

An Angel In Disguise

By Dr. E. Lee Bez

Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.

Hebrews 13:2

She was a nondescript little person barely five foot tall. Her nose was hooked and her glasses hung precariously on the end of it. She had lost her teeth and her mouth was sunken in, giving her a comical appearance. We called her "Sarah Woodchuck".

Sarah lived in a small shack at the end of Avenue A. She could be seen every day walking to town and looking for road kill (a rabbit or a woodchuck) that would be her dinner. Evenings she staggered home drunk muttering obscenities. This strange little woman was the butt of our youthful jeers and jokes.

Blood was pouring profusely from a large cut in her head.

The highlight of our day was throwing apples or stones or whatever was handy at her as she tettered home in the twilight. One day I found a rather large stone, about the size of a baseball, and with a friend egging me on I heaved it in Sarah's direction. The stone caught her on the back of the head. She

staggered and almost fell. Blood was pouring profusely from a large cut in her head. She turned in our direction and hurled some foul obscenities at us then staggered on toward her little domicile muttering and cursing. I was the hero of Avenue A that evening.

Sarah wept and sobbed her way out of her night and into the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

One day when Sarah was hitchhiking a local pastor stopped and offered a ride to this grotesque little figure. The pastor looked beyond the comical face and ragged attire and saw a soul in need of Christ. For the first time Sarah heard the plan of salvation that all have transgressed and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. Sarah wept and sobbed her way out of her night and into the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The strange little woman then sought membership at the local church of which I later became a member.

I was converted on my sixteenth birthday and immediately sensed that God was calling me into the ministry. I could not wait to finish high school and enroll in a Bible college. My parents were not in sympathy with my new found faith and my desire to be a minister. When I graduated from high school I immediately applied to a Bible college in

upstate New York. I worked hard throughout the summer, saved my nickels and dimes and tried to save enough money for my first year's tuition.

When I reached into the bag I pulled out a fist full of money - \$600.00!

As summer turned to fall and the opening day of school approached, I was still \$600 short of the needed expense. However, my bags were packed and my heart was fixed on going to college that fall. A few days before leaving, Sarah approached me with a brown paper bag. "Oh no," I thought, "it would be a going away present of the hard little biscuits she baked and distributed among the congregation." Some of the children used them for balls and others played badminton with them. They were utterly indigestible. I took the bag and contemplated where I could dispose of the biscuits discreetly. When I reached into the bag I pulled out a fist full of money - \$600.00! - Her money which represented her life savings. No one would have ever imagined that she had saved from her small social security checks.

I cannot think of her today without hot tears washing my face as I think of the malicious act I did in throwing the stone at her head. When I could no longer hold the dark secret in

my heart I felt I must confess to Sarah that it was I, her brother in Christ, that gashed her head. I shall never forget her gracious reply as she said, "That's all right, Brother Eddie. God bless you. I forgive you."

Sarah went to be with the Lord some years ago but I cannot remember her without thinking of the gracious spirit of Christ who though wounded by the whips, thorns and nails of the Roman soldiers, prayed with his dying breath, "Father, forgive them."

One of my dreams is to see Sarah in heaven and thank her again for her generosity that paid my first year in Bible college.

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