

## The Disappearance of the Red Purse

For many months, Beth's family had been planning a vacation camping trip. Beth wanted to buy gifts when she was away so she could bring them back to her friends. She had been saving money and putting it in her piggy bank. When the bank got full her mother gave her dollar bills for the coins. She put these in a small red purse.

On the Saturday afternoon before they were to leave on the trip, Beth's brother, Tim, had to play in a baseball game in a nearby park. Just before Tim left for the game, he and Beth had an argument. While his sister wasn't looking, Tim took the purse off of her dresser. When he got outside, he put the purse on the empty luggage rack on top of the car. Tim was sure that either Beth or his dad would see it up there and no harm would be done. He just meant it to be a joke to scare Beth. Then, Tim took the short cut to the ball field without telling anyone what he had done.

When Beth first missed the red purse, she thought that she had put it some place and then had forgotten where it was. She looked all over her room, but could not find it. "Mother," she said when she saw her in the hall, "I can't find my money and I think that Tim took it to get back at me because we had an argument."

Mother quickly reminded her that she was bearing false witness against her brother by seeing him as someone that would do such a thing. Also, mother told her that she had proven many times that there is nothing lost in divine Mind.

"I know that, but I also know that Tim knows where my money is. I'm going to search his room right now!" She looked everywhere in Tim's room, but found nothing. She was so angry that she wanted to cry. But right about then, Beth heard her dad's voice telling her that it was time to go to the ball field.

Beth climbed into the back seat of the car with such an angry look on her face that her mother had to immediately explain to her dad about the missing purse and how it was making Beth upset. Beth sat quietly on the way to the ball field. She knew that error was telling her lies about her and her brother, and was making her very unhappy. So she began replacing the lies with the truths she was learning from the Bible and *Science and Health*. She knew that God had made everyone in his likeness so that had to include her brother, Tim. Since both she and Tim were made by a loving God, they had to be loving and couldn't be angry or mean.

By the time they got to the field, Beth had stopped worrying about the red purse. She had also stopped being mad at Tim. Beth's dad asked Tim about the purse and Tim told him where he had put it. When they went to the car to look for it, it was still on the luggage rack, even though the car had gone up and down two steep hills. Dad started to lecture Tim about what he had done. But Beth spoke up and said that it was all right because divine Love had protected the purse from being lost.

Both Tim and Beth learned not to listen to error telling them lies about themselves or anyone else, and instead to listen to God who would always show them how Love meets all their needs.

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*S&H 476-477: "Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals."*

