

"Done It unto Me"

The Legend of the Fir Tree

Two little children were sitting by the fire one cold winter's night. All at once they heard a timid knock at the door, and one ran to open it.

There, outside in the cold and the darkness, stood a child with no shoes upon his feet and clad in thin, ragged garments. He was shivering with cold, and he asked to come in and warm himself.

"Yes, come," cried both the children. "You shall have our place by the fire. Come in!"

They drew the little stranger to their warm seat and shared their supper with him, and gave him their bed, while they slept on a hard bench.

In the night they were awakened by strains of sweet music and, looking out, they saw a band of children in shining garments approaching the house. They were playing on golden harps, and the air was full of melody.



Suddenly the stranger child stood before them; no longer cold and ragged, but clad in silvery light.

His soft voice said: "I was cold and you took Me in. I was hungry, and you fed Me. I was tired, and you gave Me your bed. I am the Christ Child, wandering through the world to bring peace and happiness to all good children. As you have given to Me, so may this tree every year give rich fruit to you."

So saying, He broke a branch from the fir tree that grew near the door, and He planted it in the ground and disappeared. But the branch grew into a great tree, and every year it bore wonderful golden fruit for the kind children.

"And the King shall answer and say unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me'" (Matthew 25:40 KJV).

In Matthew 25:31–46 you can read the words Jesus spoke that this story is based on.

S&S link: Character Building: Values and Virtues: Generosity-2a
Text adapted from "The Legend of the Christmas Tree," by Lucy Wheelock. *Christmas Stories and Legends*. Copyright © 1916 by Megis Publishing Co.
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