place where many giraffes and baboons lived. The giraffes and baboons lived in harmony together. The young giraffes would romp and play with the young baboons. They enjoyed being together.



One day a great earthquake shook the land and split the ground where they lived. The giraffes ended up on one side and the baboons on the other. There was now a big gap between the giraffes and baboons. They could no longer play together or enjoy each other. One side of the gap became the Land of Giraffes; the other side became the Land of Baboons. From then on they had to be separate.



Benny Baboon jumped on his mother's back. He was too tired to take another step. Benny lived in the Land of Baboons with all the other baboons.

"How much further do we have to walk, Mother?" Benny asked.

"Just a little longer," his mother answered.

You see the Land of Baboons had become very dry over the years. It was getting harder and harder to find water. All the water holes near Benny's home had dried up. Each day Benny and his mother would have to go further and further for water.

"I see the water hole!" Benny cried. He jumped down and ran to the water. There wasn't much left. It wouldn't be long before this water hole too would dry up. It was the last one in the area that they knew of. Together Benny and his mother drank until they were satisfied.

"Mother, what are we going to do when this water dries up like all the other water holes did?" Benny asked.

"I don't know son, I just don't know," was his mother's solemn reply. Slowly they made their way home. Benny lived near the big gap in the ground. Often he would gaze over to the Land of Giraffes. He noticed that their land looked so much better. The giraffes had plenty of water and the leaves on their trees were still green and healthy. They had shade when the sun got too hot. Here in Benny's land the trees were shriveling up. All the leaves had died and fallen to the ground.

Benny wondered why they couldn't live with the giraffes, "Mother, why can't we just go live in the Land of Giraffes? It's so much better over there."

"It's impossible Benny. There is a big crack in the ground between us. The gap goes for miles. For years our ancestors have tried many ways to bridge the gap and get across but they always failed. We are stuck here son. There's nothing we can do." Benny was very sad.

Meanwhile in the Land of Giraffes, George Giraffe chewed on a big juicy leaf while he gazed over to the Land of Baboons. "Those Baboons are all going to die over there. There is no hope for them," he thought. "They could live if they were over here with us." Then George had an idea. He called his son over to him. George's son was the biggest, strongest giraffe in the whole land.

"What is it Father?" His son asked.

"Well son, I was looking over at those Baboons. They are all going to die, but we could make a way for them to live. I have an idea but I need you to do it." George told his son his idea. His son readily agreed to do what his father asked him. George's son walked over to the big gap and knelt down. Then he stretched his long, strong neck across the gap in the ground until it touched the other side.

Benny Baboon was watching the giraffe. "Mother, come quick!" he cried. "I think there's a way we can get across now. Look! We could walk across on that giraffe's neck"

Benny and his mother rushed over to where the giraffe was. "Why are you stretching your neck across the gap?" Benny's mother asked the giraffe.

"I am making a way for you to come into a land where there is life, because you will die if you stay where you are. All you have to do is walk across on my neck." Benny looked and saw how far down it was if he were to fall. He started to get nervous.

"How do I know that you won't slip? Or how do I know that you can even hold us?" Benny asked skeptically.

"Well guess you'll just have to trust me, won't you," the giraffe answered.

Benny looked into the giraffe's kind eyes. Yes, he would trust him. Benny and his mother walked across into the Land of Giraffes. Now they could live all because of what George Giraffe's son did.

Lesson:

After the earthquake, the giraffes and baboons were separated with a big gap between them. It is the same with God and us. When the First Adam sinned it separated him and God. Everyone born after Adam was stuck on the same side of the gap as Adam, including you and me. Our sin separates us and there is nothing we can do to get close to Him and be friends with Him. We are like the baboons that were dying and needed to get across to the Land of Giraffes where there was life. The only way they could get across was when one of the giraffes became a bridge for them.

There is someone that has become a bridge for us also. God gave us someone who would stand in the gap between God and us so that we can get to God. That person is Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 2:5). God's son, Jesus, became a bridge. The only way we can get close to God and be His friend is through Jesus Christ. He is the only way for us to get across that big gap.

## The New Birth Explained - Children's Version

### Lesson 5: The Substitution

Jesus is the one who can bridge the big gap between God and us. He is the only one who can do it. But how did He do it? What did he do to bring us together?

#### Story: Felicity

Felicity Fox scrambled up the hill, jumped over the log, and scurried back into her den. She had done it again. She was late for dinner. Her mother scolded her for being late and then gave her what was left of the food. At least there were a few bones left to gnaw on. She wasn't always that fortunate.



Felicity was forever getting into trouble. She loved to wander off on her own and go exploring in the woods. Her parents had set up certain boundaries for her and her brothers and sisters to stay within. But Felicity always had to go just a little further, even though she knew she was disobeying.

Felicity strutted over to her brother, Felix, who was happily gnawing on a bone. She quickly snatched the bone from him.

"Felicity!" Felix cried, "Give that back. That was my bone!"

"It's mine now," Felicity sneered. Felix whined until their mother intervened and returned the bone to him. Felicity looked around for her next target. She just couldn't sit still. She always had to be bothering someone. She spotted her older sister, Flora, grooming herself. Felicity snuck up behind her and quickly bit her tail. Flora yelped and spun around.

"Felicity!!" she screamed, "Why can't you just leave us alone?! Why do you always have to be antagonizing one of us?"

"I don't know," Felicity shrugged. "I'm just bored."

"Well go find something constructive to do, and stop being so annoying!" Flora ordered.

Felicity went to lie down for a while. She was tired from her long day of exploring. A few hours later, she woke up. It was nighttime now and the moon was shining brightly. "What a perfect time to go exploring," Felicity thought to herself. She snuck out of the den, being careful not to waken any of her family members. Once she knew that she was a safe distance from home, she skipped off happily to see what she could discover. She came up to

the boundary that her parents had set up. Without thinking twice she walked right passed it and went off into the woods. There were so many exciting things to see deep in the woods.

As Felicity was busy sniffing under logs and peeking in the bushes, she heard a very familiar sound. It sounded like the footsteps of another fox. She quickly dashed under the nearest shrub. She peered out to see who it was. Oh no! It was her father. He must be out hunting. "Oh I hope he didn't see me," Felicity held her breath.

Her father stopped and looked around. He had heard something. He sniffed the air. Felicity waited as silently as she could. She wondered if he'd ever leave. Now she was starting to get an itch. She tried her best to ignore it, but it was getting worse and worse. She couldn't take it anymore; she just had to scratch it. She raised her foot to scratch the itch. As soon as she moved, a twig snapped beneath her.

"Oh no!" She knew her father had heard it. Felicity's father walked toward the shrub she was hiding under and looked in.

"Felicity, is that you?" he asked.

"Yes Father," she answered.

"Come out of there right this minute," he commanded. Felicity crawled out from under the shrub and hung her head. She knew she was in a lot of trouble this time. "Let's go home," her father said.

Slowly the two of them made their way home. Neither spoke a word. Once they arrived home Felicity was told to go and wait in the den. Her parents went out and met with the other foxes in the area. They were meeting to decide what was to be done with Felicity. You see it wasn't just Felicity's family who was affected by her mischief. The neighboring foxes also had had problems with her. The meeting seemed to take forever. Finally it was over. Felicity's father came to tell her what they had decided.

"Felicity, all of the foxes have decided that your disobedience has gone too far. You must be punished. We have decided that you must be banished from here for three days. You will be on your own. You will have to hunt for yourself and find your own shelter. We will take you to the far away place in the morning."

Felicity gasped, "They can't be serious. They can't do this to me. I might not even survive!" She started to sob. Morning came all too quickly.

Outside waited her father and a couple other foxes to take Felicity away. She was terrified. Why did the punishment have to be so severe? Felicity slowly stepped out of the den. "Are you ready to go, Felicity?" they asked.

"Yes," she nodded, trembling. She was terrified.

As she stepped forward to join them, her sister Flora stepped in front of her. "I want to go in Felicity's place," Flora said. "I want to take her punishment for her. She will stay here. Take me instead."

Felicity couldn't believe her ears. After all the things she had done to her sister, Flora, and now she was taking her punishment for her. "Why are you doing this for me?" Felicity asked.

"I love you, Felicity," was Flora's answer and she turned around to be taken away.

### Lesson:

Just like Felicity needed to be punished for her disobedience, we need to be punished because of our sin. Only the punishment for our sin is far worse than Felicity's punishment. Our punishment is death. (Rom. 6:23) God will not overlook our sins - they must be punished. But remember our story. What happened to Felicity? Flora took her punishment for her. Someone also took our punishment. Jesus Christ died on a cross for us. We deserved to die but Jesus took our place. Now our sins are all paid for.

Remember the big gap between God and us? That gap is our sin. Our sin is what separates us. But Jesus bridged the gap. He brought God and us together by paying for our sins. When we believe in what Jesus did. God can be friends with us. When He looks at us He no longer sees our sins because Jesus paid for them all. (Col. 1 :20-22) The only way that we can be friends with God is to believe in what His Son, Jesus did. There is no other way. Jesus did It all; we just have to believe.

Once the gap between God and us is gone we become part of a new family. We are no longer part of the first Adam's Family. The Last Adam, Jesus becomes our new leader.

## The New Birth Explained - Children's Version

### Lesson 6: Liberty and Life

We've heard about Jesus, the one who brought God and us together. He paid for our sins on the cross so that we could fellowship with God. Now we are in the new family. But what does it mean now that we are part of this new family?

#### Story: Tommy

Tommy hopped out of bed, washed his face and brushed his teeth. It was Sunday morning. Tommy loved Sunday mornings because it meant he got to go to Sunday School. He looked forward to this day all week long. In Sunday School he would be able to hear neat stories, and play fun games, and color pictures. It was always a fun time. Tommy threw on his good Sunday clothes and bounced down the stairs to wait for the rest of his family to be ready. They always seemed to take such a long time to get ready.

Finally everyone was ready; they got in the car and headed for church. Once they arrived, Tommy raced to his classroom. He wanted to be sure he was on time so that he wouldn't miss anything. He was almost always the first one there. Today was no exception.

Tommy wandered around the classroom waiting for the teacher and the other kids to arrive. He looked over on the shelf and something caught his eye. There were brand new boxes of crayons on the shelf. He went over and picked a box up and opened it. Yep, they were brand new; they had never been used. Oh they were wonderful crayons. Tommy thought about his crayons at school. They were old, broken and worn out. Most of the other kids in his class at school had brand new crayons. But Tommy still had to use his old ones from last year. His mother had told him that they would work just fine. Tommy thought about how great it would be to have one of these new boxes of crayons to take to school with him. Then he wouldn't have to be embarrassed about his old ones anymore and he could be like all the other kids. He stared at the box of crayons in his hand and he knew how easy it would be to slip it into his pocket. There were plenty of others on the shelf and no one would even notice. As he stood there dreaming he heard footsteps coming towards the classroom. He could tell they were the footsteps of the teacher, Mrs. Jones, because she always wore noisy shoes. Before he could think about what he was doing, Tommy slipped the box of crayons into his pocket and quickly sat down.



"Oh, hello, Tommy." Mrs. Jones said. "You're here early as usual, I see."

"Hello Mrs. Jones," Tommy answered.

"Whew, she didn't see me take the crayons," Tommy thought to himself. One by one the other kids arrived and they were able to start the class. Tommy had a hard time paying attention today. All he could think about was the box of crayons in his pocket.

Once in a while he would start to feel a little guilty, but then he would just think about showing off his new crayons to the kids at school. After Sunday School and church were over Tommy went home with his family. He made sure the crayons were well hidden because he didn't want his parents to see them.

Monday morning came. Tommy hid the crayons in his backpack and headed out for school. Today would be the day that he could use his new crayons. When the teacher would give them something to color today, Tommy would be able to proudly pull out his brand new, never-before-used, crayons. He was excited, but at the same time he felt kind of funny inside. He knew that it had been wrong to steal the crayons.

That morning when the teacher passed out the coloring sheets, Tommy pulled out his crayons. He saw some of the kids watching him. "Wow, Tommy!" one of the kids shouted, "Where did you get those awesome crayons? They look brand new!"

"My mom bought them for me," Tommy answered quickly. Tommy started to get that funny feeling inside again. He knew he had just lied. As the week passed, Tommy thought more about the crayons. For some reason he couldn't stop thinking about them. Each time he thought about them he felt worse and worse. It even got to the point where he didn't even want to use them anymore. Every time he saw them he would feel so guilty. He knew what he had to do. He would have to bring the crayons back to Mrs. Jones, the Sunday School teacher, and tell her what he did.

Sunday rolled around again. This time Tommy wasn't as eager to get out of bed and get ready. His mom even had to wake him up this time. He slowly washed his face and brushed his teeth. Slowly he got dressed and trudged down the stairs. This time his whole family was waiting on him.

They got in the car and went to church. Tommy sat in the Sunday School class and listened to the story. He still had a hard time concentrating. But he did hear the teacher say a verse from the Bible. She said, "For the wages of sin is death..."

"DEATH!!" Tommy thought, startled, "I stole those crayons and that's sin and then I even lied about it. That's another sin. And the Bible says that now I have to die!"

He was very worried. He squirmed in his seat through the rest of the class and didn't hear a word the teacher said. What had he gotten himself into? After all the kids left, Tommy

walked up to Mrs. Jones, gave her the crayons, and told her about what he had done. Tommy started to cry. "Mrs. Jones," he sobbed, "I just don't want to die."

"What are you talking about Tommy?" She asked. "Well, I stole those crayons and that's sin and the Bible says that the wages of sin is death. So now I'm going to die!"

"You're right," Mrs. Jones said, "stealing the crayons was sin. But did you hear the rest of that verse this morning? It said, 'For the wages of sin is death, BUT the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.'"

"What does that mean?" Tommy started to calm down.

"Well Tommy, God knew that you were going to sin. He knew that all of us were going to sin because we all came from Adam who was a sinner. So God sent His Son, Jesus to die on the cross for us. The wages of sin is death - but Jesus Christ already died that death for us. God knew way before you were even born that you were going to steal those crayons and that you would deserve to die. That's why he sent His Son to die for you to save you. And when you believe what Christ did for you, you have eternal life. You will live forever with Jesus!"

Tommy started to understand what Mrs. Jones was saying. Jesus had already paid for his sins and God had forgiven him. Tommy smiled as he skipped out of the Sunday School room to find his parents. He didn't have that funny feeling inside anymore. He felt free because he knew that he would live forever because of what Jesus did for him.

#### Lesson:

We have learned that when we were born, we were born into the First Adam's family. The First Adam was our leader. He was sinful, and therefore, so were we. We were separated from God forever. We were born into the wrong family. But then we heard good news. God had a plan to save us from eternal death. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ to bring Him and us together. Jesus died on the cross to pay for all of our sins. Because of our sins we deserved death, but Jesus died our death for us. When we believe what Jesus did we can be friends with God and are born into a new family. When we are born into this new family we get to live forever. (I Cor. 15:22)

God loved us so much; He gave us Jesus and eternal life. It wasn't because we are good that He did it - there is nothing good in us. It was only because of His love and grace. (Rom. 5:8)

John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." When we believe what Jesus did, we can have everlasting life! That's sure a nice change from the eternal death we had in the first family with the First Adam as our leader. After Jesus died, He rose again on the third day. Now He is our new leader in this new family. We will get to live with Jesus forever!

## The New Birth Explained - Children's Version **Lesson 7: The Lord Jesus Christ**

Now that we believe that Jesus died for our sins on the cross, we can be friends with God. We also get to live forever now because all our sins are forgiven, even the ones we haven't committed yet. Let's learn a little bit more about what happened when we first believed. Does Jesus stay with us after He saves us?

Story: *"I Can't Feel Him in There!"*



Christy was so excited she couldn't even sit still. She felt like jumping for joy all over the house. You see Christy had just finished reading a Bible story with her mother. Her mother had told her the story of when Jesus died on the cross to pay for her sins. Christy believed it and now knew that her sins were forgiven, and that she was going to get to go to heaven and live with Jesus forever! She could hardly wait to tell her Daddy when he got home. She even called him at work, to let him know that she had something very special to tell him. It was so hard for her to wait but finally six o'clock rolled around. She heard the familiar sound of the car coming into the driveway and footsteps coming up the steps. Then the door opened and Christy flew into her Daddy's arms.

"Guess what, Daddy!"

"What Honey?" her Daddy asked.

"I learned something today," she said.

"Well, what is it?" By this time he was really wanting to know why his daughter was so excited.

"I learned that I'm a sinner and that Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sins! If He hadn't done that, I would have died and gone to hell and been separated from God forever. But He *did* die and paid for every one of my sins - even the ones I haven't done yet! Now God can accept me. And guess what else, Daddy."

"What Sweetheart?"

"Now I get to live forever in heaven with Jesus!"

Christy's father was so happy that his little girl learned this wonderful truth. He had been trusting' God that she would someday believe it. And that wonderful day was here. He

hugged Christy tight in his big arms and said, "I'm so happy for you Honey. God sure did an awesome thing, didn't He?"

"He sure did Daddy." Christy was very thankful to Jesus for what He did for her.

She thought, "Jesus did so much for me. I should be good from now on to show Jesus how thankful I am. I will try to always do good things and act just like Jesus would act."

Christy was playing with her toys when her Mom asked her to clean them up and get ready for bed. Immediately Christy started up the stairs to get ready for bed. "Jesus would want me to obey my parents," she thought.

The next morning Christy got out of bed when her Mom woke her up. She ate all her breakfast, without complaining, even though it was oatmeal. She didn't like oatmeal. She even helped her Mom with the dishes. She kept thinking, "Jesus would want me to do these good things."

In the afternoon Christy was getting a little tired and didn't feel like doing much. But then she remembered about what Jesus did for her. She thought she'd better help her Mom clean the house to show Jesus how thankful she was. "I'm a child of God now," Christy thought, "I better act like one."

When Christy's father came home that night he noticed that Christy looked a lot more tired than she usually was when he got home. "Christy, are you feeling all right?" he asked.

"Yes Daddy, I'm just tired that's all."

"Why are you tired?"

"I did a lot of work today." she answered. She told him about all the things that she did to help her Mom that day.

"You don't usually work that hard. Why did you today?" Her father asked her.

"Well Daddy, I thought that since Jesus died for me and made me a child of God, I should do good things now. I need to act just like Jesus would. I shouldn't complain, or argue, or disobey. So that's why I did all that work. It's tiring though. It's kind of tough being a Christian, huh Dad."

"Christy, Jesus dying on the cross for you was a free gift. He doesn't want you to have to pay him back now by being good. But what's even better than that is that when you believed, Jesus came into you to become your life."

All of the sudden Christy started to cry. "What's wrong Sweetheart?" Her father asked. He wondered why she was crying.

"Daddy, maybe I'm not saved after all. Maybe I didn't believe right." "What do you mean?" He was confused.

"Well, when I believed in what Jesus did, I didn't feel Jesus come inside of me," she sobbed. "You said that Jesus comes inside but I can't feel Him in there."

"Oh Honey, you don't have to *feel* Him. You just have to believe what the Bible says. When you believed, Jesus entered your spirit by His Holy Spirit. And He will live in you forever. It doesn't matter what you feel - what you *believe* is what matters."

"Oh I see - so Jesus does live inside me. What's He there for?" She asked.

"I'm glad you asked. Jesus lives inside you so He can be you very life. Jesus doesn't want you to try to act like Him. Jesus wants to live His life through you. Before you were saved you were in the First Adam's family and had that sinful old nature like Adam. When you were saved God didn't want you to try to do good now with that old nature so he crucified it on the cross with Jesus. He knew that that old nature could never do good. No matter how hard you tried. Even if it looks good to us - it never looks good to God because it comes from our old sinful nature. Instead God gave us a new nature - Jesus' nature. He wants us to stop trying to do good and let Jesus live His life through us.

"Wow!" Christy exclaimed. "Not only did Jesus die for me, but now He's going to live for me too?!"

"That's right."

"I don't have to do anything but believe and let Jesus live through me. Jesus doesn't want me to try to be like Him. He just wants to be Himself in me. Being a Christian doesn't look so tough now. Jesus did it all"

### Lesson:

When we believe in what Jesus did for us on the cross we become what the Bible calls "Christians." Christians are people that are friends with God and will live forever with Him. Their leader is Jesus Christ, the Last Adam. We know we are Christians because of the person we believe in, not because we feel like Christians. All we have to do is believe. It doesn't matter if we don't feel like a Christian; as long as we believe in Jesus, we are one. That's what the Bible says (Acts 16:31).

When we believe in Jesus, not only do we become friends with God and get to live forever, but we also get to have Jesus actually live Inside of us. He becomes our very life! (Col. 3:4) We don't have to try to be like Jesus. We just have to trust Him to live His life through us.

When we were in the First Adam's family we had a nature just like Adam. We acted just like him - sinfully. But when God placed us into the new family, He put Jesus and His nature inside us. Our old nature did wrong things; but our new nature is perfect because it is Jesus' nature. Since we have a new nature that is Jesus' nature, we are now God's children, just like Jesus (2 Pet. 1:4).

## The New Birth Explained –Children's Version

### Lesson 8: The Principle of Grace

Isn't it wonderful to know that now that we are Christians, Jesus Christ Himself lives Inside of us! Jesus is our life now. But what does that mean?

#### Story: Little Branch

Among the rolling hills in the countryside, there was one hill that was special from all the others. Upon this particular hill there stood an old apple tree. This apple tree was very strong and had produced many apples so far in its lifetime. It had withstood violent winds and terrifying storms. It continued to produce more fruit from its many sturdy branches.

One day, on the apple tree's thick trunk, a tiny little branch was born. The little green branch looked around at the world he was in. He looked up at all the other branches and the many apples hanging on them. The branches named him, "Little Branch."

Little Branch was excited to be a part of such a wonderful tree. He would admire the bigger branches for hours and couldn't wait to grow up to be just like them. They were so strong and could hold so much fruit at once. Even one apple would be too heavy for Little Branch, but that didn't stop him from trying.

"May I hold one of your apples?" Little Branch asked a bigger branch.

"I'm afraid it would be much too heavy for you, Little Branch," the branch answered.

"Oh, please just let me try," he pleaded, "I'm sure I can do it."

"OK, but promise me you'll let go if it gets too heavy." "I will, I promise," Little Branch assured him.

Little Branch was excited. The bigger branch leaned over and placed one of his apples onto Little Branch. Little Branch was surprised at the weight of one little apple. He grunted and groaned, trying his best to hold on to the apple. It was just too heavy. He knew he had better drop the apple before it tore him right off the tree. Reluctantly, Little Branch released the apple. He felt like such a failure.

"Cheer up Little Branch," another branch encouraged. "We were all your size once. But now look at us. It just takes time to grow, that's all. One day you'll be as big as us and



will be able to carry many apples. But until then you'll just have to relax and be patient, while you grow."

"But I don't want to wait that long," Little Branch whined. "I want to be big now. There must be a quicker way to grow."

Little Branch thought and thought. Finally he had an idea. "Maybe it takes too long to grow because I'm stuck to this old tree. I bet that I could grow better and faster on my own."

Little Branch removed himself from the old apple tree and hopped down the trunk to the ground. "Ah, this is better," Little Branch said. "Now I can grow to become a big strong apple tree all by myself." He settled himself on the ground and prepared to start growing. A little while went by and Little Branch started to get thirsty. He looked around for some water - even just a couple water droplets to quench his thirst. He looked and looked but the hot sun had dried up all the dew on the ground. There just wasn't any water.

"How does the big tree get water?" Little Branch wondered. "Oh yeah, its roots suck it up from the ground." Little Branch tried to plant himself into the ground a little. But the soil was dry. He didn't have any roots to go down to the wet soil. Little Branch fell down, exhausted, and gazed up into the sky. As he looked up he noticed clouds forming. "Clouds!" he shouted. "Clouds mean rain. I'm going to get some water after all. I'm not giving up yet!"

Little Branch sat and waited for the rain. It came, but with it came wind, thunder and lightening. He wasn't expecting all that. Once the wind came, Little Branch had a hard time staying on the ground. He had no roots to keep him down. The lightening and thunder frightened him. He felt so scared and alone. The wind was really picking up now and it was beginning to toss Little Branch around. The rain was beating down so hard that it was hurting him. What was he going to do? He would never be able to grow like this. He wouldn't even be able to survive!

Just then Little Branch felt himself being lifted off the ground. One of the branches from the old apple tree picked him up and placed him back on the sturdy trunk of the tree. Immediately, Little Branch knew he was safe. He knew he could trust that trunk to hold on to him tightly so that the wind and rain couldn't harm him. He also noticed that his thirst was quenched as soon as he was back on the trunk. The trunk supplied him with all the water he needed. All he had to do was sit there and let the old apple tree grow him up. It supplied him with all he needed to grow. Little Branch was ashamed for thinking that he could grow up all by himself. He saw now how foolish he had been. He settled himself into the trunk and relaxed. He was quite content now to just let the tree grow him up to be a big branch like the others. He knew that he couldn't do anything to make himself grow. Only the tree could grow him with the life that it poured into him from its roots and trunk.

"The tree will grow me in its time," little Branch grinned. "I will just trust it and wait"

## Lesson:

When we became Christians, it was by grace. "By grace" means that it was a free gift from God. We didn't do anything to deserve or earn salvation - God just freely gave it to us. (Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8) Now that we are Christians, we need to live our lives the same way that we were saved - by grace. (Col. 2:6) How did we receive Jesus? We only believed and He was freely given to us. So how should we live our lives as Christians? By simply believing that Jesus is going to live in us and work through us. (Phil. 2:13)

Jesus wants us to know that He must be the One working through us. He wants to show us that we can't do it on our own with our old nature. Remember, our old nature can never do good - so when it tries to do good, it will always fail. He wants us to see that we can't do anything in our old nature, even if we ask Jesus to help us. Jesus doesn't help our old nature. He crucified it on the cross, so that He could live through us in our new nature. (Gal. 2:20) Jesus wants us to believe that our old nature was crucified and trust Him to live through us now.

Remember little Branch. He had to be attached to the trunk for him to live. If he wasn't attached he would die. All the moisture he needed to survive came from the trunk of the old apple tree. He had to just sit there, attached and let the trunk give him life. Eventually, once he had grown enough, little Branch would be able to produce fruit like the other branches. But the fruit would never come if little Branch was not attached and resting in the trunk. We are like Little Branch and Jesus is like the trunk. We cannot live the Christian life apart from Jesus. He is our very life. The fruit is like good works. We cannot do good things. Slowly God will teach us to trust Jesus to be our life, instead of trying to live in our own strength. He will show us more and more about how awful our old nature is and how we need to trust Jesus to live through us.

## The New Birth Explained - Children's Version

### Lesson 9: Acceptance with God

When we believed in what Jesus Christ did on the cross, we were saved from being separated from God forever. We became Christians. But what happens if we still sin now that we are Christians? Will God still accept us and be our friend?

#### Story: Amy's Bad Day

Amy hummed happily as she helped her mom do the dishes. "It's so great to be a Christian, isn't it Mom!" She exclaimed.

"It sure is Amy," her mother agreed.

"I'm so glad that God is my friend. He's a wonderful friend." Amy had been a Christian for a while. She was excited about her new life and friendship with God. She was very happy that God accepted her. But after a while things began to change for Amy. Her excitement started to wear off. And sometimes she even wondered if God still accepted her.



It all started one Wednesday afternoon. Amy was walking home from school with her friends. They spotted Kara, one of the girls in their class. Kara didn't have many friends. She was different from the other kids because her clothes were old and tattered, her hair was usually messy, and she wore glasses that were too big for her face. She was quiet most of the time, but if anyone did talk to her she usually wasn't very friendly. The kids picked on her a lot.

Before Amy could stop herself she shouted, "Hey Four-eyes, why don't you get some new clothes!"

The other girls joined in and taunted Kara. Amy was kind of surprised at herself. After all, she was a Christian and Christians weren't supposed to talk to others like that. She knew it had been wrong for her to make fun of Kara. She started to feel guilty.

Once she made it home from school, Amy's little brother, Jacob, ran up to her wanting play. "Amy, Amy, come play with me," he begged.

"Not now Jacob, I don't feel like it"

"Aw, come on Amy. We always play when you get home from school," he whined.

"Well, I just don't want to play with you today. So why don't you just get out of here and leave me alone." Jacob left the room crying. Amy felt bad again. What was wrong with her? Why did keep doing things that she knew were wrong? She felt terrible. It was

getting close to suppertime. Amy knew her mother would be calling her soon to help set the table.

Sure enough, "Amy," her mother called, "Time to set the table."

Amy shuffled into the kitchen, grumbling the whole way. "Why do I always have to set the table? Why can't Jacob do it for once?"

"You know Jacob is too little to set the table. He would break all the dishes," her mother answered.

"Well I'm sick of doing it all the time," Amy complained.

Amy was just feeling worse and worse. She kept doing bad things. She felt like God was so far away from her. She remembered back when she was so excited about being a Christian. God was her friend then. Surely God couldn't be her friend anymore. Not after all that she did today. The more she thought about it the sadder she got.

They sat down for supper once the table was set. Amy's father asked her to thank God for the food.

"I'm sorry Dad, but I can't," Amy said solemnly.

"Why not Amy?" Her father asked.

Amy's lip began to quiver. "God won't want to listen to me anyway. I've done so many bad things today. God can't accept me anymore." She began to sob.

"How can you say that Amy?" her father asked. "God will always accept you."

"No Daddy. He can't accept me anymore. I'm a bad person."

"Amy, why did God accept you in the first place? When you first became a Christian, why did God become your friend? Was it because you were good? Did God say, 'I will be Amy's friend because she is a good little girl'?"

"No, I don't think so."

"Then why did God accept you?"

"Because I believed in what Jesus did for me on the cross," Amy answered.

"What did Jesus do for you Amy?" Her father questioned.

"He died to pay for all the bad things I do."

"So God accepted you even though you were a bad person. He didn't accept you because of who *you* were but because of what *Jesus* did for you. Now you are part of God's family and Jesus lives inside of you. Does God always accept Jesus?" He asked.

"Oh yes, always, because Jesus is His Son and is perfect," Amy quickly answered.

"Well if Jesus lives inside of you, don't you think God will always accept you too? When God looks at you, He sees Jesus. He will accept you forever," her father smiled.

"Even if I do more bad things?" Amy had to be sure.

"Well Amy, if God was your friend because you did good things then He wouldn't be your friend for long. We all sin. That's why we need Jesus."

Amy breathed a sigh of relief. God was still her friend after all. Not because she was a good person. She knew she wasn't good - especially after today! God only accepted her because Jesus died to pay for all her sins and when God looked at her He saw Jesus. God will always accept Jesus!

Lesson:

It is easy for us to feel accepted by God when we aren't doing bad things. But when we do bad things, sometimes we feel like God can't accept us anymore. We feel like Amy felt. We need to remember that God always accepts us - no matter how we feel. Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay for each of our sins, and that's why God is our friend now and accepts us. It's all because of what Jesus did and has nothing to do with what we do. God accepted Amy after she did all those bad things just as much as He did before she did them.

When God looks at us, He sees our leader, Jesus in us because He knows that we trusted Jesus to pay for our sins. So since He sees Jesus in us. He will be our friend forever!

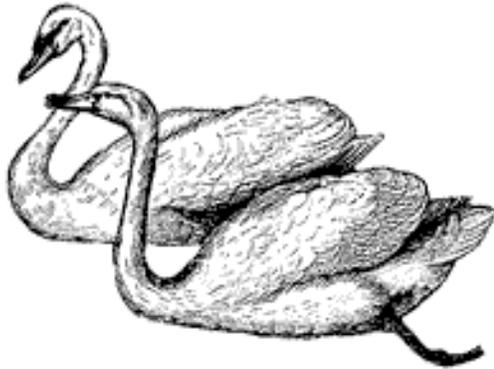
## The New Birth Explained - Children's Version

### Lesson 10: Assurance of Salvation

When we first become Christians we know that we are saved. We feel saved and are very happy. But after a while, when things aren't going so well, we begin to wonder if we are still Christians. We wonder if we really were saved in the first place or if we lost our salvation.

#### Story: "Am I Really a Swan?"

By peaceful pond in the countryside there lived a swan. This was a beautiful swan.



She swam in the pond with such grace. All the animals that lived around the pond admired her. Today the swan seemed to glow with even more beauty than before. You see she was caring for an egg that was soon going to hatch. She was very excited about meeting her baby and it would be any day now.

Finally the day arrived. The swan was sitting on her egg to keep it warm when all of the sudden she heard a little crack and felt something move beneath her. She quickly jumped up and watched her egg. Could it really be happening? Would she meet her baby today? She watched with anticipation as she saw a tiny little beak poke through the crack in the egg. Slowly the crack got bigger and a little head popped out. Soon the eggshell totally broke open, and there sat the swan's baby at last. She loved him instantly and nudged him under her wing to keep him warm. She named him Sammy.

Sammy soon was big enough to swim in the water behind his mother. At times he even went off on his own to explore the pond where he lived. As he was swimming alone he passed some ducklings playing in the water. When he swam by he noticed that they were staring at him and giggling. Sammy joined them to see what was funny.

"What's so funny?" Sammy asked.

One of the ducklings answered, "You just look funny, that's all."

"What do you mean, I look funny?"

"Well your feathers stick up all over the place and you're an ugly gray color," the duckling explained. "What kind of bird are you?"

"I'm a swan, of course," Sammy said confidently.

"A swan?" the ducklings laughed harder. "Swans are the most beautiful birds in this pond. You're definitely not a swan."

"I am too!" Sammy argued and swam off.

Sammy glided up to the shore and climbed onto the land. As he waddled around the bulrushes he saw some geese. He saw that the geese were staring at him just like the ducklings did.

"Oh no," he thought, "here we go again."

"What are you looking at?" Sammy asked the geese.

"We were just trying to figure out what kind of bird you are," a goose answered.

"Well what do you think I am?" Sammy questioned.

"We really have no idea. We've never seen any bird that looked so ... well so different, to put it nicely," the goose said.

"I'm a swan," Sammy told them.

"Oh no my dear, you are *not* a swan," the goose said boldly.

"Why doesn't anyone think I'm a swan? I thought I was a swan." Sammy was really starting to wonder if he was a swan after all.

"Come here let me show you something." The goose led Sammy over to the water. She pointed at a grown up swan across the pond. "See that bird over there? The beautiful white one with the long neck?"

"Yes," Sammy nodded.

"That's a swan," the goose said. "Now look at yourself in the water."

Sammy looked down at his reflection in the water. He gasped. What a surprise he got! He really was a funny looking bird. He didn't look like that beautiful swan.

"Does your reflection look anything like that swan over there?" the goose asked.

"No, not at all" Sammy shook his head, still in shock.

"Well then I've made my point. You're *not* a swan." With that the goose waddled off. Sammy was confused. If he wasn't a swan what was he?! He went home to ask his mother. He found her by the nest.

"Mother," he asked, "what am I?"

"Well you're a swan, of course," she answered.

"That's what I thought too," Sammy said. "But I'm afraid we're both wrong. I found out today that I'm not really a swan. I don't know what I am."

"What makes you think you're not a swan?" his mother asked.

"Well look at me Mom." Sammy pointed out. "I don't look anything like you. You're beautiful and white and your feathers are so smooth. I'm just this little gray, fluffy thing. You must have gotten my egg mixed up with some weird looking bird's."

Sammy's mother smiled and nudged him close to her. "Yes Sammy, you really *are* a swan. I laid that egg; you weren't mixed up with another egg. It just takes time for you to grow up to look like me. Baby swans are supposed to look just like you. As time goes by you will look more and more like a grown up swan. You were born a swan. Nothing can change the fact that you are a swan - no matter what anyone says."

"Well that's a relief," Sammy sighed. "I'm glad to know that I really am a swan after all, and I always was one."

Lesson:

Sammy was born a swan. He knew he was a swan. When he met the ducks and the geese, they tried to convince him that he really wasn't a swan because he didn't look like one. Sammy began to doubt if he was a swan. But the fact remained - Sammy was a swan because that's how he was born. Nothing can change that.

Sometimes we feel like Sammy felt. When we became Christians we were born into God's family. After a while we may start to wonder if we are still Christians. Sometimes we might do things that Christians shouldn't do. Does that mean we are no longer Christians? If we don't look like a Christian, does it mean we aren't one? Of course not. We are Christians because we were born into God's family when we believed in what Jesus did for us on the cross. It doesn't matter whether we *look* or *feel* like one. Nothing can change the fact that we are part of God's family. We must always believe what God's Word says about us, instead of believing in how we *feel*. (1 John 5: 13)

## The New Birth Explained. Children's Version

### Lesson 11: Eternal Security

The things God has done for us are wonderful. He sent His Son, Jesus, to come and die for our sins. When we believe in what Jesus did, we are saved from everlasting death and born into God's family. Will we always be a part of this new family? Will God ever reject us because He doesn't want us anymore?

#### Story: "I Will Never Leave My Son"

Birds sang sweetly in the beautiful green forest. The golden sun shone down through the canopy of leaves fanning a speckled blanket of color on the forest floor. The breeze tickled the leaves of the trees making it sound as though the trees were whispering secrets to one another. In the distance you could hear the rattle of a woodpecker searching for his next meal. The forest was a peaceful place.

Bentley was a bunny who lived in the forest. He loved his forest home. He enjoyed hearing the birds sing and listening to the trees whisper their secrets. He would often go searching for the woodpecker whose rattles echoed through the forest. But what Bentley loved more than anything else was to spend time with his father. He loved his father so much; he couldn't wait to do things with him. The two of them would go hopping through the trees everyday. His father would teach him new things about life in the forest. His father was so wise; Bentley wanted to be just like him when he grew up.

Bentley's father, Richard, loved his son more than anything in the whole world. He found great joy in spending time with him and showing him new things. Bentley was his only son. He cherished every moment with him.

One afternoon Bentley woke up from his nap with a strange smell in his nostrils. He looked around and saw his father a few feet away. His father had a very concerned look on his face and was sniffing the air intently.

Bentley hopped over to his father and asked, "What is it, Father? What do we smell?"

"I think it might be smoke, son," his father answered.

"If there's smoke there must be a fire. Are we in danger, father?" Bentley asked nervously.

"Don't worry Bentley, everything will be all right," Richard reassured. He didn't want Bentley to be afraid.

Just then they saw a deer bolt by them at full speed. The deer was followed by a few more. Then came squirrels, mice, foxes, and even slithering snakes. All kinds of animals



were rushing but and they were all headed in the same direction. They were going to the river.

"Come on son!" Richard cried, "It's a forest fire. We must get to the river!"

Bentley started hopping as fast as he could in the direction that all the other animals were going. His father stayed right by his side. Bentley noticed that many animals were passing him because he couldn't hop very fast. The smoke was thickening in the air. Bentley began to gasp and wheeze and his eyes started to water.

"I can hardly breathe father," Bentley gasped. "How much further to the river? I don't think I can hop much more!"

"Keep going Bentley. You can make it!" His father encouraged.

Bentley looked behind him. What he saw frightened him. The beautiful forest that he lived in was up in huge orange flames and billows of smoke. The flames were coming closer and closer. Bentley could feel the heat. He must hop faster! But he was running out of energy. He stumbled on a log and fell to the ground.

"Come on Bentley, get up!" His father said in desperation.

Bentley tried but he couldn't. He could barely even move. Just then some more rabbits hopped by. Bentley recognized them as neighbors.

One of them called to his father, "Just leave him, Richard! Save yourself. You'll never make it with him. You will both die!"

"I will NEVER leave my son!!" Richard yelled back.

He realized that Bentley had no more strength. There was only one thing left to do. Richard would have to carry Bentley. Without wasting any time, he grabbed Bentley by the back of his neck and started hopping again. It was a heavy load but Richard's legs were strong. The heat rose as the roaring flames came closer. There was only a little stretch left to go. Richard kept hopping as hard as he could. Soon the river was in sight. Richard came up to the river side and jumped right into the water. Richard and Bentley sighed as the cool water refreshed their tired and aching bodies. They had made it! The water felt so good. They turned and watched the trees crash down as the fire destroyed the forest. They were sad about their home but they were very glad to still have each other. Bentley nuzzled close to his father, "Thanks for carrying me father, and not leaving me."

"I would never leave you, son. Never."

### Lesson:

Richard loved his son, Bentley, so much. He would never leave him no matter what. God loves His Son, Jesus, just as much.

Remember what happened when we believed in what Jesus did for us on the cross? We became part of God's family and Jesus came to live inside of us. Jesus will live inside us forever. If Jesus is inside us, will God ever leave us? No. When God looks at us He sees Jesus and God would never leave His Son. God will never leave us because we are all part of His family now. He loves us so much because of Jesus. Nothing can separate us from God's love. (Rom. 8:35, 38, 39)

God says in the Bible that He will NEVER leave us nor forsake us. (Heb. 13:5)



