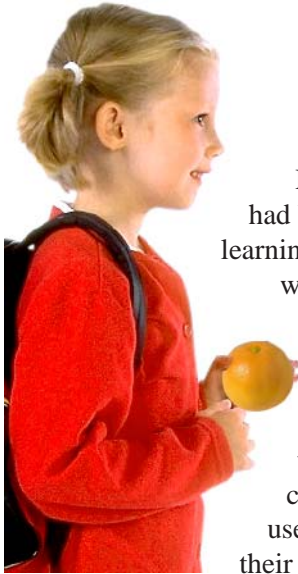


THE CHRISTMAS ORANGE



Mary's class had been learning about the way children lived in the past. They learned that children used to bring their teachers apples and oranges as Christmas presents. Oranges back then were quite expensive. Mary's class decided to bring their teacher a Christmas present the way children once did. Mary chose to bring an orange.

We will never know why Mary just felt she just had to have a taste of her orange, but she did. After fighting temptation for what seemed like ages, Mary decided she could just cut the pip out of the top, suck out a little of the juice, and replace the pip. Surely, just a little juice

wouldn't be missed.

After awhile, Mary felt she just had to have a wee bit more of the lovely juice. Again and again as she walked to school, she would pull up the pip and suck out just a little juice.

When the time came for the children to give their teacher her gifts, Mary was left with a very squashed orange. With a tear in her eye, Mary gave the pitiful present to her teacher and sadly said, "There's still some juice left."

Too often that is what we as Christians do with our lives. We intend to serve Christ by giving Him our lives in service for Him, but we take a little bit for ourselves, and then a little bit more, and then a little more. Each time we take some for

ourselves, we tell ourselves, "This will be the last time."

Sadly, some Christians live most of their life for self and only decide to surrender their lives in service for the Lord when they are well up in years: then they hand the Lord the squeezed out remains of their lives with the words, "Lord, I'm surrendering what remains of my life."

How much better to begin serving God when we are young and full of potential.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them"

Ecclesiastes 12:1



**the wages of sin is death; but
the gift of God
is eternal life
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Romans 6:23

**For God so loved the world,
that he gave his only
begotten Son, that
whosoever believeth in him
should not perish,
but have everlasting life.**

John 3:16-18

