

## Charley the Parrot

Shirley had a new little parrot named Charlie. Charlie loved to sit in his cage on his perch and talk all day long. Mother knew that Charlie might also like to get out of his cage and use his wings to fly a little. So one day, she put tree branches around the room so that Charlie would have places to sit. When Shirley opened the cage, Charlie flew around the room. When he got tired of flying, he picked out a branch to land on and began squawking a parrot story. He was so happy that he could do what birds like to do best and that is to fly.



One day, when Shirley came home from School, she told Mother that she had passed by the pet store and saw a sweet little parrot in a tiny cage. She thought how much the dear little bird might like to come to live with them and be able to fly around like Charlie. The new little bird would be good company for Charlie. Mother said that she had an extra cage in the attic and they would go together right away and buy the parrot.

The new bird was named Mike. He loved his new cage. When he saw that he could fly around the room, and that was the most special thing of all. But, oh what a surprise Mother and Shirley had! Instead of Charlie being happy to have company, he flew at Mike and pecked at him. He chased Mike all round, until finally Mike flew into his cage so he could get away from Charlie. Even then, Charlie continued to be a naughty bird. He sat on the top of Mike's cage and screeched at him in a loud parrot voice.

Shirley was so disappointed that she began to cry. "Oh Mother," she said, "I think we have made a terrible mistake. Charlie doesn't want company after all. He was happier when he was alone and had everything to himself. Maybe we are going to have to return Mike to the store. I don't want to do that because Mike is a very sweet little bird, and I know he could be happy here if Charlie wasn't being so cruel to him."

Mother knew it was time to voice the truth about the situation so she and Shirley sat down on the couch and began to pray about the problem. Mother said that if they let Charlie's selfishness have its way, that would not be right. God made all the birds and everything that He had made was good. Since Charlie and Mike were both created by God, then there could be no selfishness, no fighting, and no fear going on between them. God is Love and all that he creates must be loving.

They opened Mike's door. He immediately went out into the room and flew around fearlessly. Charlie watched him quietly for a little while, then he flew out of his cage. Soon, both birds were flying around together. That night, when it came time to cover the cages, Mother and Shirley found both birds in one cage on the same perch. Charlie and Mike were the best of friends from then on, proving that all God's creatures reflect Love.

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*Hymn # 31 "Love" by Mary Baker Eddy: "Like brother birds that soar and sing and on the same branch bend".*