

57 cents



A sobbing little girl stood near a small church from which she had been

turned away because it 'was too crowded'. "I can't go to Sunday school," she sobbed to the pastor as he walked by. Seeing her shabby, unkempt appearance, the pastor guessed the reason and taking her by the hand, took her inside and found a place for her in the Sunday School class. The child was so touched that she went to bed that night thinking of the children who have no place to worship Jesus.

Some two years later, this child lay dead in one of the poor tenement buildings and the parents called for the

kind-hearted pastor who had befriended their daughter to handle the final arrangements. As her poor little body was being moved, a worn and crumpled purse was found which seemed to have been rummaged from some trash dump. Inside was found 57 cents and a note scribbled in childish handwriting, which read, "This is to help build the little church bigger so more children can go to Sunday school." For two years she had saved for this offering of love.

When the pastor tearfully read that note, he knew instantly what he would do. Carrying this note and the cracked, red pocketbook to the pulpit, he told the story of her unselfish love and devotion. He challenged his deacons to get busy and raise enough money for the larger building.

The story does not end there! A newspaper learned of the story and published it. It was read by a estate agent who offered them a parcel of land worth many thousands. When told that the church could not pay so much, he

offered it for 57 cents.

Church members made large contributions. Checks came from far and wide. Within five years the little girl's gift had increased to \$250,000.00 - a huge sum for that time (near the turn of the century). Her unselfish love had paid large dividends.

When you are in the city of Philadelphia, look up Temple Baptist Church with a seating capacity of 3,300 and Temple University, where hundreds of students are trained. Have a look, too, at the Good Samaritan Hospital and at a Sunday school building which houses hundreds of Sunday scholars, so that no child in the area will ever need to be left outside during Sunday school time. In one of the rooms of this building is the picture of the sweet face of the little girl whose 57 cents, so sacrificially saved, made such remarkable history. Beside it is a portrait of her kind pastor, Dr. Russel H. Conwell, author of the book, *Acres of Diamonds* - a true story.



If you are thinking you might get bored or tired after being in Heaven for a while.. don't worry. Try to imagine something with me. Imagine you are a little bird who lives in a tiny cage made of rusty metal. Inside your cage you have a food dish, and a little mirror, and a tiny perch to swing on.

Then one day some kind person takes your cage to a big beautiful forest. The forest is splashed with sunlight. Proud towering trees cover the hills and valleys as far as you can see. There are gushing waterfalls, and bushes drooping with purple berries, and fruit trees and carpets of wild flowers, and a wide blue sky to fly in. And besides all these things, there are millions of other little birds...hopping from one green limb to another and eating their fill and raising their little

families and singing their hearts out all through the day.

Now, little bird can you imagine wanting to stay in your cage? Can you imagine saying, "Oh please don't let me go! I will miss my cage. I will miss my little food dish with seeds in it. I will miss my plastic mirror and my tiny little perch! **I might get bored in that big forest.**"

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"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

1 Corinthians 2:9