

Speaker Notes: from the Good News Club Kick-off 8/22/15
A Life-Changing Memory
By Jan Garmo



Every once in a while special childhood memories from my great grandpa's yard flood my mind: eating as many raspberries as I could pick, rolling down grassy hills, savoring the view of the Puget Sound, the intrigue of the forbidden rooms upstairs, and swinging in great grandpa's spacious swing.

But there is one memory that changed the course of my life. My mom and dad taught a weekly Good News Club for as long as I can remember. As a young child I was an eager attendee. I heard about God's deep love for me and that my sin separated me from God. Even at the young age of five, I knew what sin was.

I loved flannel graph stories and to this day I still remember the words of the songs and Bible verses we learned. But until that memorable afternoon in great grandpa's backyard I didn't understand that Jesus' death was payment for *my* sin.

It all began with a question. Sitting in grandpa's swing with my parents I asked, "Daddy, today you talked about Jesus preparing a mansion in heaven for us and streets paved with gold, but how can I go to heaven?"



My father and mother seriously explained the simple plan of salvation. All of us have sinned and fall short of reaching heaven on our own merit (Romans 3:23). God loved us so much that He sent His only Son, Jesus, to pay for our sins on the cross (1 Peter 2:24). We must receive His free gift of eternal life by faith (Romans 6:23 & Romans 10:9-10).

That day, sitting in grandpa's swing with my parents, I responded by praying, "*Lord Jesus, I admit that I am a sinner. I believe you died for my sins and rose again. Please forgive my sin. I receive your gift of eternal life, so someday I can go to heaven.*"

What did I gain that day? Eternal life, a quality of life that began the moment I received Jesus (1 John 5:11-13); a personal relationship with God and Jesus Christ (John 17:3); my name written in the Lamb's book of life (Luke 10:20); membership in God's family (John 1:12); and the assurance that comes from knowing God will keep that which I committed to Him that day (2 Timothy 1:12).

You may never hear the "Swing" stories, but you are teaching children eternal truths that can change the course of their lives. The stories, the songs, and the Bible verses they learn can replay all through their adult years.

In Isaiah 55:11, God promises that when His Word is sent out, it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all He wants it to, and it will prosper everywhere He sends it.