



THE NEWEST MEMBER OF OUR FAMILY, Little Bit, has now had the run of the house for just over a week. She came to us, like a number of her predecessors, as an orphan emerging from the woods that surround our home. A furtive, suspicious little thing, she nonetheless stayed close to our house, so we began putting out food for her.

As the temperatures dropped and she gradually became more accepting of us, we decided to bring her inside—but sequestered from the rest of our feline family on the west

porch. Early last week Little Bit received the last of her shots and a clean bill of health, so we began introducing her to her inside “sisters.”

Little Bit has made herself at home, and she is behaving like a kid in a candy store. Less than two months ago she was on her own, desperate to survive, battling the elements and approaching winter, sleeping in dirt and eating whatever she could catch or find. Now she lives in a well-heated house with many rooms. She is clean, has plenty to

Reflections
by the Pond

No. 430
January 18, 2010

eat, and is surrounded with what is for her an unimaginable array of things to play with. In fact, for certainly the first time in her young life, she has been granted the luxury of play, replacing her constant struggle merely to survive. Little Bit has unearthed all the toys outgrown by her older sisters, and ecstatically whiles away the hours playing first with one, then another, then yet another. She has made it her immediate goal to sample all at once the riches now at her disposal.

If Little Bit is behaving not unlike a third-world peasant who has just been introduced for the first time to an American supermarket, she is also behaving like a human being who has spent years trying to get by on her own merit, but has just been introduced to God through the saving grace of His Son. Suddenly the new believer is presented with riches beyond imagining:

Do you mean I can talk to God all by myself? Do you mean He actually loves me, and will never stop loving me? Do you mean that my eternity is secure, and I needn't fear death? Do you mean to say that Jesus Christ is now my brother and friend, and is now actually a part of me? Stand aside! I want to enjoy it all—right now!

But let all who take refuge in You be glad,
Let them ever sing for joy;
And may You shelter them,
That those who love Your name may exult
in You.

Psalms 5:11

The moment the Spirit has quickened us to life in regeneration our whole being senses its kinship to God and leaps up in joyous recognition. That is the heavenly birth without which we cannot see the Kingdom of God. It is, however, not an end but an inception, for now begins the glorious pursuit, the heart's happy exploration of the infinite riches of the Godhead.

A. W. Tozer



Some times, however, when Little Bit is lost in her play time, she will suddenly be ambushed by one of her new and older sisters. Though they too are just playing, their attack brings Little Bit's play time to an immediate

halt as she goes flying in retreat.

Oh, how familiar is that scene. Just as the believer is happily, contentedly luxuriating in the joy of his relationship with God, giddily immersing himself in the riches now at his disposal, along comes someone to spoil the fun. But *this* antagonist is not playing. Satan is always on the lookout for a Christian enjoying himself. He can't abide that.

Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

1 Peter 5:8

In fact Satan has a unique radar for righteous joy; he can spot it a mile away. Because of this singular ability he often strikes when we are on the mountaintop. Why bother with us when we are already in the "slough of despond"? That is his goal for our lives in the first place, so if we have managed it on our own, he can gladly spend his energies else-

**In the Paradise of glory
Is the Man Divine;
There my heart, O God, is tasting
Fellowship with Thine.
Called to share Thy joy
unmeasured,
Now is heaven begun;
I rejoice with Thee, O Father,
In Thy glorious Son.**

**Where the heart of God is resting,
I have found my rest;
Christ who found me in the
desert,
Laid me on His breast.
There in deep unhindered fulness
Doth my joy flow free—
On through everlasting ages,
Lord, beholding Thee.**

"T. P."

where. But let have just scaled the heights, or be lost in the joys of our Lord, and he will invariably pay us a visit.



When Little Bit was outside, on her own, it was necessary for her always to sleep with one eye open. She was surrounded by harm, and peril, and myriad predators wishing her no goodwill. There was no time for play, only survival. She was weary, anxious for her life, and alone.

Then she found a new home—a safe, warm and loving home, one in which there was no hunger, no want. But even here she has reason to glance over her shoulder from time to time, for there are still those who wish spoil some of her joy, her kittenish abandon.

Little Bit, the diminutive new member of our family may always need to be on the lookout for ambush. She is the new kid on the block, and will always be smaller than her sisters. Though in this instance her tormentors mean her no harm, she may get pounced on from time to time.

There will come a day, however, when the believer will no longer need to look over his shoulder. He will be free to give himself wholly to the joys of sweet communion. In our new and final home, we will be utterly safe, secure, loved.

There, rid at last of this damnable flesh, Satan will no longer enjoy any influence over our lives, but we will experience uninterrupted joy before the holy throne. In that day we will finally be sampling the true and boundless riches of heaven—not the diluted version available to us here on earth, but the real thing. We will be like kids in a candy shop—but this time no Satan waiting to ambush us when we're not looking.

