



BLADE

ISSUE 1

HIT

I KNOW YOU MAY SOMETIMES FEEL A BIT INFERIOR TO OTHER PEOPLE. AND WHEN YOU DO, YOU PROBABLY GET A REAL SINKING FEELING INSIDE AND START TO FEEL PRETTY ROTTEN, DON'T YOU? THAT'S ONE OF THE ENEMY'S FAVORITE WEAPONS—DISCOURAGEMENT. AND HE JUST LOVES TO THROW IN A BIT OF COMPARING, TOO, TO MAKE YOU FEEL EVEN WORSE. HE'S SUCH A RAT!

WHEN THE ENEMY COMES IN LIKE THAT, WHAT YOU'VE GOTTA DO IS PICK UP THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT AND USE IT AGAINST HIM. PICK UP THAT RAY GUN AND ZAP HIM! COME ON! GET ON YOUR HEAVENLY ARMY GEAR, 'CAUSE WE'RE GOING TO GIVE HIM SOME HELL! HOW ABOUT IT? ARE YOU WITH ME? DO YOU WANT TO LET OUT SOME OF YOUR FRUSTRATION? OKAY, THEN, LET'S REALLY LET THE OL' BOY HAVE IT! LET'S GIVE HIM A REAL BRUISING, SHALL WE?

LET'S SOCK IT TO HIM! JUST LIKE I USED TO DO WITH THOSE BULLIES THAT WOULD BEAT ME UP WHEN I WAS A KID. I DIDN'T CARE IF THEY WERE TWICE MY SIZE, I WASN'T ABOUT TO LET 'EM HAVE AN EASY TARGET. IF THEY WANTED TO FIGHT WITH ME, I WAS GOING TO GIVE THEM SOMETHING WORTH FIGHTING ABOUT! I LET 'EM HAVE IT. AND THEN I'D RUN BEFORE THEY HAD A CHANCE TO HIT ME BACK. HA! YOU CAN DO THAT WITH THE

HIT

ENEMY. JUST SOCK HIM REAL HARD AND JAB HIM IN THE FACE. THEN RUN BEHIND JESUS AND LET HIM PROTECT YOU.



CAN'T YOU SEE HOW FRUSTRATED THE DEVIL IS? YOU KEEP JUMPING OUT AND HITTING HIM, THEN RUNNING BACK TO THE SAFETY OF JESUS' ARMS. HE'S LOOKING UP AT THE LORD LIKE, "THAT'S NOT FAIR!" AND THE LORD JUST SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS AS IF TO SAY, "TOO BAD!"

ISN'T JESUS A GREAT FRIEND? ISN'T HE JUST THE BEST DEFENDER? OKAY, TIME FOR ANOTHER GO AT THAT PUNK. SOCK IT TO HIM! I'M WITH YOU ALL THE WAY!

—GRANDPA

RUNE

YOU DESERVE THE BEST!

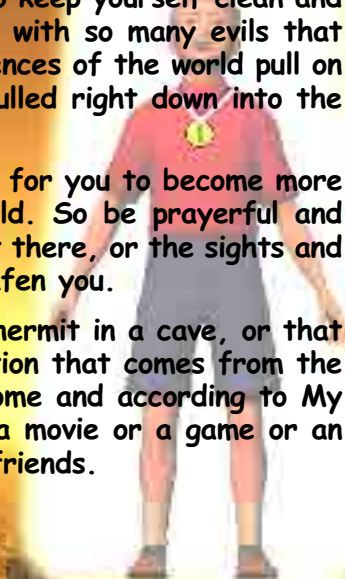
You're special and chosen, and I want you to keep yourself clean and separate from the dirty world that's infested with so many evils that you can hardly count them. Don't let the influences of the world pull on you, or you may soon find that you've been pulled right down into the dirty, slimy pit of the Enemy.

All it takes is one or two little compromises for you to become more and more vulnerable to the traps of the world. So be prayerful and stand strong in your convictions when you're out there, or the sights and sounds of the world will start to blind and deafen you.

I'm not saying that you need to live like a hermit in a cave, or that you can't relax and enjoy some of the recreation that comes from the world. As long as what you're doing is wholesome and according to My Word, I'm happy to see you happy, enjoying a movie or a game or an outing, or just having fun together with your friends.

Unless you're living in an igloo on the North Pole or in a hut on a desert island somewhere, you'll always be coming in contact with the world. But I want you to avoid being defiled by worldly ways of thinking and the wickedness of the world. Save yourself for Me! With My strength and grace, you can break away from the mold and be the unique person I've made you to be.

You are My princes and princesses who have been brought up in My court and in My presence. You deserve much more than what the foolish world has to offer.



Feeling Shy?

Do you sometimes feel like you're alone, even in a room full of people, like you just don't fit in? Do you feel awkward around others, like you just can't seem to say or do the right thing? Then you look at some of the others your age and see that they're popular and funny, and that they always seem to be the center of attention, while you're tucked away in a corner somewhere?

I know it's hard, and sometimes you feel pretty lonely. But there's a remedy that works. All you have to do is have a little courage and not be afraid to fall a few times.

Remember when Peter stepped out on the water? As long as he kept his eyes on Me, he was fine. But as soon as he got his eyes on himself, the situation got pretty wet, pretty quick!

You may fall a few times, but there's really nothing wrong with that. You may say something really off that sounds kind of stupid. But you can't let that sink you. Just keep looking to Me and keep taking those steps on the water. Before you know it, you'll be on the shore again, surrounded by friends.

Fighting shyness is sort of like pioneering. You need faith that it's eventually going to work out, and you need courage to step out and try to make friends and to communicate. I promise you that as you keep trying, and resist the temptation to give up and to crawl back into your little private world, you'll make progress by leaps and bounds. It'll work! Trust Me.



BOUNCE BACK

Ever wonder how you can pull out of it when you're feeling lousy and you seem to be getting a lot of flack? Or when you've been misunderstood and corrected for something that wasn't your fault? Or maybe it was your fault, but the correction was rough to take, so you're feeling discouraged and on a bummer? What's the easiest way to not let it get you down?

Why not take a tip from basketball and bounce back? You can really enjoy those slam dunks. And if you're thrown for a loop, just fly with it. When you hit the ground ... that's right ... just bounce back!

If you get it for something you did, just keep bouncing. Don't go flat. Don't let the Devil knock the wind out of you so you have to be thrown out of the game like a deflated ball. Just bounce back for the rebound.

Keep flying high and stay in the game. Let 'em see that you've got what it takes. Don't let the Enemy knock the wind out of you and make you lose your spring, so that you can't be dribbled and passed and used to make another score.

No matter what happens, just keep bouncing. The harder you're thrown, the higher you bounce! So don't let anything get under your skin, or let some correction deflate you. Stay in the game and bounce back—no matter how hard or how far you're thrown. Just bounce back again.



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(Grandpa:) I want to direct your eyes to the Heavens and remind you that what's up ahead is worth holding on for.

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I love you, and I'm proud of you. I want to encourage you that you're doing well. You're making progress, and the Lord is pleased with you.

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Maybe you're thinking, "Sure, Grandpa, that's easy to say. That's encouraging and all, but you don't know all the things that happen every day in my Home. You're not really up on how my interactions with others and with the adults around me aren't so hot all the time. Seems that sometimes I can't do much right."

O

Well, we all make mistakes. Nobody's perfect! Haven't I taught you that in my Letters? I mean, I was the classic example of someone who blew it right and left, but who just had to get back up again, and confess, receive the Lord's forgiveness and love, and go on for Him! And look at what good fruit that has borne!—I'm talking about you! You're the fruit of my life.

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Of course, it's all to His glory that He was able to accomplish anything with me at all. But He did! That's the way the Lord works.

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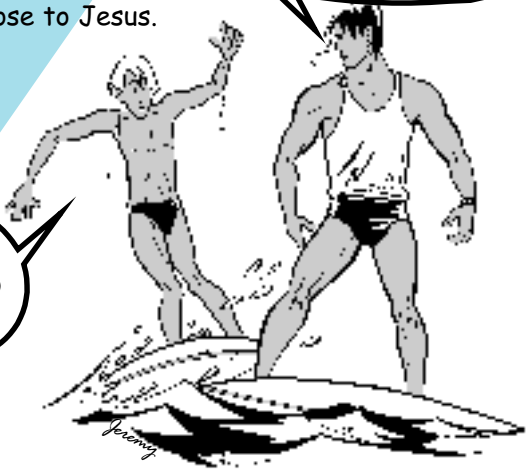
You've just got to ride the wave and do your best. No one's perfect. We're all learning together. The whole Family is learning. And this new day is a day of learning. About what? About love. About understanding others. About being close to one another. And most of all, about being close to Jesus.

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WHAT DO I DO NOW?

JUST RIDE THE WAVE AND DO YOUR BEST! YOU'RE DOING GREAT!



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MAKE ROOM FOR MORE BLESSINGS



I've been pouring out tons of blessings on you—literally showering you with My love! In fact, I've been dumping so many blessings on you that you don't even have room enough to hold them all. And I'm going to keep doing it, too, as long as you keep making room for more.

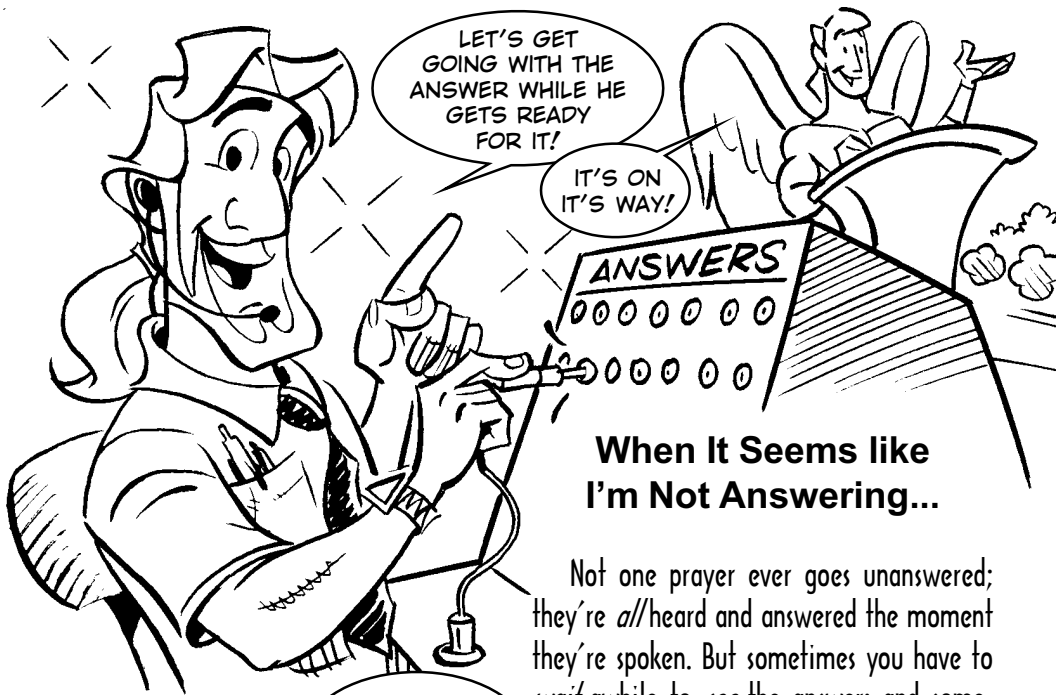
How do you do that? Well, have you ever had a friend or a contact give you so much donated food that you didn't know what to do with it all? What did your Home end up doing with it? You probably loaded it all up into the biggest van available, and went out looking for people who really needed it and would appreciate having it.

But what would've happened with all that food if you had just let it sit there and didn't do anything with it? It would've gone stale or rotted, and ended up making a big mess of things.

And what would the person think who had donated it to you in the first place? Do you think he would've wanted to keep on giving you more? Not on your life!

So, let Me ask you this: Have you been feeling a little stale lately? Do you feel like your life is just going to waste? Well, maybe it's because you haven't been sharing all of the love and the many blessings that I've been giving you, either by pouring out to others through witnessing, or just by being more loving and giving to those around you.

Please, when I give something to you—things like My Words, or new songs, or any of the other blessings which I've been pouring out by the bucketfuls—don't just sit around and let them go to waste. You need to make sure you're making room for more—by giving them out to others who really need them and will appreciate them—or I'm not going to feel like giving you any more.



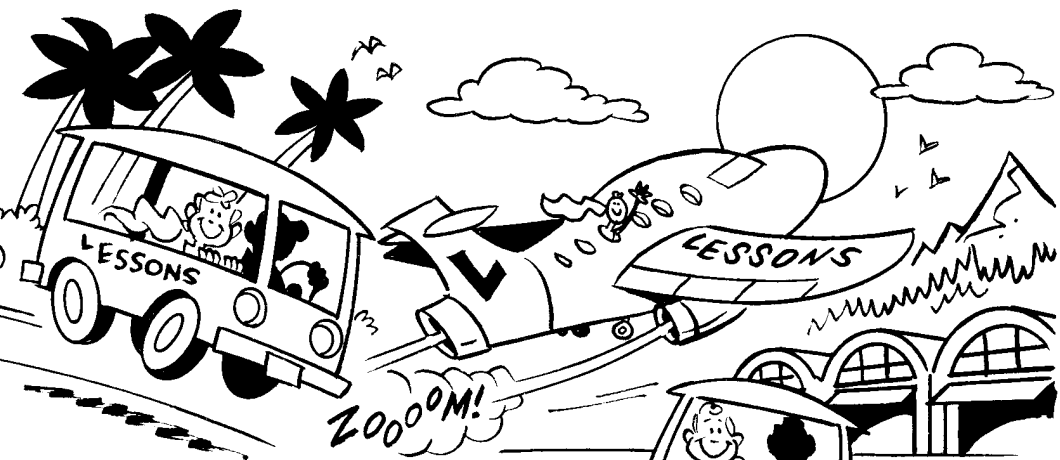
When It Seems like I'm Not Answering...

Not one prayer ever goes unanswered; they're *all* heard and answered the moment they're spoken. But sometimes you have to *wait* awhile to *see* the answer; and sometimes the answer isn't what you were expecting.

I answer right away, but if you're not quite ready, or if it's not the right time in your life, then the answer will wait until you *are* ready. But I *have* answered!

For example, say you've prayed for Me to give you a friend, someone your age that you can be close to and have fun with, and I set things in motion for just the right person to come to your Home. I might know that there are certain lessons in getting along with others that would be good for you to learn before that person arrives. So in order for your friendship to be a blessing to you, and for you to be a blessing to that person, I bring different lessons along the way, so you can grow in





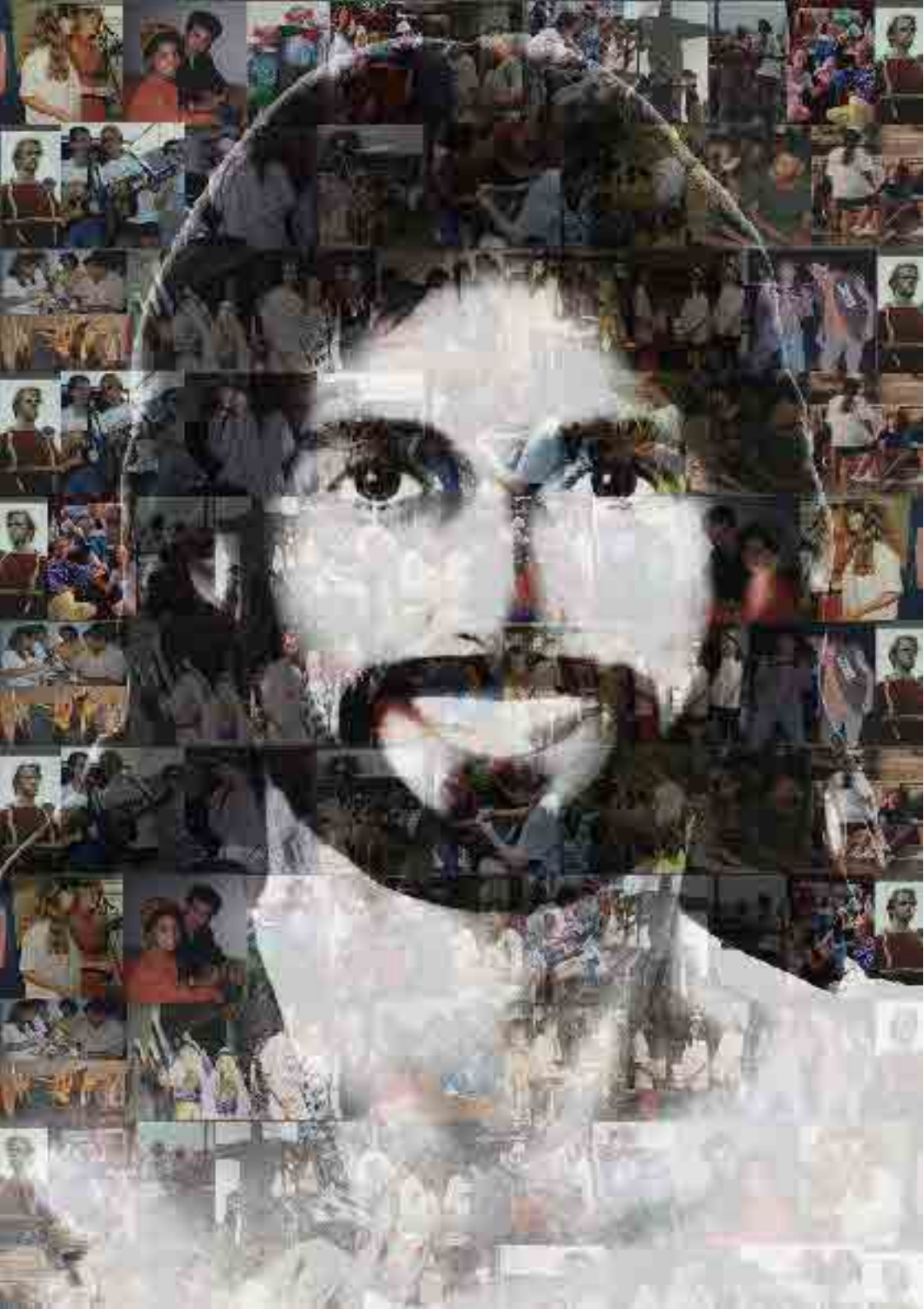
your relations with others first. Then, by the time your friend arrives, your friendship can be built on these lessons, so that you can have a sweet and lasting relationship.

You may think that I didn't answer your prayer, but actually I have *more* than answered, because I'm even preparing you for that friendship by helping you to learn lessons regarding friendship—sacrifice, communication, unselfishness and understanding—which are all important lessons to learn.

So next time you're wondering why I haven't answered you right away on something that you've asked Me for, please know that it's because I'm working on it and even preparing you for the answer.

Even when it seems like I *don't* answer, it's *still* an answer, because I know that *not* giving you what you've asked for is what's best for you. So that's an answer in itself. If you're not sure what the answer is—yes, no or wait—ask Me about it and I'll tell you.







Witnessing is a great way to overcome boredom. There's so much action out there, face to face with lost and hungry sheep—looking into their eyes and telling them that I love them. Have you ever seen someone light up after having received Me into their heart? Isn't it thrilling? Nothing can match winning a soul to My Kingdom.

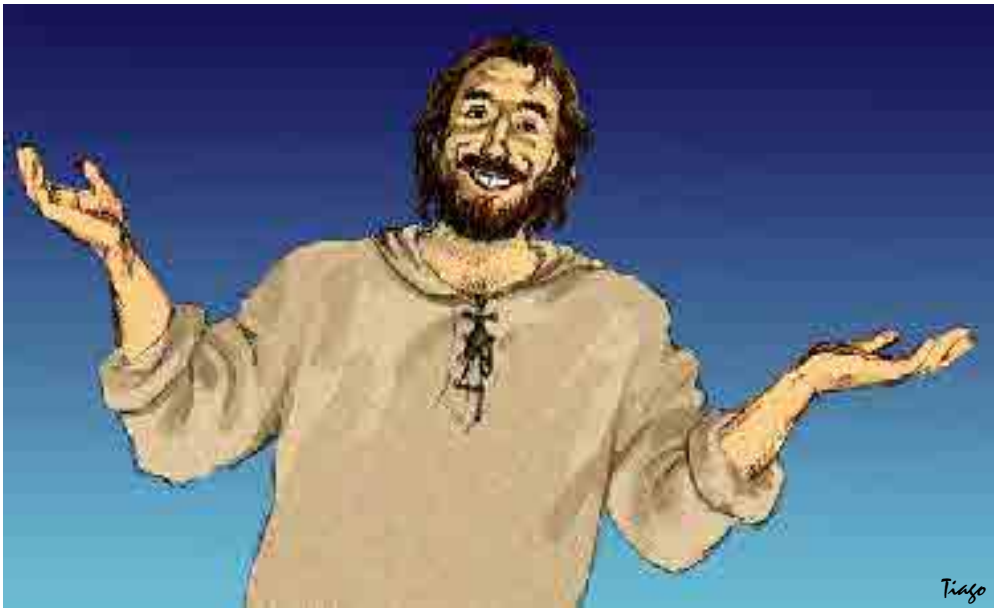
Everyone has problems, and I know that you do too. There are days when you feel like you can hardly get out of bed. And often, those are the days when you feel the least like going witnessing. You can't see how you could possibly help anyone else, when you need help yourself.

Well, the best remedy is to just grit your teeth and get out there anyway. It's impossible to light someone else's way without also brightening your own. You may not feel like it at first, but witnessing will really help you get your mind off of yourself and your problems, and on the needs of others.

It's impossible to light someone else's way without also brightening your own

So if you're discouraged, sad, lonely, or just plain bored, try reaching out to others and you'll see a real difference in your life, as well as in the lives of others. Thank you for bringing My light to the world.

Witnessing is a great way to overcome boredom



YOU CAN TELL ME ABOUT IT

DO YOU NEED SOMEONE TO UNDERSTAND YOU, SOMEONE WHO REALLY KNOWS WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH? WELL, I KNOW MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH THAN *you* DO—HONEST! I KNOW EVERY BIT OF YOUR HEART AND EVERY THOUGHT THAT HAS EVER COME TO YOUR MIND.

BUT EVEN THOUGH I KNOW YOUR EVERY THOUGHT, YOU STILL NEED TO GET IT OUT. IT'LL HELP YOU FEEL BETTER, AND HELP YOU TO SEE THINGS MORE CLEARLY. GO AHEAD AND TELL ME WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND. I PROMISE TO UNDERSTAND YOU AND GIVE YOU COUNSEL AND LOVING WORDS THAT'LL REALLY HELP.

I LOVE TO SPEND TIME

WITH YOU. I ENJOY IT SO MUCH! I LOVE TO JUST SIT NEXT TO YOU, WITH MY ARM AROUND YOUR SHOULDER, LISTENING TO WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY. YOU CAN TELL ME ANYTHING YOU WANT.—OUR CONVERSATION DOESN'T HAVE TO JUST BE ABOUT YOUR TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS. WHY NOT TELL ME ABOUT YOUR HOPES AND DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE? YOU'RE AT A VERY EXCITING, PASSIONATE AGE, AND I KNOW THERE'S A LOT ON YOUR MIND.

I'M YOUR FRIEND, SO LET'S SPEND SOME TIME TOGETHER—TALKING, LAUGHING, CRYING, OR JUST BEING TOGETHER. YOU'RE SO SPECIAL TO ME. I PROMISE I'LL LOVE YOU AND BE BY YOUR SIDE FOREVER.





Life is all about learning! I created the world and put you in it, not only so you can enjoy all the beauties of My creation and the wonders around you, but also so you can learn.

There are valuable lessons that I want to teach you as you grow up to be the person that I want you to be, and to fill the place that I created you for.

I could have created you perfect and already knowing all there is to know. But that would have been too easy, and it would have taken a lot of the fun out of life! It's fun to have challenges and to have to stretch yourself to reach for a goal! Without a vision, without something to shoot for, a goal to strive for, your life would be empty and meaningless.

So don't just exist from day to day, or try to do the minimum and just get by with what little you can possibly do. Put your all into it, no matter what it is—whether it's a hobby you're working on, schoolwork you're doing, or just something you're interested in. If you put your heart into it, I'll help you to reach those goals and to be the person that you and I want you to be. But you can't do it half-heartedly. Give it your best shot, and you'll be amazed at what happens.



I know you want to be original, because I put that desire in you.

You want to be unique, special, and smart. You want to think of things nobody else has thought of. You want to say things nobody else has said. You want to dress to suit your own special tastes. You want to make your mark on the world. I know, because I made you to feel that way.

But I know how frustrating it can be when you feel like those around you are trying to make you be just like everybody else, or when it seems like nobody is interested in your ideas and thoughts, or your feelings.

But you know what? I'm interested—really interested! I made you different from anyone else. When I created you, I didn't use a cookie cutter! There's never been anyone else like you. And I love to read your thoughts, 'cause nobody's ever thought things just like you do. I think that's so neat!

And you know what else? When you get cool ideas, don't forget about them just because it doesn't seem like anybody's listening—write them down! That's Me speaking to you, and you should take My voice seriously.

The only way that I can get My ideas out is through people like you; I love it when you listen to Me. Some people live in such a loud world that they can't even hear Me. But I know you hear Me. And the more you practice listening to Me, the clearer My voice will become.

You can share every idea, every single thought, and every difficulty with Me. I love to hear everything! You can just get alone somewhere and talk out loud. Picture Me sitting in front of you just like a captive audience, 'cause that's what I'll be doing.





I GIVE YOU MY BLADE

*Sharper than Any
Two-edged Sword*

The **blade** represents the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. I give it to you so that you might use it to defeat the Evil One and his lies, his doubts, his fears, his discouragement, and all the wiles that he uses to try to ensnare you.

If you let it, it will cut you to the heart, convicting you and purging you clean of all the things that do not belong there.

You can also use the sharp **blade** of My own personal Words to cut yourselves free from the brambles and the choking vines and weeds that would entrap you and smother you, and use it to cut a path through the jungle of difficulties that you face as you are growing up.

The messages that I give to you are quick and powerful, even sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. They are Words that can cleanse and purify, Words that will cut away the chaff, Words that will set you free from the Enemy, Words that will turn you against him and his wicked devices. For this purpose, I give you . . . My **blade**!

