

## I Shed Some Blood for Him

A young couple was deliriously happy when a beautiful little girl was born. This young couple was unsaved; in fact they had somehow grown to hate anything and everything that had anything to do with God, and His Son Jesus Christ. Instead of doing as they should, and presenting the baby to the Lord for His blessing, they made a vow that the little girl, whom we shall call Melinda was never to be allowed exposure to anything that had anything to do with Christianity.

Throughout her young girlhood, she wasn't allowed to go to Sunday School. If a preacher or soul winners from a local church visited their home, Melinda was sent to her room before the visitors were let in.

Melinda's parents and grandparents were well off; and she had more toys and dolls than she could keep up with, and ate only the best of foods and wore the very best clothing money could buy. Her parents made sure of her secular and cultural training. She studied piano, voice, and ballet with the best teachers and instructors money could afford; but her parents were doing a very good job of keeping her away from learning anything about the Lord.

One day, Melinda's mother was baking her husband a birthday cake, and she discovered that she lacked a certain ingredient. She called her beautiful nine-year old daughter and gave her some money and sent her to the store to purchase the ingredient. Her orders were that the girl should go straight down the street to the store, purchase the article and come straight home.

Melinda, glad to be going out in the sunny spring day, skipped down the street, went into the store and purchased the article, and started back home. Melinda decided it might be fun to take a different route home, so she turned left at an intersection and walked up a back street. She knew that it would intersect a little farther up with the street that would lead to her home, so no harm could come of it.

As she walked along, she began to hear some pretty singing and music, and the farther she walked, the louder it became. Finally, she saw that the singing and music was coming from a big building just across the street from her.

Melinda loved music and singing, and she possessed the natural curiosity of a nine year old, so she crossed the street and entered the building. Though she didn't know it, this was a mission house, and inside was a goodly number of down-and-outers: a cross-section of the folks from the lower echelon of society; but many seated there had experienced the regenerating power of receiving Jesus Christ into their lives. Some were there, just fulfilling their obligation for having been given breakfast and perhaps some article of clothing.

As Melinda shyly entered, they looked back and smiled at the beautiful little girl. She sat down in back, thinking she would stay just a little while and listen to the group on the podium singing such a beautiful song, but one she had never heard before.

The group finished their song, and a pleasant-face gentleman came to the podium and welcomed the assemblage. After a word of prayer, he began to preach. Melinda knew she should get up and hurry on home, but something seemed to hold her to her seat.

The preacher was talking about Who Jesus is, and the many compassionate miracles he performed, and finally describing his arrest, trial and cruel treatment by the Roman soldiers and King Herod Antipas' guards; and finally his crucifixion.

*"At that very time of year when lambs were being sacrificed for a covering for sin, Jesus Christ became the Lamb of God; not to cover our sins, but to take them away. Jesus had never committed a sin as we have, but he took all our sins to the Cross, and was nailed there: shedding His precious blood to cleanse us from all sin and make us ready to go to Heaven."*

The missionary preached on about why it was necessary for Christ to come down to earth and give His life on Calvary's cross to pay our sin debt. Tears flowed from Melinda's beautiful hazel eyes. The singing group came back to the podium to join the missionary, the piano started up, and they began to sing *"There's Room At the Cross For You"*. After the first verse and chorus the missionary began the altar call, with the group singing softly behind him.

*"Some of you have gone too long, living your life without Jesus and his wonderful gift of salvation." He said. "Here at the mission house we have offered many of you gifts of food, shelter and articles of clothing. You accepted those gifts, and we're glad; but a greater gift is being offered: the greatest gift ever offered to anyone - the free gift of salvation. And with that gift, another wonderful thing comes to pass: you are adopted into the family of God and become joint heirs with Christ."*

Melinda found herself walking down the aisle to the altar in front of the podium. Her face was streaked with tears. A lady knelt beside Melinda and hugged her; then took her Bible and quietly explained how she could give her heart and life to Jesus and be saved. Melinda repeated the sinner's prayer.

There was *"joy unspeakable and full of glory"* in Melinda's heart as she left the mission house. When she had started from home there was a warm sun shining, but now a cold rain was pouring down. Melinda knew she would be punished for being gone so long and worrying her parents.

By the time she arrived home her pretty dress was drenched, and her blonde curls hung limp down the side of her face. She shivered. Melinda's mother angrily jerked her around to face her, bombarding her with questions about where she had been so long. Her father came in with an expression on his face that frightened Melinda.

Finally, she spoke, *"Mummy - Daddy - I'm so sorry I worried you by being gone so long, but I have something wonderful to tell you. I heard some pretty singing and music, and went inside a building. They told me all about Jesus dying on a cross. Mummy - Daddy; I gave my heart to Jesus and..."*

Melinda was interrupted by a loud anguished sound coming from deep in her father's throat. He uttered blasphemous profane exclamations, and became as a man possessed. Melinda had never seen her father like that - then she saw him strip off his heavy belt and approach her.

Melinda's mother wept in loud cries as her husband beat her daughter until she fell to the floor, mercifully passing out. For two days Melinda was confined to her bedroom. The harsh beating had left not only bruises, but also some lacerations. Her mother applied ointments and alcohol rub, saying very little; sometimes with tears in her eyes.

The morning of the third day, Melinda awakened with a raging fever and raspy breathing. A doctor was summoned; his diagnosis being double pneumonia. These were the days before penicillin was available. Several medications were tried, but Melinda's condition only worsened.

The fever raged on; and Melinda moved in and out of consciousness; sometimes murmuring bits and pieces of the wonderful things she had heard at the mission. Her mother sat by her bed patting her forehead with a cold cloth. The doctor came by briefly, leaving the room sadly shaking his head. Just before dark Melinda sat up in bed and called for her mother. Her mother had lost a lot of sleep, and had dozed off when she was awakened by Melinda's call. When she saw her sitting up in bed it gave her a happy start. She thought the fever had broke and there would be a chance for Melinda to recover after all.

*"Mummy."* Melinda said softly.

*"Yes, sweetheart; I'm here."*

*"Mummy, I want you to bring me the dress I was wearing that day."*

*"No honey."* Her mother groaned. *"You don't want to see that thing. It was soiled and torn - and - had some bloodstains on it. I threw it in the trash."*

*"Please Mummy; go and get it for me."*

*"But why, Melinda?"* Her mother protested. Melinda's father appeared in the doorway of the bedroom with guilt and grief written all over his haggard face. Melinda had lain back down again, closing her eyes.

She hadn't seen her father enter. She spoke softly, but loud enough for both parents to hear her final words on earth.

*"Mummy, an angel came and told me I would be going to Heaven tonight and I wanted to take the dress with me so I could show Jesus that I shed some blood for Him too."*