

The Romance of the Doctor's Visits

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LITTLE JOE WITH A BIG QUESTION

Located in the hills of Missouri, is a typical country schoolhouse, not at all attractive in appearance, nor situated on a modern highway. In this little, obscure place, however, there was, one evening, a great transaction which changed the life of one fine lad of twelve, and through him, of many others.

I had the joy of presenting to this group the Gospel as it is found in Romans 10:9 -- "**If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.**" A number of illustrations were used in order to explain the meaning of the confession mentioned in this verse. The policeman, wearing his blue uniform and showing the star on his breast, is thus making a confession of his connection with the police department and the authority vested in him as an officer of the law. The bank messenger, with his blue uniform and the name of the bank on his cap, is confessing by these that he is employed by the great bank in the heart of the city. The soldier in his khaki uniform, with the marks on the collar, in confessing that he has entered the service of his country and is no longer his own master, but is governed entirely by the will and the law of his superior officers.

Near the back of the room in this little schoolhouse, sat a boy twelve years of age with tousled hair, and wearing a soiled torn pair of overalls. One could easily see that he came from a family which had been denied the luxuries of life and many of the necessities. In his home were eleven other children, and the father worked on the section along the railroad. All through the service this lad listened closely and attentively. He had never heard a message like that before. There was a tug at his little heart as he heard the story of the Saviour calling and inviting boys and girls, men and women to come and put their trust under the shadow of His wings.

At the close of the meeting, the little lad elbowed his way through the crowded aisle toward the front. He dodged under the arms and between the bodies of the folk who crowded the little room, until he came to where I was standing. Looking up at me with an eager face and attractive countenance, he said: "Mister, how old does a boy have to be to be saved?"

What a question is this? Many older ones have asked it. Sunday school teachers have pondered over it. Parents have inquired concerning it; but never before had I been asked about it by a child. Praying quickly for wisdom, I slipped one arm around his shoulders, and said: "My little friend, you must be just old enough to know that the Lord JESUS came to save you, and to tell Him that He can have you to be His own. Would you like to tell Him so?"

He bowed his head for a few moments in meditation and then looking up with a sweet smile

said: "Yes, Mister, I'll take JESUS right now." That was all! Others crowded up to converse and he was soon lost in the crowd.

Later on, I learned his name and made some inquiries about little Joe, and whether he really was walking with the Lord and trusting this new-found Saviour. The report came back: "Yes, Joe is really saved. Someone has given him a Bible. He carries it to school with him. He has it on his desk with his other books. At recess when the boys are playing their games, Joe is sitting in the grass over by the fence, reading his Bible and meditating on the precious Lord and Saviour he had found."

Joe is still carrying his Bible, though several years have passed. He has learned to know the Gospel so well that he is able to tell it to others publicly and privately; and has proven by his godly life, that on that eventful day he really did take the Lord JESUS CHRIST for himself and the blessed Saviour took him to be His very own.

A boy of twelve is not too young to be saved, nor is he too young to be lost. I trust that every boy and girl who reads this beautiful story may do as Joe did, and say at once: "I will take GOD's gift; I will receive the Lord JESUS, for He died for me."
