INSPIRATIONAL STORY

The Duck and the Devil

There was a little boy visiting his grandparents on their farm. He was given a slingshot to play with out in the woods. He practiced in the woods, but he could never hit the target. Getting a little discouraged, he headed back for dinner. As he was walking back he saw Grandma's pet duck.

Just out of impulse, he let the slingshot fly, hit the duck square in the head, and killed it. He was shocked and grieved!

In a panic, he hid the dead duck in the wood pile, only to see his sister watching! Sally had seen it all, but she said nothing.

After lunch, the next day Grandma said, "Sally, let's wash the dishes." But Sally said, "Grandma, Johnny told me he wanted to help in the kitchen." Then she whispered to him, "Remember the duck?" So, Johnny did the dishes.

Later that day, Grandpa asked if the children wanted to go fishing and Grandma said, "I'm sorry but I need Sally to help make supper." Sally just smiled and said, "Well that's all right because Johnny told me he wanted to help." She whispered again, "Remember the duck?" So, Sally went fishing and Johnny stayed to help.

After several days of Johnny doing both his chores and Sally's, he finally couldn't stand it any longer. He came to Grandma and confessed that he had killed the duck. Grandma knelt down, gave him a hug, and said, "Sweetheart, I know. You see, I was standing at the window and I saw the whole thing, but because I love you, I forgave you. I was just wondering how long you would let Sally make a slave of you."

Thought for the day and every day thereafter?

Whatever is in your past, whatever you have done... And the devil Keeps throwing it up in your face (lying, cheating, debt, fear, bad Habits, hatred, anger, bitterness, etc.) ....whatever it is.... You need to know that God was standing at the window and He saw the whole thing..... He has seen your whole life. He wants you to know that He loves you and that you are forgiven.

He's just wondering how long you will let the devil make a slave of you.

The great thing about God is that when you ask for forgiveness, He not only forgives you, but He forgets. It is by God's grace and Mercy that we are saved. Always remember: God is at the window.

■■■■

Preventing Atopic Dermatitis in At-Risk Infants

Use of emollients as early as within 1 week of birth may prevent atopic dermatitis in high-risk infants, according to results of the recently published Short-term Topical Application to Prevent Atopic Dermatitis (STOP AD) trial.[1] A total of 321 high-risk infants born at term at Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH) were recruited for this randomized controlled trial between April 2019 and November 2020. At least one parent had a positive history of atopic dermatitis (AD), allergic rhinitis or asthma. These infants were randomized to either daily emollient application at 2 weeks, 4 weeks and 8 weeks (intervention group; n = 161) or standard routine skin care (control group; n = 160) within 4 days of birth to examine if early use of emollient could reduce the incidence of AD at 1 year of age. More than 80% of the infants applied the emollient once or twice-daily at the specified time points compared to 68% in the control group. Results published in the journal *Allergy* showed that at 6 months, 18.3% infants in the intervention group developed AD versus 36.4% for the control group. At 12 months of age, nearly 33% infants in the intervention group developed AD compared to 46.4% in the control group. The two groups had comparable incidence of parent-reported skin infections; 5.0% vs. 5.7%, respectively. Based on these findings, the authors concluded that early application of emollient, as early as within 4 days of birth as demonstrated in this single-center study and using it till 2 months was associated with significant decline in the occurrence of AD in at-risk infants. At the same time, the authors also caution that "As we did not collect longer term data, we cannot exclude the possibility that the intervention may have only delayed the onset of AD beyond 12 months". (***Reference:*** *Chaoimh CN, et al. Early initiation of short-term emollient use for the prevention of atopic dermatitis in high-risk infants - The STOP-AD randomised controlled trial. Allergy. 2022 Aug 23*)