

"A poor lost child," I said. "I found it on the road. Take it, will you? I've turned faint." And as I lifted the little sleeping thing, I saw the face of my own child, my little Dolly. It was *my* darling child, and no other, that I had picked up on the rain-drenched road.

While her mother was working, my little Dolly had wandered out on the prairie to greet papa and the new doll. When the storm hit, my wife lost hope of finding her alive, and was lamenting for our child that she assumed to be dead.

I thanked God on my knees before them all.

It is not much of a story, friends, but I think of it often in the night. I wonder how I could bear to go on living if I had not stopped when I heard the cry for help upon the road – the little baby cry, hardly louder than a squirrel's chirp.

– Author Unknown



**T**his story speaks beautifully of God's redemption – The Great Shepherd leaving the 99 to go after the one lost sheep. But I'd like to suggest another analogy. We know children today are under attack – even from the time of conception, dark forces plot their death. And if they do survive, the massive attack continues in the hope that their souls will be lost for eternity. We may not hear the faint cries – but that doesn't mean they aren't there. Just read the papers or watch the news. The cries are loud and clear if we'll just listen for them.

Our own children may be doing great, but all is not well with this generation of children. Every child is at risk of becoming a casualty. We're responsible for more than our own little families. If we don't care about a stranger's daughter aborting

her baby, one day it might be our daughter at the clinic door. If we don't care about drugs, suicide, and pornography now, when will we care? When it touches our loved ones?

The man in the story thought his own child was tucked safely away at home – yet he was willing to inconvenience himself, even risk his safety to save what he thought was another child's life. I encourage each of you to be like this man. Moved by the compassion of Jesus, he did the right thing and, to his surprise, ended up saving his own child.

Will you answer the cries? Will you inconvenience yourself a bit? The cries you hear may be from unknown children, but no child is nameless to God. Our sacrificial service today may even save our own children, or our grandchildren, in years to come. Let's be God's hands and feet – showing His father's heart of compassion for this generation. And let's be like the man who said, "I wonder how I could bear to go on living if I had not stopped when I heard the cry for help upon the road – the little baby cry, hardly louder than a squirrel's chirp."

– Melody Green



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# A CRY IN THE NIGHT



**T**he following story is true and was taken from one of our all time favorite books, "Touching Incidents And Remarkable Answers To Prayer," written in 1894. Gather the whole family around! This is a story you'll enjoy reading out loud to your children.

Some people reject Christianity because it seems too incredible to believe that God would take such great pains to save human beings so far beneath Him. They forget the New Testament teaches that God is our *Father*. And because He is our Father, it is not surprising that God made such a sacrifice to save us. Even mere men will not permit a child to perish without first putting forth a mighty effort to save him – any child, it need not be his own.

One fact is worth a dozen arguments, so I will ask you to listen to the story of a humble man as he relates an incident in his otherwise uneventful life. For a little while imagine that you're seated around the table of an American boarding house where the guests are spending an hour or two in the evening relating the more remarkable events that have happened to them. Imagine that you are listening to one of the guests there instead of to me:

**M**y name is Anthony Hunt. I'm a cattle driver, and I live many miles away upon the western prairie. There wasn't a house in sight when my wife and I moved there.

One day, about ten years ago, I left home to sell fifty head of cattle. Before I came back I was to buy some groceries and dry goods and, above all, a doll for our youngest child, Dolly. She's never had a store-bought doll of her own, only the rag-babies her mother made her. Dolly could talk of nothing else but the doll I was going to bring her, and as I was leaving she ran down to the gate to call after me to "buy a big one."

Nobody but a parent can understand how my mind lingered on that toy and, when the cattle were sold, the first thing I went to buy was Dolly's doll. I found a large one, with eyes that would open and shut when you pulled a wire. I had it wrapped in paper and then tucked it under

my arm with the other parcels of calico, tea, and sugar. It might have been wiser to stay in town until morning, but I was anxious to get back and eager to hear Dolly carry on about the doll she was so eagerly expecting.

I mounted a steady-going old horse of mine and, pretty well loaded, started for home. Night set in before I was a mile from town and, when I came to the wildest stretch of road I know of, it was already black as pitch.



But I knew this road so well that I could have felt my way home if I had to – and it was almost like doing that when the storm that had been brewing finally broke and the rain fell in torrents.

I was five – maybe six – miles from home. I rode on as fast as I could, but suddenly I heard a little cry, like a child's voice. I stopped short and listened. I heard it again. I called, and the voice answered me, but I still couldn't see a thing. All was dark as pitch. I got down and felt around in the grass and called out again. Once more the tiny voice answered.

Then I began to wonder. I'm not a timid man, but folks knew that as a cattle driver I'd usually be carrying money with me. I thought then that it might be a trap to

rob and murder me. I'm not superstitious – not very – but I couldn't see how a real child could be out on the prairie so late on such a terrible night. It might be an animal's cry. The bit of coward that hides itself in most men showed itself to me then, and I was half inclined to run away. But once more I heard that pitiful cry and said to myself, "If any man's child is out here, Anthony Hunt is not the man to let him lie there and die."

I searched again. At last I remembered a hollow underneath the hill and groped my way there through the darkness. Sure enough, I found a little dripping thing that moaned and sobbed as I took it in my arms. I mounted my horse and tucked the little soaked thing under my coat as best I could, promising to take it home to its mamma.

The child seemed tired to death and soon cried itself to sleep against my bosom. It had slept there over an hour when through the darkness I caught sight of

my own windows. There were lights in them, and I supposed my wife had lit them for my sake. But when I got into the front yard I could sense that something was wrong. I stood still with dead fear in my heart for about five minutes before I could bring myself to lift the door-latch. At last I did and found my wife in the middle of a room filled with friends from surrounding farms. She was weeping, and when she saw me enter she hid her face.

"Oh, don't tell him," she said. "It will kill him."

"What is it, friends?" I cried.

And one said: "Nothing now, I hope. What's that in your arms?"