

BAPTIST FEATURES

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CHILDREN'S PAGE
September 1, 1955

TOM LEARNS TO SMILE

BY: Ellen Brown

"I don't like Tom much," said Ben. "He's always frowning. He doesn't smile."

"You like him, but you don't like his ways," Ed said. "I wish he wasn't such an old sour puss too."

Tom's face turned as red as a tomato. They hadn't known he was hiding behind the chinaberry tree. Why should I smile? thought Tom. Ben and Ed didn't have any troubles. Why shouldn't they be cheerful and happy all the time? Every time he saw Ben he was laughing and having fun. Ed was always cheerful too. But they didn't have a sick Daddy like he did.

Every day he went home and worked and worked. I don't have any fun anymore since Daddy got sick, thought Tom. Why should I smile? he argued with himself.

He trudged sourly home from school. It was hot. He'd like to go down to the creek with Ed and Ben if they went today. But he couldn't. He had to go home and work. He'd feed his rabbits. He'd hoe in the garden. He'd work and work. He opened the front door and walked in his house.

"Hello, Tom!" said Mother happily. She rushed to him and gave him a big squeeze. "How is my big man today and how was school?"

"Aw, all right, I guess," Tom said sourly.

"Come, come," said Mother. "Give me a great big smile!"

Tom tried to smile. He almost did. But then he thought of all his chores. The smile was more like a frown than a smile.

"Tom!" he heard his Dad calling. He rushed to the back bedroom.

"Hi, Dad," Tom said. His mouth wavered in a crinkle that was more like a frown.

"I think Tom needs an outing, Mother. Why don't you run along and play this afternoon?" Dad said.

Tom almost smiled. "I'll go see Ed," he said. He hurried to change into his play clothes. He picked up his kitty and went to find Ed and Ben. They were laughing and talking and having fun. They looked so cheerful--but then, why shouldn't they? They had everything they wanted.

His little kitty meowed in his arms. He ran to meet Ed and Ben.

"Oh, let me hold the kitty! Let me see him!" Ed said. He put the soft fuzzy ball against his cheek. "Oh, how I wish I had a kitty like that!" said Ed. "But I can't have a kitty. You're lucky, Tom, to have such a nice kitty. Grandpa has asthma. We can't have a kitty. The kitty's fur makes him sick."

"I have rabbits too!" Tom said. "I have a garden!"

"You're lucky!" Ed said. "We can play with your kitty in my yard."

"Poor Ed," thought Tom--"no kitty."

"Listen to him grrr," Tom said to Ed and Ben.

"He grrr's loud," said Ben. "But I must be running home. I have my chores to do."

Tom was surprised. He hadn't lived here long enough to know these things, he supposed. Ben had chores too. Ed couldn't have a kitty. But they were always cheerful. They didn't get to do everything they wanted either. But they smiled. What was it the Bible said about being cheerful? Oh, yes, he remembered, "A cheerful heart is a good medicine," and it was in Proverbs.

"Proverbs 17:22," Tom said aloud.

"Why that verse?" Ben and Ed both said at once, for they knew what it said. Tom could see they were surprised. "You remind me of it," Tom said. And he smiled so far his smile was like a bright yellow banana in the middle of his face. It reached almost to his ears.

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NEW NEIGHBOR
BY: Lois Snelling

EGGS FOR SALE
BY: Helen Howland Prommel

Eggs for sale! Eggs for sale!
Who will buy from me?
I have piled them in a pile--
Fresh as they can be.

I'm the egg man, hurry now,
Buy them for a cake--
You will need a lot of eggs
When you start to bake.

Eggs for sale! Eggs for sale!
Use them many ways--
Scrambled eggs, and hard-boiled eggs,
Good for picnic days.

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A brand new boy has moved
To the house across the street;
I'm sure we'd be good friends,
If we could only meet.
And so I think i'll say,
As friendly as can be,
"I'd like to have you go
To Sunday school with me."

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