

LITTLE PIG OF BETHLEHEM

Intent of the Fable:

- ✓ *To find happiness, look heavenwards not earthwards*
- ✓ *Happiness Jesus-like can go with pain, but not with pleasure*
- ✓ *Blessed the pure of heart, they will see God.*
- ✓ *Don't run after happiness, I will follow you.*

The Fable

It was midnight 24th December. Close to Bethlehem, the shepherds kept watch over their flocks. All of a sudden the angel of the Lord appeared to them and joyfully sang: "Rejoice! I bring good news for all the people. In your own town, in Bethlehem, your Savior is born. You will find him in swaddling clothes lying in a manger in that cave down the mountain."

Immediately, the shepherds left their flocks behind and rushed to the cave. Whilst the shepherds were away, all the animals gathered. Thus they said: "The shepherds are gone to see the child. Yea, what about is? I wanna go too! Yea, let us. We all wanna to go. Come on chaps." And they darted down the slope towards the cave. When they reached the cave they pushed and elbowed one another just to get in first.

Then, a hush fell on them all. The sight was too much for them. No one moved or made any noise. They were spellbound by the charming, bright, smiling little child. Only the little pig did not seem to be very much taken up by the new born child. He remained alone in a corner of the cave nosing about the floor for some scraps of food.

After a long, long time, the animals left the cave. All were silent, full of awe and wonder. After a while, they began talking and commenting on what they had seen and felt:

"What a lovely child!", one said,
 What bright and sparkling eyes!" another remarked,
 And what plump and rosy cheeks", a third one whispered,
 "Yes, and what a charming smile!" some one added.

All wanted to say something. They were so eager to tell what they saw. Only the little pig remained silent. He said nothing, while nosing about the ground. At last, the little pig growled: "What's all this fuss about? Eh? A child? Sparkling eyes? Plump cheeks? Charming smile? Pooh! I saw nothing at all! All I saw was mud, straw, cow dung."

A little goat retorted: "Of course, you saw nothing! You are a pig! Dung is all you look for. Dung is all you see!. Dung is all you get."

Full of joy and praising God, all the animals went back to their flocks. The little pig, sad and dejected, followed them at a distance. What joy could he have? What could he be

singing about? He could not figure out why only he could not see the child, the sparkling eyes, the plump cheeks and the charming smile.

Points for Reflection and Discussion

1. Why all the animals in Bethlehem were so happy?
2. Why only the pig could not see the child? What was the attitude of the pig?
3. What was he searching for? Where was he looking?
4. What does the pig's attitude tell us?
5. Can we see Jesus? Why? Where should we look for him?
6. Do all people find happiness in life? Why?
7. Where and how to find happiness?
8. Are we not sometimes acting a bit like the Little Pig? How? Give instances.
9. What did Jesus bring into the world? Who will be able to enjoy it?

Explain the words of Jesus:

- Happy are the poor in spirit, The Kingdom of heaven belongs to them.
- Happy are those who mourn, God will comfort them.
- Happy are the meek, they will receive what God has promised..
- Happy are those whose only desire is to do the will of God, They will be satisfied.
- Happy are the merciful, they will find mercy
- Happy are the pure of heart, they will see God.
- Happy are the peacemakers, they will be called sons of god.
 - Happy those persecuted for doing what is right, Heaven belongs to them

Explain these sentences:

- To find Jesus, raise your eyes to heaven, don't nose the earth.
- Jesus never promises 'pleasures', but happiness.
- Happiness cannot be found outside, but only insight our heart where Jesus dwells
- Don't search for joy in sensuous pleasures as the little pig did.
- If you follow Jesus, happiness like a shadow will follow you.
- Happiness is found in doing our Heavenly Father's will as Jesus did.
- Christian happiness is not a product, but a by-product
- Jesus-like happiness can be found both in pain and joy
- Happiness is a mind set, not a set of circumstances