

Uncle Joe and the Prize Cow



Early one summer evening, a small boy and his sister were walking along a path by their house with their mother. They were singing a hymn written by Mary Baker Eddy called "Feed My Sheep." They loved to sing it and they knew all the words. Sally said that the only shepherd she ever knew was David the shepherd boy in the Bible story. Billy said that he liked that story because David was very brave, and with God's help he killed a lion and a bear when they wanted to kill the sheep. Sally said that she also remembered a story that Jesus had told about the little lamb that had wandered off and got lost. The shepherd searched for it. When he found it he carried it gently back to its mother.

The next morning, Billy, Sally, and Mother were busy in the kitchen making breakfast. Just then Uncle Joe came into the house. Uncle Joe worked on the farm where Billy and Sally lived and he took care of the cows. He was very angry because their prize cow had broken her chain and wandered away. She had done this several times before. Once, she had stayed away for more than a day. Uncle Joe felt cross because now he would have to search for her for many hours, and that would make him lose time from his regular farm work.

It was a very hot day, so Uncle Joe pulled his straw hat down over his eyes and mumbled something about the trouble that cow had made for him. As he started off in his search over the rocky hillsides that were around the farm, Mother turned to the children and said quietly: "Uncle Joe has gone to look for our cow in the only way he knows how. But we know another way. We can turn to God right now and ask Him to show us the way to find the cow, just like Mrs. Eddy did in her hymn about the shepherd."

Sally really liked her uncle, so she began knowing the truth about him as God's perfect child. "Uncle Joe can't really be angry," said Sally, "because as God's child, he is forever expressing love." "That's right," said Mother. "We must know only what is true about Uncle Joe." "Also," said Billy, "we need to know that since our cow is one of God's ideas too, then it can only be a good cow and it can't be disobedient." Mother was very happy that they had taken the time to know the truth about Uncle Joe and the cow. After that, Mother went back to sewing, and the children went back to finishing their chores in the house. Later, when Billy and Sally went out on the front lawn to play, they couldn't believe what they saw. They shouted for Mother to come and see, too. "Oh look, Mother, look! Our cow is right here, standing still and eating grass."

Sometime later, Uncle Joe showed up at the house. A happy smile spread across his face when he saw the prize cow standing in the front yard and munching grass. "Now doesn't that beat anything you have ever seen!" he said as he took off his straw hat and scratched his head. He then took hold of the cow's harness and led her back to the barn, whistling as he walked along. Sally squeezed Mother's hand. "Oh, Mother," she said, "he is the Uncle Joe we love."

Hymn #'s 304-309 "Shepherd, show me how to go O're the hillside steep, How to gather, how to sow,--How to feed thy sheep."