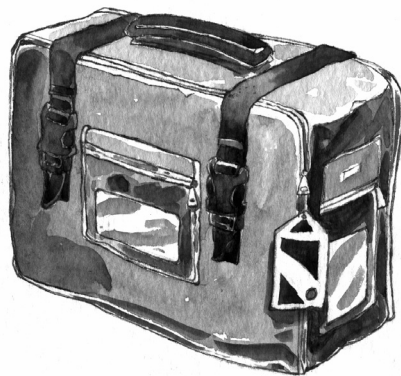




1. The First Day



Sarah and Paul MacDonald are twins. The day they had been waiting for had arrived at last - the first day of their holidays. For weeks they had been thinking of things to do and places to explore.

Their excitement grew as they decided what to take with them on holiday. Both of them had new cameras for which they had saved up and they looked forward to using them. They were going to a chalet by the sea. Changing their





Sarah and Paul



minds frequently as to what to take, they had packed and unpacked their suitcases, lots of times!

But now they had arrived at the chalet. They unpacked their suitcases, and put their things where

they wanted them in their rooms.

Paul finished first and went to find Sarah. 'Have you finished, Sarah?'

'Yes, let's get Dad to take us down to the beach.'

'A good idea!' agreed Mum, coming into Sarah's room. It will give me a chance to get the lunch ready, and to tidy up your rooms.' She said the last words with a smile, because she shared the twins' excitement about the beginning of the holidays.

'It'll be good when we can go into the water,' exclaimed Sarah.

'I want to collect shells this year,' added Paul.

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On Holiday Again

Sarah was on the point of saying the same when she asked, 'What's that noise, Dad? It sounds like people singing on the beach.'

'Look!' said Dad, pointing to a notice. 'There's been a holiday club for children going on all this week. This morning is the last meeting. Would you like to go? You've missed the games, but you'll be in time for most of the meeting.'

'Yes, please,' cried Sarah and Paul.

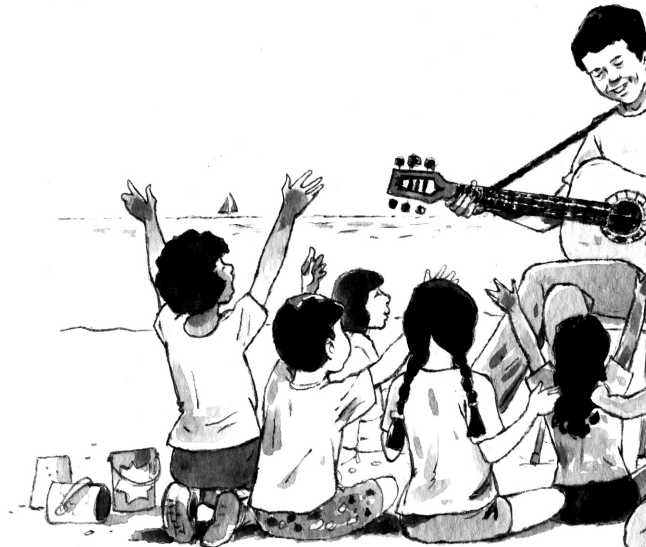
The sound of the singing led the twins and their father to the place where the meeting was being held. Crowds of children were sitting around a sand platform, made in the shape of a boat. Lots of parents were sitting where they could listen too. The leader of the mission was conducting the singing of choruses and a member of his team played the guitar.

One of the team members spotted Sarah and Paul arriving and quickly came forward to welcome them and to find them a place where they could both see and hear. 'I'll come back at twelve,' whispered Dad.

* * *



Sarah and Paul



Lunch was late that day and, by the time they had finished the dishes, the weather had changed and it was no longer sunny.

‘We’ll go for a trip to the country,’ said Dad. ‘Let’s just take any road that looks interesting and explore it. We’ll get lost, if you like!’

‘Could you really get lost?’ asked Paul, as they began to travel down a beautiful country road.

‘Not really, Paul. We could lose our way easily enough, but it would be difficult to get





On Holiday Again



really lost, especially with our new book of maps.'

Sarah was looking out of the car window. 'Look, that road looks exciting. May we explore that one, Dad?'

Before Sarah had finished her sentence, Dad turned the car up the road. The narrow road twisted and turned, and in places the trees touched one another so much at the top that they shut out most of the light.

While they were driving along Mum asked





Sarah and Paul



the twins to tell her about the holiday club meeting.

‘Well,’ explained Sarah, ‘because it was the last morning, the leader spoke about becoming a Christian and the wrong ideas

people have about becoming a Christian. I’m sorry we missed the other meetings. There won’t be any next week.’

‘Me, too,’ agreed Paul. ‘That man could play the guitar well.’

The twins’ parents smiled. ‘I know what we could do then,’ suggested Dad. ‘I’ve promised to speak to the young people at church when we get back. I want to talk about how to become a Christian and what it means to follow the Lord Jesus. Suppose we talk about it together and then take some photos to illustrate what we learn?’

‘What do you mean, Dad?’ asked Sarah.

‘We’ll talk about what it means to be a Christian. Then, if we can, we’ll make a note

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On Holiday Again

of things we can take photographs of and show people, to help them understand. You two could even write a script, which you could read and we could even make a video.'

'It sounds like fun!' cried Paul excitedly.

'Can we start now?'

'All right, Sarah. I've got paper and a pencil in the glove compartment. I'll stop the car and we'll work on this together. Let's think first about those wrong ideas you were hearing of this morning.'

Dad wrote at the top of his page, 'You don't become a Christian by - '

'Where do we start?'

Sarah began. 'You don't become a Christian by going to church.'

Dad drew a church and then he sketched in people with wind-up keys sticking out of their backs.

'You're right, Sarah,' he said, as he finished his drawing. 'People can go to church as regular as clockwork, out of habit, never really being Christians.'

'But Christians want to go to church, don't they, Dad?' asked Paul.



Sarah and Paul

‘Yes, they do. But just going to church isn’t good enough. It does not make you a Christian. What else do some people think makes them Christians?’

‘Being christened or baptised?’ suggested Paul.

Dad drew a minister sprinkling a baby’s forehead with water. He also drew another minister about to baptise an older person.

Paul was thinking about the photographs. ‘It will be difficult to take a photograph of a baby or a grown-up being baptised.’

His father nodded in agreement. ‘Yes, but we may have the opportunity. If not, we’ll manage without.’

‘Don’t you become a Christian when you’re baptised?’ asked Sarah, puzzled.

‘Some people may think so,’ explained Dad. ‘But just going into the water, or having water sprinkled on your head, doesn’t make you a Christian. Something much more important has to happen.’

‘But if you’re a Christian, you do want to be baptised, don’t you?’ asked Sarah.

‘Yes, you do, because the Lord Jesus



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commanded that His followers should obey Him by being baptised. Now, is there anything else you know about which people may think makes you a Christian?’



‘Having Christian parents,’ Paul said.

‘The man said so this morning.’

‘That’s right,’ agreed Dad, ‘but I don’t think I’ll draw a picture of myself. I know what we’ll do.’

He drew a family at a dining table, with their heads bowed, having family prayers.

‘Because Mum and I are Christians, does that make you both Christians?’

‘No,’ the twins replied together.

‘That’s the right answer,’ said their mother. ‘Much as I would love you both to be Christians like Dad and me, I cannot make you Christians.’

‘What about praying?’ asked Sarah.

‘Yes. People sometimes think that because





Sarah and Paul

they say their prayers God is pleased with them and He accepts them as Christians, but they're wrong.'

'The same is true of reading the Bible then,' added Paul.

Dad nodded and drew matchstick men praying and reading the Bible. 'All Christians are meant to discover the importance of praying and reading the Bible, but these two things don't make anyone a Christian. Now I think we've come to the end almost. Is there anything else?'





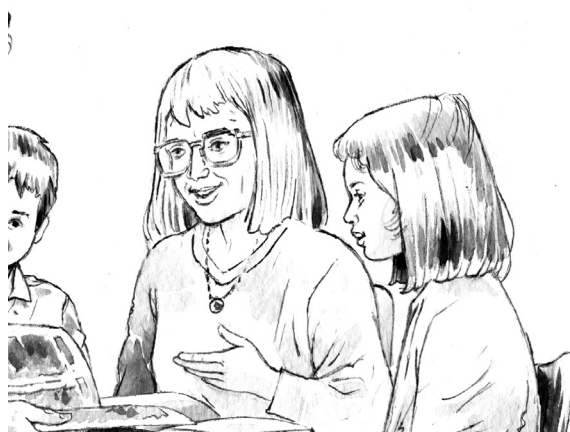
On Holiday Again

'I know!' said Sarah. 'What about doing your best to help people?'

By the side of the matchstick men, praying and reading, the twins' father drew a boy carrying an old lady's shopping bag.

'Now remember,' he urged, 'it's important for Christians to help other people all they can and to do all the good they can. But trying to be good isn't the same as being a Christian.'

Dad looked at the drawings critically. 'Not very good, I'm afraid.'





Sarah and Paul

'They're not bad,' commented Paul sympathetically.

'They help you to remember things, anyway,' said Sarah.

'Good,' answered Dad. 'When we take our photos, one of you could kneel to pray and the other one could read the Bible.'

'Don't forget the script,' Mum reminded Dad.

'Oh, yes. Who wants to do the script for the first pictures we're going to take?'

'I will,' offered Sarah.

'All right, girls first, I suppose,' said Paul.





On Holiday Again

Get Active!

Wrong ideas about becoming a Christian!

First, write down three wrong ideas people sometimes have about how you become a Christian. For the answers read through the chapter one more time.

1.

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2.

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3.

.....

* You may check your answers on page 126.

Draw a cartoon picture of people going to church with a wind-up key sticking out of their backs.

