

The Bulwark

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DEAD DUCK...

Some years back a story was being circulated via email over the Internet. The story focused on a brother and sister, James and Sally, who had arrived at their grandparents farm for an extended visit. James was given a slingshot to play with, and he went off into the woods to practice. He couldn't hit a target he had set up. Discouraged, he headed back to his grandparents house as it was drawing close to dinner time. As he was walking back, he saw his grandmother's pet duck, and being a boy, out of impulse he took aim at the duck with his slingshot and let go. He nailed that duck smack dab in the head and killed it. He was shocked and saddened. What to do? He grabbed the dead duck and hid it in a nearby wood pile. However, his sister Sally saw what he had done, but she savored the moment but didn't say a word.

The following day, after lunch grandma said, "Sally, let's wash the dishes". Sally smiled sweetly and replied, "grandma, James told me he wanted to help you in the kitchen." Turning to James she whispered, "Remember the duck". James did the dishes. Later that same day grandpa asked James and Sally if they wanted to go fishing. However, grandma said she needed Sally to help in making dinner. To which Sally put on a smile and



replied, "but grandma, James told me he wanted to help you." She once again whispered to her brother, "Remember the duck" She went fishing, James helped grandma.

This went on for several days. Finally James got tired of doing his chores and those of his sister. He went to his grandmother and confessed he had gotten off a lucky shot and killed the duck. Whereupon his grandmother reached down and hugged him and said, "James, I know. I saw what happened. I was standing at the window, but because I love you, I forgave you. I was just wondering how long you were going to let your sister make a slave of you."

That story triggers a powerful reminder of the love God has for us and the thought He must have with respect to how long we grant permission to Satan in order to keep us enslaved. Consider what Paul penned to Titus, chapter three and verses three through five. *"For we also were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared. He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy,*

by the washing of regeneration."

"Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24) Paul, the author of Roman, answers that question in chapter eight as he discusses in some detail how in Christ deliverance from the bondage of sin is found. We don't need to let sin reign over us. Paul, explained in Acts chapter twenty-two how he was overwhelmed by the guilt of sin and longing to be set free, was asked by Ananias after the message of the gospel had been presented to him, "And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name." (Acts 22:16) (wbe)

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