

The Heart of Thampi (Story of a Keralite Boy)



THE HEART OF THAMPI (Story of a Kerala Boy)

Thampi was a little Keralite Boy, One day as he sat in the middle of a street in Kerala, playing with some stones, a tall, kind looking man happened to pass by. After a brief conversation, the gentleman said, "Thampi, do you know Jesus?" No," answered Thampi, "I don't know Him. Who's He?"

The man went to explain that many, many years ago Jesus was born in a manger. Though He came in such poor circumstances, angels sang at His birth and wise men came to worship Him. Thampi listened carefully and his heart was deeply touched. Thampi knew what it meant to be homeless. He also knew what it meant to be cold and hungry.

The kind gentleman went on to tell how Jesus grew to be a man. Thampi was so surprised to learn that Jesus never did anything that was wrong or bad. Very patiently the gentleman explained to Thampi that Jesus was God's only Son. God loved the whole world so much that He gave Jesus to die on the cross and take our sins on His own body.

"But if He was wonderful," spoke up Thampi, "Why did He have to let them make Him die on the cross?" The gentle man explained that Jesus, though He had all power, was obedient to His Father and knew He was dying for the sins of the world.

"Oh, please tell me more about this Jesus," said Thampi. Together they walked to a quiet, shady place and the new friend began, "This is the wonderful story about God's love. Jesus loved us so much and is anxious to be our friend. But there is one called

Satan who is the enemy of our souls. He is known as the prince of the power of the air. Today he is seeking whom he may destroy.

"God's word says 'Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.' 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?' 'All have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God.'"

"Thampi, if we could look into the hearts and see them as God's all-seeing eyes sees, we would be surprised and ashamed before Him."



"He made us to be perfect and like Him. In this picture we would see the ever-present eye of God. He sees all we do. He hears all we say."

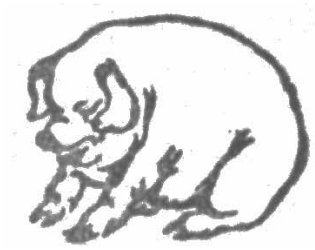
"Sometimes, Thampi, do you ever think unkind and mean things of other people? And sometimes have you thought that you were better than they? That is called pride and selfishness. Let us put a picture of a peacock to represent pride, because you know he is a proud and selfish bird."



"Did you ever get into trouble, Thampi and do things you knew you should not do? Let us put a picture of a goat to represent this sin, because he is such a reckless and unrestrained animal."



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"Are you intemperate about eating and doing things? Let us use the hog as a symbol to represent gluttony."

"Thampi, do you ever listen to filthy stories, and do you ever talk against people or listen to gossip? That is sin."



"We will put a toad here to represent filth and gossip."



"We don't like to admit that there is ever envy or deception in our hearts. It is just like a serpent, so we will put this picture of a slithering snake to represent deceit and envy."



"Do you ever get angry, and want to hurt somebody to pay him back for hurting you? Maybe this tiger is like anger and revenge."



"And do you ever feel lazy, and don't like to obey when you are told to do something good? Could we use this slow, poky tortoise to represent the times when you don't do your best?"

"Oh, Gentleman, I think all those sins are in my heart. How can I get rid of them?"



"When all these sins are in our hearts, Satan is ruling supreme, and we cannot have real joy or peace with them present. But God in Heaven is watching, and the kind angel that I am placing here representing the Grace of God makes you willing to hear God's word. He will send His Holy Spirit to help you understand His Word. He is the One who changes our hearts, and leads us in God's ways. Thampi, the Holy Spirit is from God, heavenly and holy. So we have this picture of a dove representing the Holy Spirit.



"Thampi, a wonderful thing takes place in your heart when God through the Holy Spirit takes control. Your heart can become a new heart made clean by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you are willing, Thampi, confess your sins and ask God for Jesus' sake to forgive your sins, He can make your heart as though you had never sinned. Will you do that, Thampi, just now?"

Humbly Thampi sobbed out a confession of just the very sins of which the gentleman had been speaking. He asked God for Jesus' sake to forgive his sins and make his heart clean.



Looking up into the missionary's face with tears streaming down his own, Thampi told how different he felt, how warm inside, and how wonderful. That, the Christian worker explained patiently, was called peace.

"How precious that the marvelous grace, of our loving Lord, in the form of a kind angel, was hovering near! The Holy Spirit was striving with your heart. When Jesus came in and the light of the Holy Spirit flooded your heart, all these sins of pride, impurity, intemperance, anger, revenge, filthy stories and the like could remain no longer."

The man, seeing that Thampi was not able to grasp what had happened, again continued, "Do you remember, Thampi, how we said that Jesus died for your sins? In this wonderful book, the Bible, we read, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in.' Thampi, your heart used to keep a lot of ugly, dirty sins in there. It was Jesus whom you heard knocking at your heart's door. He couldn't get in, Thampi, unless you opened the door, because you see, the latch to your heart's door is on the inside. You opened the door when you were willing to confess your sins, and now Jesus has come in and is living and abiding there. That is why you are so happy, and so different.



"Yes, Thampi, this heart of yours is completely different, the sins that have made your heart so ugly and dirty have all departed. Now your heart is filled with the Holy Spirit. Instead of feeling unkind and mean to others, you will find that you love everyone.

"The same all-seeing eye of God is still present. Before, it was seeking in love and anxiety to save your sinful heart to keep it from the fiery darts of the enemy of your soul.

"Thampi, the Lord Jesus Christ is now living and abiding in your heart! Isn't that wonderful? You have obeyed God and now Jesus is pleased to dwell within your heart. Jesus is so kind and faithful. He is anxious to be your constant friend and

companion. He wants to share your joys and help you bear your troubles and sorrows."

"With the Holy Spirit flooding your soul, the joy and peace you will have will be wonderful."



"Isn't it wonderful to have Jesus Christ living and abiding in your heart?"

"God is our heavenly Father, Jesus Christ His Son, is our Saviour. We are heirs and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. If we are willing to press on for God, we shall inherit all things." Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him."(1 Corinthians 2:9)

"Now, Thampi, since you have a changed heart and have accepted Jesus as your Saviour, you are called a Christian. Just as it is necessary for you to eat food each day and keep your body well and strong, so you must feed your heart so you can keep growing as a Christian. Sometimes we say 'soul' instead of 'heart'. The food necessary to keep your soul alive and growing, is the Bible, God's word. From it we learn how to grow spiritually. You remember that God is your Heavenly Father. To talk to God is what we call prayer. We talk to Him, just as we would to our earthly fathers. When you eat food, you take it into your body, and now as a Christian, you are taking God's word into your heart. It makes you grow as a Christian and it keeps you from sinning. Just as God is ever watching and guarding you, just so is Satan watching and provoking you, to try to tempt you to sin. As Jesus loved you and wants them to come to Him. (Mark 10:13, 14).



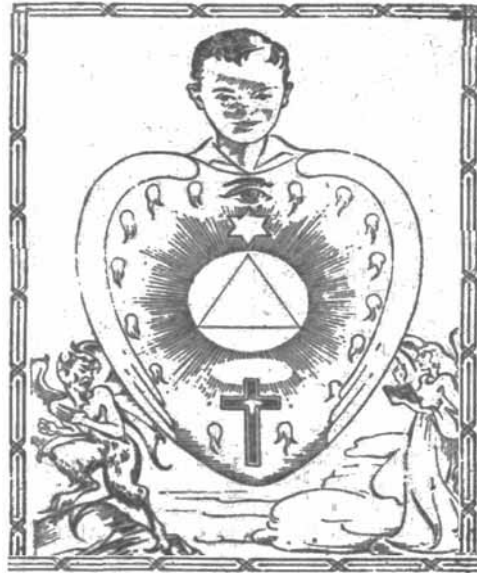
"We have just talked about Satan is watching you, Thampi, and tempting you to sin. You must remember what to do to grow as a Christian. You must faithfully read God's Word and pray."

"Just as soon as we fail to keep our hearts filled with God's Word, and fail to keep a close relationship with Him, Satan then stands ready to tempt us. He causes us to become angry and jealous, spiteful, to think impure thoughts to listen to gossip. He makes us to be careless and reckless in our living. All these and many more sins come into our hearts and lives."

"Thampi, the closer you live to God and the more you have communion with Him, the stronger you will be to withstand Satan as He comes to tempt you."

"Sometimes we talk about protecting ourselves from Satan by using the whole armour of God. It is like a war. We gird our loins with Truth. We have a breast plate of righteousness and our feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. (Ephesians 6:13-17)

Just as Jesus died for Thampi, so He died for you and for all the children of the world. He loves you and wants you to come to Him.



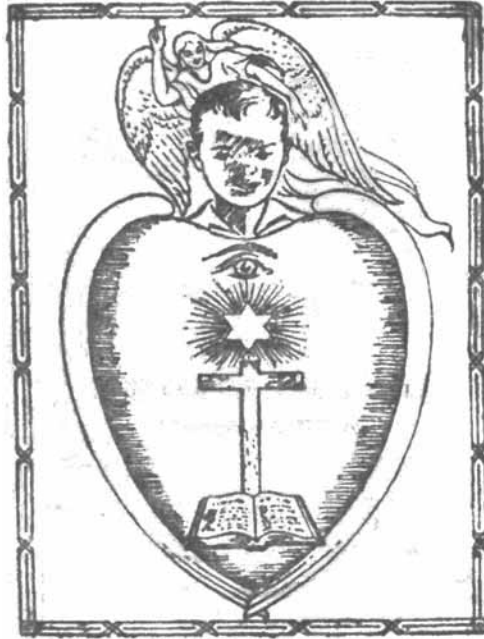
Each day as Thampi walks and talks with God and His Son, Jesus Christ, he experiences more joy and peace. He learns how much God really loves him. He came to know what a great price was paid that we could come into the family of God. Jesus suffered terrible agony on the cross where He was placed by cruel men. He could have come down from the cross but He gave Himself as a sacrifice for all the boys and girls and the men and women of the whole world. Three days after His death and burial He arose from the dead-the-victor over sin and death and Hell.

*"Jesus loves the little children
All the Children of the world;
Red and Yellow, Black and White.
All are precious in his sight,
Jesus loves the little children of the world."*

Boy or girl, man or woman, today Jesus is knocking at your heart's door. Just as He entered Thampi's heart and changed him, so He would do wonderful things for you. Today is the day to invite Him. Just now Jesus is sitting at the right hand of His Father, interceding for those who love Him. (Romans 8:34). When He was here on the earth, He promised He would come again to receive His own unto Himself (John 14:3).



To wait to decide about Him is dangerous. He could come back today and then it would be too late to take Him as your Saviour.



With war and sickness and death all about us, not one of us can be certain of tomorrow, Death is the only thing of which we can be certain. To die without Christ would mean to be lost and separated from Him for all eternity. To die in Christ would mean to live with Him for all eternity. Then we'd worship Him in the Land where we shall never be hungry or thirsty, where there is neither, sickness nor death.

Today ask Him to come into your heart and fill it with Himself. He will give you joy and peace which you have never known.

Into my heart, Into my heart,
Come into my heart, Lord Jesus;
Come in today, come in to stay,
Come into my heart, Lord Jesus

∞ The End ∞

(Story adapted from Christian Folklore)