

## **Esther and Emmett – February 20 2022**

Esther: Hi Emmett.

Emmett: Hi Esther. How are you today?

Esther: I'm good. I saw a woodpecker eating from a bird feeder a few days ago. I look forward to the spring when more birds will be returning our community.

Emmett: And when the snow is gone and we don't have to wear boots and mitts every time we go outside.

Esther: And how are you today, Emmett?

Emmett: I'm good, but I'm trying to make a list.

Esther: What kind of list? A grocery list?

Emmett: No, I'm making a prayer list.

Esther: A prayer list! What's that?

Emmett: I'm making a list of people I want to pray for when I say my prayers each night.

Esther: That sounds like a nice thing to do.

Emmett: Well, it started out being a nice thing to do!

Esther: What do you mean?

Emmett: Well, it was easy to think about praying for lots of people – my family and my friends. I want to pray that they be safe and happy and healthy. That was easy, but then Jesus went and made it harder!

Esther: Jesus did that? How did Jesus do that?

Emmett: Jesus told his friends to pray for people they don't necessarily like. He told his friends to pray for people who 'abuse' them. I think that means to pray for people who make your life difficult and who might even be mean to you.

Esther: Jesus did say that. He told his disciples that they should love everyone, even their enemies.

Emmett: Well, I don't think I have any enemies, but there are some people who sometimes make fun of other people, and I don't like that.

Esther: I wouldn't like that either.

Emmett: Someone even made fun of my hair...what's not to like about my hair? I have really neat hair!

Esther: You sure do! I tell people, "My friend Emmett has neat hair!"

Emmett: Thank you Esther...and you have neat hair, too!

Esther: Thanks Emmett!

Emmett: I think Jesus would like my hair, too! So how come Jesus wants me to pray for people who don't like my hair? Hey, maybe I should pray that they get hair just like mine!

Esther: I think you should be thankful for your neat hair, but I don't think God wants us to all look alike. I think God created the world to be filled with all sorts of neat but different people and creatures and plants and birds and...everything.

Emmett: Yeah. I guess that's why a rainbow isn't just one colour. God wants us to see all the colours of the rainbow.

Esther: God loves all God's creation and all God's creatures.

Emmett: So, back to my question...why should I pray for people who make my life difficult....ohhhh!

Esther: Oh, what?

Emmett: Maybe Jesus wants us to pray for everyone that God loves!

Esther: Do you think so?

Emmett: I do! I think I should pray for everyone that God loves. I think that God prays for everyone. Maybe, God wants us to love other people the way God loves other people.

Esther: Jesus said that we should love other people without expecting that we would get anything in return.

Emmett: What does that mean?

Esther: I think it means that we don't love people so that they will give us a nice gift, or even so that they will love us.

Emmett: Hmmm. I guess not everyone loved Jesus, but he still told his disciples that they should love everyone.

Esther: Maybe the only way the world becomes a more loving place is if we try to love a little more, trying to love like Jesus loved.

Emmett: So how do I pray for someone who doesn't like my hair?

Esther: I don't know...maybe you just say, "God, I pray for...and say the person's name"...then let God do the rest of the praying. Maybe just praying for someone helps us to see that person as a child of God.

Emmett: So maybe praying for someone is one way of loving someone!

Esther: And maybe it's one more way in which we somehow touch God's love.

Emmett: Yeah....oh wait! Oh no!

Esther: What! What!

Emmett: If I start praying for everyone...I'm going to have to make a really long list!!! I don't think I have enough paper!

Esther: Oh Emmett! I think you can pray for the people on your list, and then, after you have prayed for them, you can pray for anyone else you think of at that moment. Then maybe the next time you pray, you will pray for some other people!

Emmett: Yeah, I guess if God loves everyone, then God doesn't need to keep a list, so I guess I don't need to keep a list of everyone either!

Esther: That sounds wise...something that someone with neat hair would say!

Emmett: Ah, thanks Esther. And after I have said my prayers, guess what I will say then!

Esther: Would you say...'Amen!'

Emmett: That's right....Amen!