

# Tommy's Thanksgiving

## Value: Joy



Tommy grew up in a fairly small town with his mother and father, two older brothers, Steve and Frank, and his little sister, Helen.

Tommy's father had a regular job at the factory like most of his friend's fathers. Tommy thought that his family was the same as any other family especially when it came to celebrating holidays such as Thanksgiving or Christmas.

He never forgot that first Thanksgiving which started a long family tradition.

Steve and Frank were in the living room with Uncle Al and Uncle Bob watching football with his father. Helen was in the kitchen trying to find something that she could help with, as Aunt Betty and Aunt Ann helped his mother make the Turkey dinner.

This Thanksgiving Day was different then all the ones before. On this Thanksgiving Day the doorbell rang. "Hello, how are you?" Tommy's father happily said as he answered the door. "We are so glad to have you. Marge, look who is here," his father eagerly said as Tommy's mother rushed in.

There stood the Harrisons. "Tommy, This is Ike, the Harrison's little boy. He is about the same age as you," Tommy's mother told him. "Why don't you show him your baseball cards, I'm sure that he would like that."



Tommy wasn't sure how to act. The Harrisons weren't like the families of most of Tommy's friends. Ike's father didn't work at the factory like the other fathers he knew. The Harrisons had a very small farm and they didn't have a lot of things because they were poor.

Tommy took Ike upstairs and showed Ike his baseball cards. "Wow," said Ike. "I have never seen anything like this my whole life." "Well, just be careful touching them," Tommy said. He still wasn't sure about Ike. He didn't know Ike too good because Ike missed a lot of school. Ike had to work on his family's farm a lot of the time instead of going to school.



"Why are they here?" Tommy wondered. "They aren't family or relatives." This bothered Tommy because he didn't understand. He thought Thanksgiving was just about turkey and family.

Finally Tommy went downstairs to the living room where Mr. Harrison had joined his brothers, uncles, and his father watching football.



“Dad,” Tommy said sadly. “Can I talk to you about something?”

“Why sure son,” Tommy’s father said. “Excuse me, I’ll be right back.”

“What is it Tommy?” his father said as they went out onto the back porch.

“Well ... I was just wondering,” Tommy slowly got the words out. “Why are the Harrisons over here on Thanksgiving? They aren’t family or anything like that, and their son Ike doesn’t even have any baseball cards.”

“I glad that you brought that up to me Tommy,” his father said. “Do you remember what you were taught in Sunday school about how we are to be like Jesus?”

“Sure, I remember Dad,” Tommy replied.

Tommy’s father went on to explain; “Jesus said that we are to love our neighbors like we love Jesus and God. When you love someone you want to bring them joy and happiness.”



“I think that I get it now Dad,” said Tommy.

“The Harrisons are here because your mother and I invited them Tommy. We realized that they didn’t have what we were blessed with this Thanksgiving so we wanted to bring some joy to them. When God blesses someone, He expects him or her in return, to bless someone else and spread the joy around. Also Tommy, it gives that person great joy in their heart for loving someone by bringing joy to them. Do you understand now Tommy?”

I sure do Dad, thanks for explaining it to me,” Tommy happily said.



After dinner, Ike came running into the living room. “Daddy, Daddy, look what Tommy give me.” There in his hand was Tommy’s favorite baseball card.

“You know Dad,” Tommy quietly told his father, “your right. It does bring you great joy in your heart when you bring joy to someone else.”