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Babysitter

Dad's Babysitting Night Leads

PERSPECTIVE

By JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

It was Saturday night and I was exhausted. Events of the week and the frustration of having to work on my day off had almost crumpled me — physically and spiritually.

My wife had gone to a party and I was babysitting with the five children.

I told them I was going to

I gave them permission to
bed and they could sit up and watch TV until their mother came home.

But I had no sooner gotten in bed than our 7-year-old Timmy started a fight with his 4-year-old sister. The older kids joined in and soon there was a free-for-all going in the living room.

Go ahead
IN A RAGE, I threw back the covers and stomped into the livingroom. Gritting my teeth, I grabbed little Timmy by the arm, whacked his seat with my hand, and dragged him back

down the hall to the bedroom. He was sobbing out, it wasn't his fault, but at the moment I had no desire to be just. I slung him into bed beside me and told him to go to sleep.

We lay there in the darkness. I was still steaming and Timmy was choking back his sobs.

Then he said: "Daddy, should I say my prayers?" I muttered something about his going ahead and began to chide myself for my selfishness.

HE BEGAN. He thanked

To Closeness With Son, God

God for the blessings of his little world ... the sunshine ... his bicycle ... the sno-cone man ... his new pajamas.

My heart was melting like spilled ice cream on a hot sidewalk.

Then he asked God to help him be a good boy and keep him from fighting with his baby sister and let him have a good time at Sunday School in the morning.

I was under conviction for my unjust and selfish behavior and realized I was going to have to apologize

and ask his forgiveness.

He closed his prayer asking God to take care of his friend, Sammy, whose daddy got drunk every night and slapped his mother.

WHEN HE finished there was a long period of silence.

I finally spoke up softly, "Good night, son."

Timmy whispered back "good night, daddy,"

I felt him turn over and snuggled down to go to sleep, oblivious of the TV

sounds in the other room.

Then, almost as an afterthought, I heard him say softly; "Good night, God."

THE WORDS of the poet flooded through my mind: "Backward, turn backward, Oh time in your flight,

Make me a child again just for tonight."

I turned my heart toward the heavenly throne which moments before had been out of thought and desire and I, too, whispered: "Good night, God."