

Friendly Instructor.

Available for Sunday Schools.



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THE
Friendly Instructor ;

OR,

A COMPANION

FOR

YOUNG MASTERS AND MISSES.

SUITABLE FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

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Mary Kildreth
Book

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THE

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DIALOGUE I.

*Between SAMUEL and WILLIAM
against Lying.*

Sam. WHAT'S the matter, William? you look as if you had been crying.

Wil. My father has been angry with me.

Sam. What has he been angry with you for?

Wil. I am ashamed to tell you: I have been very naughty indeed.

Sam. Nay, but tell me what it was; I won't tell any body; and you know I tell you any thing you ask me.

Wil. I told a lie. My father taxed me with a fault I had committed, and I denied it; at last he made me own it, and corrected me.

Sam. That was a little hard, when he had made you confess, to correct you, without you had done somewhat very bad indeed.

Wil. No: that was but a little fault: It was not for what I did, but for denying it, I was corrected: and I am sure I deserved it.

Sam. Nay, then, if you are satisfied, don't look so dull: Come, cheer up, and be brisk.

Wil. No, Samuel, I am not satisfied; for though I have no reason to complain of my father, I have a great deal to be angry with myself, that I should offend so kind a father, and, what is worse, make God angry with me.

Sam. No, no, don't be concerned about that. I have told a lie a great many times, and God was never angry with me, that I know of.

Wil. No, it may be you don't know it, but God is very angry with us when we tell lies. I never knew so much of it before, but my father has told me, what a sad thing it is for children to tell lies; and showed me where Christ has said, *That the devil is the father of liars*, and, in another place, *That all liars shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone*; and is not this enough to grieve me?

Sam. I don't know; I never was concerned about it. My father says, that it is a very naughty thing for children to tell lies; but he never told me that God

would be angry with me, and that I should be the devil's child if I did; for then I believe I should have been afraid as well as you. But are you sure it is true?

Wil. Yes, I am sure my father would not have said so, if it was not. Besides, I tell you he shewed it me in the Word of God, and made me read to him, in the 5th chapter of the Acts, how Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead for telling a lie.

Sam. That was sad indeed! I ought to bless God that he has not struck me dead, who have told so many.

Wil. Well, Samuel, I hope we shall both take heed what we say for the future, and pray to God to forgive us what is past.

Sam. Will God pardon us then, if we don't tell any more?

Wil. Yes, if we are sorry, and pray him for Christ's sake to forgive us; for my father told me, he has said, *Whosoever confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy.*

DIALOGUE II.

Between CHARLOTTE and OLIVIA, on reading the SCRIPTURES.

Char. I CAME to play with you, Olivia, this afternoon, if I may.

Olivia. Yes, Charlotte, why should you question it? for I am very glad to see you, and my mother is always willing to have you here.

Char. I was afraid you had got a task to learn, because I saw you with a book in your hand, that made me say so.

Oliv. No, I was not getting any

thing, I was only reading a chapter to myself.

Char. You love reading better than I, for I think I have reading enough at school. I don't love to read at home too.

Oliv. Not love to read the word of God, Charlotte! it is sad indeed if you don't.

Char. Yes, I like well enough to read it; but not at home and at school too.

Oliv. I read at home as well as you, but I generally read a chapter to my father or mother besides, and sometimes to myself.

Char. If you like to read so much it is nothing to me; but I think you have no great occasion for it, you can read better than I.

Oliv. No, I can't; but that is not the chief thing I read at home for.

Char. No! I thought what all children read their books for, was to learn.

Oliv. Pray, what do other people read for? Don't your father and mother too read the Bible?

Char. Yes, but they read it to mind the sense, which is none of our business till we are bigger.

Oliv. O dear, Charlotte, don't speak so! What, is it none of our business to know what God hath said to us in his Word?

Char. No, not till we are older, for we can't understand it yet; I can't at least, I don't know what you do.

Oliv. Yes, you and I too are capable of understanding something of it, if we read it carefully; nay, there's my little brother, who is not above five years old, will very often give my mother an account

of what he has been reading at his school, and if it is any pretty story, will tell her the most of it.

Char. Why, are there any pretty stories in the Bible? I love stories dearly, but never found any pretty ones there.

Oliv. No! that's strange indeed! You might well say you did not understand what you read; but the reason is, because you did not mind.

Char. Yes, I do mind, or else how could I learn to read?

Oliv. You mind to read all the words right, but I find not at all what you are reading about.

Char. No, indeed, that's true, for I always thought it was what I knew nothing of. But what are the stories about? I should like to mind them.

Oliv. I am sorry to see you so

ignorant, indeed, Charlotte. Were you never taught who was the first man? who was saved in the ark when the world was drowned?

Char. Yes, I was taught those questions when I was very small, and was in my primmer.

Oliv. Well, don't you remember reading these stories when you were in the beginning of Genesis?

Char. No, indeed, I dont; are they there;

Oliv. Yes, and towards the latter end is all the story of Joseph, that his brethren sold into Egypt.

Char. Oh, I remember that was in those questions; and there was one about Daniel's being put into the lion's den; is that in the Bible too?

Oliv. Yes, that is in the 6th chapter of Daniel; and in the third chapter is the story of the

three children in the fiery furnace.

Char. I'll look these stories and read them. But pray tell me what others there are ?

Oliv. Charlotte, there are so many, that I can't tell you a quarter of them. In the New Testament, the first five books are full of very pleasing ones. I hope your mother has told you that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners ; that he was born of the Virgin Mary ; that whilst he lived here, he did a great many miracles ; made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and raised the dead to life.

Char. I don't know ; if she has I have forgotten. Is all this in the New Testament ?

Oliv. Yes, as also how Christ was put to death on a cross ; and how he arose again in three days,

and afterwards ascended to heaven.

Char. Well, I believe I shall love to read these stories; I will read some every day, and mind more what is read at school.

Oliv. Pray do, and I think you will be pleased with them. But I will not keep you any longer in talk about this, we will go to play, if you please, and have a little more discourse the next time I see you.

DIALOGUE III.

*Between the same, on reflecting
what is read.*

Oliv. You see, Charlotte, I have soon returned your visit, and am glad to find you employed as you found me.

Char. Yes, Olivia, I have been reading some stories every day

since I was with you ; I am glad you put me upon it, for I have been greatly pleased with them.

Oliv. So I thought you would, when you said you loved stories ; and I hope you will consider what use you are to make of them ; for it is with that design they are written for us.

Char. Dear Olivia, I must beg you to tell me how I must do that, for I don't know but I shall be willing to learn whatever you will teach me, for I find you have been better instructed than I, and know a great deal more.

Oliv. That I have had good instruction I must own, for my father and mother too have taken great pains with me ; but to my shame may I speak it, I know but little ; however, I shall be very willing to tell you any thing I do know.

And as to what I was speaking of, my father has often put me (when I have read a story to him) thinking what I was to learn out of it, that was suitable for me.

Char. Pray make this a little plainer to me, for I don't well understand you.

Oliv. I will if I can. Tell me what story you have been reading, now, Charlotte, and we will see what we are to learn from that, and then you will know what I mean.

Char. I was reading in the 2d. book of Kings, 2d. chapter, about the children that mocked Elisha, the prophet, and how two bears came out of the wood, and tore forty-two of them.

Oliv. This is a very remarkable story indeed; what did you think when you read it?

Char. I thought they were very wicked children, and that God shewed how angry he was with them, by letting the bears kill them.

Oliv. That was a very good thought. You remember what they said, don't you?

Char. Yes. *Go up, thou bald head, go up, thou bald head.*

Oliv. Well, and what made it so wicked in them to say so? for it is to be thought it was true that the prophet was bald.

Char. I suppose it was because they spoke it to deride and jeer him; did they not?

Oliv. Yes, to be sure they did. They could not think what to say, to express their scorn and contempt of this holy man, and so jeered him on account of a natural defect. And sure this should

be a caution to all children (who are but too prone to this evil) never to express their contempt of others, by mentioning any natural or accidental infirmity or defect.

Char. I did not think of this use of the story before; but, as you say, it is indeed a very common thing, when we would show our anger against any, to call them crooked, hump-backed, bald-pated, one-eyed, or whatever other imperfection they may have, that this story convinces me is wrong.

Oliv. It is indeed, and as my father told me when I read it to him, I should consider, that it is both foolish and wicked. It is very silly to reflect on any one for what he cannot help; and is very wicked, as it is indeed reflecting on God himself, who made us all, and for wise reasons permitted those

defects in nature, or suffered those accidents to befall them by which they came; and the dreadful lot of these children, I think, should be enough to check us, whenever we find any inclination so much as to entertain a thought of this nature; much rather ought we to turn our minds to thankfulness and praise to our gracious God, who has formed us so perfect, and preserved us from being maimed or deformed by sad disasters.

Char. Dear Olivia, I am much obliged to you for giving me these good instructions; and as I have not the advantages of learning as you have, I hope you will be so good as to tell me a little more the next time we meet.

Oliv. That I will, most readily. And if you ask me about any thing I don't know, I will request my

father or mother to tell me; and pray, my dear, come to see me quickly.

DIALOGUE IV.

Between the same, on the death of a child.

Char. I HAVE made a quick return of your visit. But what's the matter, dear Olivia? what do you cry for?

Oliv. Matter enough, Charlotte, my brother Philander is dead!

Char. Dead! I am very sorry for that; when did he die?

Oliv. This morning about ten o'clock.

Char. He was well when you were with me last, was he not? Pray what did he die of?

Oliv. Yes, but he was taken ill the next day; the doctor says it was a violent fever.

Char. But pray don't cry so much, you will make yourself sick, and then you will die too.

Oliv. No I hope not; for I am afraid I am not so fit to die as he was; I wish I were.

Char. I hope you won't die, indeed I should be very sorry to lose you; but I wonder you should think Philander fitter to die than you.

Oliv. Oh, Charlotte, he was always a very good child, he took great delight in hearing and reading good things; he would go by himself, to pray every morning and night; and I never remember his making his father or mother angry with him but once, and then he went by himself presently to beg pardon of God for his disobedience, and would not rest till he had obtained his pardon too.

Char. He was an extraordinary child indeed of his age, but I think you as good: I am sure I never saw one that knew so much as you.

Oliv. So much the worse for me, Charlotte, that I should know so much of my duty, and do it no better; my dear brother that is gone, took care to put in practice what he knew.

Char. So do you I believe, for I have heard you much commended.

Oliv. No, indeed, I have not; for I have frequently displeased my parents, and often omitted secret prayer, which this dear little creature would reprove me for; and now he is gone, I wish I had minded him more.

Char. Well, come, pray don't cry any longer; you may follow his advice now; And I hope this

account will do me good, for I am sure I am a great deal worse than you; and if you are not fit to die, what will become of me?

Oliv. I hope God will give us repentance, and forgive our sins, that when we die, we may go to heaven, where my dear brother is gone. For he told us he was going to God and Christ, and bid us not cry for him, but prepare to follow him; but sometimes I fear I never shall.

Cha. I came to learn of you, not to teach you; but I can't forbear telling you of a place I read this morning, which I think is suitable to us, both for direction and encouragement.

Oliv. What is it dear Charlotte? I long to hear.

Char. It is in Isa. lv. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his ways, and*

the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God for he will abundantly pardon.

Oliv. This is a seasonable word indeed. God grant we may forsake every sin, and sincerely return to him, and then we have his promise of pardon; and if our sins are pardoned, we may be sure our souls shall be saved.

DIALOGUE V.

*Between CHLOE and DORINDA,
on PRAYER.*

Chl. MY father has given me leave to spend this afternoon with you, if you are not engaged.

Dor. No, Chloe, I am no ways engaged. I shall be very glad of your company.

Chl. What book was that you were reading when I came in?

Dor. A very pretty book, *Dr. Watts' Prayers for children and youth*; did you never see it? here it is.

Chl. No, not as I remember.— Is all this prayers?

Dor. Great part of it; but here are also some considerations to excite us to the duty, and some directions for the right performance of it.

Chl. And did you ever get any of these prayers?

Dor. Yes, my mother taught me the infant's prayer as soon as I could speak; then the young child's, and now I have learned those for children twelve years of age.

Chl. But you are not so old yet; how came you to learn them?

Dor. I am almost ; and my mother has told me the meaning of those words in them I did not understand.

Chl. But I suppose they are longer, and I should not like to get long prayers, and be obliged to say them every morning and evening, as I suppose you do.

Dor. Why, Chloë ! I hope you don't consider it as a hardship to get any thing that is good, or to be so long employed every day in praying to God. What prayers do you use ? for I don't doubt but your father has instructed you in your duty, as to praying to the Lord.

Chl. Yes, indeed, my father has often talked to me about it. When my mother was alive, I remember I used to say the Lord's prayer to her night and morning, and after

her death, a servant was ordered to hear me ; but since I grew bigger, I was not required to say it to any body ; to tell you the truth, it is very seldom I say it at all.

Dor. I am very sorry to hear this indeed, Chloe, and yet you own your father has told you of your duty.

Chl. Yes, but I generally forget it.

Dor. Forget to pray to God for the mercies you want, that is sad indeed ! If God should thus forget you, what do you think would become of you ?

Chl. Sometimes of an evening I think of it, but when it is dark I am afraid to go by myself.

Dor. I don't wonder you are afraid, if you so seldom pray to God to preserve you. For my part, if I should not commit my-

self to the protection of God before I lie down, I should fear he would be so displeas'd with me, as to suffer some mischief to come to me before the morning light.

Chl. But my father prays with us, and I don't see any need there is for me to pray besides.

Dor. Indeed, Chloe, I am afraid by your talk, that you never pray'd in your life.

Chl. Nay, Dorinda, now you wrong me, I am sure ; what, won't you believe me ?

Dor. I make no doubt, Chloe, of the truth of what you said ; but I believe what you call praying is not prayer.

Chl. Nay, I don't know what you mean now.

Dor. I will tell you. I don't call it praying only to repeat the words that are in any prayer, or to

kneel down whilst the master of the family prays; this you seem to account praying.

Chl. Yes. I don't know what praying is, if this is not. I thought this was what every body called praying.

Dor. No, Chloe, praying is a work of the heart, and without we send up our desires to God, our prayers will do us no good; for it is the heart God looks at in all our approaches to him.

Chl. But my thoughts are most always on my play, and I do not know how to fix them, as you say, on good things.

Dor. The harder you find it to fix your mind, the more occasion you have to endeavour it; and I am persuaded, if you would, before you begin, sit down and consider the many mercies received

from God, and what you stand in need of, the many sins you have committed, and the dreadful consequences of them, if God should not forgive them, even endless misery; I say, if you think over these things, you will not need many more considerations to put you into a serious temper; you will find yourself so much concerned in the acceptance your prayers meet with, as will put fervour into your desires. And if you please, I will lend you this book, because I think these prayers are such as you will understand.

Chl. Pray do, and I will learn some and try to use them in the manner you have directed me.

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