

JANE SCOTT.

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JANE SCOTT.

COME here, my child, and read in a little book I have made for you. You have now got a new book, and I hope you will like it. What is more, it will do you good, if you think of what you read. Let me tell you a story about Mr. Bell, and Jane Scott.

Mr. Bell was a good man, who had a large farm in the state of Maine. He loved all good boys and girls, and tried to make the bad ones turn from their bad ways to love God. Once a week, he went all round the town to see

who was sick, and to give the poor people such things as might do them good. Here you see him with a tract in his hand, which he means to give to that little girl.



The little girl is **Jane Scott**. She is about eight years old, but she does not know much. She

has not been to school to learn, for she is very poor. Ought you not to thank the Lord that you have a Sunday-school to go to? All the good things we have in the world are sent to us by the Lord.

Mr. Bell talked with Jane the other day, and I wish you to



know what it was they said. Look at the picture, and you will see Mr. Bell in his arm chair. He is now going to say something to Jane.

Mr. Bell. My dear child have you prayed to God this day ?

Jane. No, sir. I do not know any prayer, except "Now I lay me down to sleep."

Mr. Bell. Cannot you pray to the Lord unless you learn a prayer from somebody ?

Jane. No, sir. It would not be right to pray any thing that comes into my head: would it, sir ?

Mr. Bell. No, my child. You must say what is right in your prayers. You must say what

you think is true, and you must ask for what you really want. When you feel very hungry, what is it that you do ?

Jane. I go and ask my mother for some bread.

Mr. Bell. But suppose you do not wish to have any bread, do you ask your mother for bread then ?

Jane. O, no, sir. I ask for what I want.

Mr. Bell. You only ask for what you want, then, Jane ?

Jane. Yes, sir.

Mr. Bell. And unless you really want a thing, you never ask your mother for it ?

Jane. No, sir, indeed I do not.

It would be silly in me to beg for what I did not wish. But what strange questions you ask.

Mr. Bell. We were talking of prayer. Tell me what you mean by prayer. What is prayer?

Jane. Prayer, sir! Why, I think prayer is something good that we learn to say; and then we kneel down every morning and every night and say it.

Mr. Bell. But, my dear child, is this all you know about prayer? Suppose you go into a room and kneel down and say the first commandment; would that be a prayer?

Jane. No, sir; I suppose not.

Mr. Bell. Well, you see it is

not every thing good that we say that is a prayer. Let me tell you what prayer is. It is *asking*. To pray, is to ask. To pray to God, is to ask God for what we want. Whenever you ask God for anything, then you pray.

Jane. Why, sir; then praying is almost the same as begging.

Mr. Bell. Just so. To pray, is to beg. When you want bread to eat, you beg your mother for it. Suppose you had no mother, and were alone in the woods, very hungry, and without any food near you?

Jane. Then I would kneel down and ask the Lord to give me some bread.

Mr. Bell. That would be praying to God. If you said, *O, Lord, give me some bread,* it would be a prayer. Because praying is asking. Every one that asks of God, prays to God. Now you would not need any one to teach you to ask God for bread, would you?

Jane. O, no, sir. If I was going to starve, I should know well enough how to ask.

Mr. Bell. Then when you really wish for any thing, you know how to pray for it?

Jane. Yes, sir.

Mr. Bell. What is the reason you do not pray to God to make you a good child?

Jane. I do not know, sir.

Mr. Bell. I will tell you. It is because you do not really want to be good. You said that when you really wanted any thing you knew how to pray for it. If you really wished to be a good, pious child, you would ask the Lord to make you so.

Jane. If I go and kneel down and say, *O Lord, Jesus, make me a good child*, would that be wrong?

Mr. Bell. No, my dear little girl. It will be right. And if you are in good earnest, the Lord will hear you. If you really wish to be a good child, the Lord will be pleased when you ask him.

But it is not real praying, if you are not in earnest. I will show you what I mean, by telling you a little story.

Once there was a man, who had a fine peach-tree in his garden. He had a little son, who was about six years old. One day, when the man was very busy in his shop, his little son came, and said, *O, father, come and get me a peach, for I wish to have one very much.* Then the man left his work, and came out, and went to the garden, and walked till he came to the peach-tree; the little boy said, *Father I was only in fun;* I do not want a peach at all. Then his father

was displeased and said, You are a bad boy, for you have trifled with me, and what you said to me was not true.

Jane. The little boy was a bad boy.

Mr. Bell. Why so ?

Jane. Because he told his father a lie.

Mr. Bell. What lie did he tell ?

Jane. Why, sir, he told his father he wished to have a peach very much, when he did not wish to have one at all.

Mr. Bell. Now you see how people displease God when they pray without being in earnest. Some children kneel down, and say a prayer over, and never

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think of what they are saying. Is that being in earnest ?

Jane. No, Sir.

Mr. Bell. Some little children go to say their prayers, and then, while they are on their knees, they are all the time thinking about something else. This is displeasing to God.

Jane. Can God hear me, sir, if I go by myself, and pray in my mother's room ?

Mr. Bell. Yes, my dear child ; God hears you whenever you speak a single word. If you whisper it to yourself, God hears you. If you only think it in your mind, God knows it. He knows

it if you do not speak a word aloud.

Jane. What is the use of saying any thing then? Will it not do as well for me to ask the Lord for what I want without saying any words?

Mr. Bell. What do you mean, my child?

Jane. I mean, sir, that if God knows every thing that I think in my mind, then I need not say any prayer with my lips. Cannot I just sit where I am, and pray to God in my mind?

Mr. Bell. Good people often pray in that way. We can pray while we are at work, and while we are walking, and while we are

lying awake in bed. But then it is right to pray with words also. Whenever we go to any place, by our ourselves, to pray, we ought to forget every thing else. If you try to pray without saying any words aloud, you will perhaps forget what you are praying about. When you pray aloud, you will have to think of what you are asking.

Jane. I do not know what you mean, sir.

Mr. Bell. I will show you what I mean. Just try to think of all you have been doing to-day.—Now begin. Think over in your mind all the things you have done this morning.—I will wait

five minutes. Here is my watch. When this long hand gets from this mark to that mark on the watch, it will be five minutes. Now begin.



When the five minutes were over, Mr. Bell said quickly, Stop !



Now what are you thinking about ? Have you thought of all you have been doing to-day ?

Jane. Oh dear ! sir. I did

begin, but I forgot, and just when you stopped me, I was thinking how very slow that little hand of the watch was moving along.

Mr. Bell. Now you see, my child, how hard it is to keep your thoughts from wandering. When your thoughts keep running away from what you want to be thinking about, that is what we call a *wandering of the thoughts*.

Jane. But would not my thoughts wander, if I was saying them all aloud ?

Mr. Bell. Perhaps not so much. Let us try. Just begin to tell me all you have been doing to-day.

Jane. Well, sir, now I will try to tell you. First I went for the

cow; and then I fed the ducks, and put water over the fire to boil the potatoes. Then I went to the doctor's to get some physic, and after I came home I ate my breakfast; and after I had my breakfast, I sat down and peeled apples all the morning for mother to dry, for market —

Mr. Bell. That will do. Now you see that your mind did not wander so much. So it is when you pray aloud. The words you say help to make you think about the right thing. You need not speak very loud when you pray; a whisper will do; but most persons find it useful to say something which they can hear them-

selves. I do not mean to say, that our prayers are not just as pleasing to God when they are not expressed in words, if they are really the desires of the heart.

Jane. Now I begin to know what you mean, sir. If you will teach me a prayer I will say it over every day. But I am afraid the Lord will not care for what such a bad little girl as I can say.

Mr. Bell. Do you think you are bad, Jane?

Jane. Yes, sir, indeed I do. I know I am bad. The Lord does not love bad children. How can I pray, when I am so wicked? Will the Lord give me what I ask him for?

Mr. Bell. I am glad you begin to feel that you are a sinner. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. He died on the cross to keep sinners from going to hell. He is the Son of God. He made you, and me, and every thing in the world. After he had died to save sinners, he was buried. Then he rose from the dead, and went up again to heaven.

Jane. Is he in heaven now, sir?

Mr. Bell. Yes, my child. Jesus is in heaven now. He loves sinners now, as much as when he died for them. He looks down and sees every thing we do.

He listens and hears every thing we say. He takes notice of all our poor prayers. If we ask any thing in good earnest, we must always remember that Jesus must help us to ask.

Jane. Oh, what a good Saviour! Does he pray for us?

Mr. Bell. Yes. If Christ does not pray for us, all our prayers are of no use. While we are praying, Christ is praying for us to our Father in heaven.

Jane. I am sure then that our Father in heaven will do what the Lord Jesus asks him to do for us.

Mr. Bell. Yes, my child, God

always hears him, and does what he asks. We are so foolish and bad, we do not know what to pray for, or how to pray, but the dear Saviour prays for us. He takes our poor prayers, and gives them to God the Father. The Father loves the Son, and for his sake, hears what we say. Let me tell you a little story.

Once there was a little girl, about as big as you are. She was walking in the garden to see the flowers. When she saw the roses, and the pinks, and the hyacinths, and the violets, she was much pleased. Then she thought, I should like to make my dear father a pretty nosegay. So she

plucked a great many flowers which she thought the prettiest. But she also plucked a good many weeds too. The red and blue flowers of the weeds seemed very pretty to her, and she put them along with the roses and pinks.



When she came into the house,

she ran to her elder brother, and said, "brother, see, here is a pretty nosegay: I wish you would take it to father, and tell him that his little Mary sent it to him." "Yes, I will, my dear," said her brother, "but first I will take out these ugly weeds, and I will fix these flowers better, and I will get some other flowers which are prettier, and then I will give it to your father. He will like you better for this." He did so, and little Mary's father was much pleased.

Now, Jane, said Mr. Bell, do you know what I mean by this story?

Jane. I think I do, a little. If

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I pray to God, I am like little Mary offering flowers to her father; and I ought to have some one to show me how. Is that what you mean, sir?

Mr. Bell. In part it is. When we pray to God, we honour him. He is pleased with prayers which his children offer. Every good child ought to offer the best prayers he can. But, after all, the best prayers we offer, are not as good as they should be. They have much in them that is said amiss, like Mary's nosegay, which had weeds in it. We are so wicked that God is displeased with us; the Lord Jesus Christ

pleads for us, and speaks in our favour; for he is the friend of every one who believes on him.

Jane. Can a bad person have a prayer answered?

Mr. Bell. We are all bad persons, by nature and by practice. We are children of wrath, and we go astray, from our birth. The Bible says there is not a just man on earth that doeth good, and sinneth not. Our sins would cause us all to be sent to hell, if God should not pardon them.

Jane. Then I am afraid nobody can pray a prayer that is worth any thing.

Mr. Bell. That is true. Our

prayers are not worth any thing. They deserve nothing. God might be angry with us because of them. There is no merit in them. And this is the reason why we need a friend in heaven. Try, now, to think why we need a friend in heaven ?

Jane. We need a friend in heaven, to plead for us and to ask God the Father to love us.

Mr. Bell. Exactly so. Christ is our friend in heaven. He is so much our friend, that he died for us. If any one was to die to save your life, would you not be sure he was your friend ?

Jane. Yes, sir. I should think he loved me very much.

Mr. Bell. Christ loves sinners so much, that whenever they are willing to trust in him, then he pleads for them, and says to his Father, *Father forgive them!* When they pray, Christ intercedes for them.

Jane. What is the meaning of intercede ?

Mr. Bell. It is just what you said yourself. It is the same as pleading for them. To *intercede* for you, is to *take your part*. Christ intercedes, because he takes the believer's part, or speaks for him. That is, Christ is our *Intercessor*.

Jane. Then our heavenly Fa-

ther hears us just because his Son takes our part ?

Mr. Bell. True. Our heavenly Father hears our prayers because Jesus Christ prays for us. He loves the Lord Jesus Christ. He hears us for the sake of his Son. God is well pleased with his beloved Son, and for his sake is well pleased with all who believe in his Son.

Jane. Oh, sir ; will it be right for me to say to the Lord, *Lord, I am a poor, wicked little girl, but forgive me for the sake of Jesus Christ?*

Mr. Bell. Dear child ! That is exactly what I wished you to

say. That is praying *in the name of Christ*. When you feel that you are sinful, then you feel that you need an intercessor. When you believe that Christ is your intercessor, then you pray to God to hear you for Christ's sake. When you ask any thing, for Christ's sake, then you ask in the name of Christ. And when you ask in the name of Christ, you will be heard.

Jane. How do we know that we shall have what we ask in the name of Christ?

Mr. Bell. Hear what the Lord Jesus Christ says to us. *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name,*

that will I do. We should be afraid to send our prayers up to God's holy place if Jesus Christ had not died for us. But he has shed his blood, and now we may be bold enough to go to the Lord and pray him to hear us. God will hear us for the sake of Christ's precious blood. The Scripture says, *We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.*—Heb. x. 19.

Jane. Must I always think, when I am praying, about the Lord Jesus?

Mr. Bell. Yes, you ought never to forget that your prayers are not worth any thing, until they

are offered up by Christ. Now we have talked enough for this time. I will teach you a little form of prayer, which is published by the American Sunday-school Union. You must always be in earnest and think about what you are saying, or the Lord will be displeased. Every day, go into some quiet place, where no one can see you, and kneel down, and pray to God. And now may the blessing of God rest upon you. Farewell.

A PRAYER

For a Young Person who earnestly desires to love God.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Thou art my great Creator, and I should fear Thee, and obey Thy commandments. Thou art my heavenly Father, who givest to me all my daily blessings, and I am sure I ought to love Thee. Thou hast shown thy kindness to me, not only in creating me, and giving me health, and food, and clothes, and friends, but, O, what lovingkindness Thou hast shown in giving Jesus Christ, thy well-beloved Son, to die for me, and save me from everlasting misery, if I will believe in him and love him. And Jesus also "hath loved us, and given himself for us." O, I should love my Creator, and blessed Saviour with all my heart; but it is so hard, so stubborn, it seems determined not to do so. Now, while I am speaking, I feel as if I hate sin, that keeps me from loving my God; but, O, I am afraid that

when I rise from my knees, I shall feel that I love sin still, and shall have my mind full of vain thoughts, and soon forget that I had even a wish to be free from sin. O, pity me! pity me, heavenly Father! it is a dreadful thing to have such a stubborn heart as mine is. Thou hast said in the Bible to every young person, "Give me thy heart." Heavenly Father, mine is not fit to give to Thee, for it does not love Thee as it should love Thee. But, O, if I wait until it is good enough to give to Thee, I never can do it. Take it! O take it! just as it is, for the sake of Jesus Christ, the Saviour, who was perfect in goodness. Take my heart, merciful Father, sinful as it is. O, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make it clean. Let thy Holy Spirit make me hate sin, and love Thee; drive from me all wicked thoughts, and wishes; keep down my pride, prevent my passions from breaking out into evil words, and rash actions. I cannot tell how much I want Thy Holy Spirit to do for me, for

every day there seems to be some new fault in me ; some evil way in my actions that I had not before. O, how wicked I must be in thy sight, Lord, for thou art altogether holy ! I do desire, I do pray, to have my heart changed by thy Holy Spirit. The blessed Saviour of sinners has promised that Thou wilt give it to them that ask it ; merciful Father, for his sake give it to me ! O, teach me how to pray for it, so as to be sure of having it, that I may love Thee ; love my Bible, in which I can learn about Thee ; love Jesus, who died for me, that I might be made fit to go to heaven, and live there for ever in happiness. O, for this dear Saviour's sake, merciful Father, hear my prayer ; and I will bless and praise Thee while I live, and bless and praise Thee better when I die, and am in heaven with Jesus, where there is no sin. *Amen.*

THE END.