

TRAVELER'S TALES



JEANNETTE HALEY

TRAVELER'S TALES

JEANNETTE HALEY

Copyright © 2006 by Jeannette Haley

Cover artwork © Jeannette Haley

This has been copyrighted to protect the integrity of the content, and to insure against any improper misuse of the material.

Permission granted for non-commercial (free) distribution provided this notice appears.

This book is considered a **FREE** e-Book,
Available for download from our website.
www.gentleshepherd.com

Unless otherwise indicated, Bible quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

The purpose for this material: There are very few books that encourage our young people to consider Christian practices. Although the message is simple in each of these stories, all ages have enjoyed "*TRAVELER'S TALES.*"

If you find this book a valuable resource for children, you might consider donating to this ministry to encourage and ensure further quality material for our young people.

Dedication:

To Jared and Katie McCollough.

It has been a pleasure
watching you grow.

Never lose your
pure hearts before Jesus.

Contents

1.	Traveler's First Christmas Morning	4
2.	Traveler and the Tree Birds	8
3.	Traveler and Punk, the Skunk	11
4.	Traveler Makes a Friend	14
5.	Traveler and the River Monster	17
6.	Traveler Gets Mad	21
7.	Traveler Learns to Trust	25
8.	Traveler Gets Into Trouble	28
9.	Traveler and the Buried Bone	33
10.	Traveler and the Lost Trail	37

1

**TRAVELER'S
FIRST CHRISTMAS MORNING**

Snowflakes floated like giant goose feathers to the ground. Traveler, the black and white Border collie, stood still in the sparkling snow. His freckled nose sniffed the cold Idaho air while snowflakes clung to his fluffy coat.

Finally, he shook himself and bounced across the yard to the front porch. He didn't know that Chad, nine, and Carla, seven, watched him from the big living room window.

Traveler walked slowly across the porch until he was right under the window and then he sat down and looked straight at Chad and Carla. He tipped his head one way and then the other. He just couldn't figure out why the Hunter's had put a tree in the living room. Now he watched as they took turns putting things on the branches. Truly his family was acting strange.

Early the next morning Carla, dressed in a bright red dress trimmed with white lace, opened the door to Traveler's room on the back porch. "Traveler," she said, "Merry Christmas!" You go outside for a few minutes, then you can come inside and open your presents."

Traveler understood about going outside, and the part about coming inside, but the part about "Christmas" and "presents" was new to him.

The first thing Traveler always did every morning was run in circles around *his* yard. He did this to make sure there were no kitties anywhere. Today it was so quiet Traveler checked twice. There wasn't even one kitty paw print in the

fresh, white snow. Finally, Traveler ran up the porch steps and waited for the door to open. He was anxious to find out what "Christmas" and "presents" meant.

"Come on in!" Carla said as she swung the door open. "This is Jesus' birthday! And we give gifts to one another. It helps us to remember that God gave the world the best gift ever given, His Son."

Traveler watched as Carla reached under the decorated tree. He saw all kinds of packages there. He sat down and stared at Carla. She picked up four packages. She handed one to Chad, and a larger one to their parents. She kept one for herself and the fourth one she put on the floor in front of Traveler.

Traveler watched as Chad and Carla opened their gifts. "Oh! Thank you, Chad!" Carla's eyes filled with tears of joy. "It's that beautiful sweater I wanted!" Carla jumped up, ran over to Chad, and gave him a hug.

"Wow! Thanks, sis!" exclaimed Chad as he unwrapped a new football.

Mr. and Mrs. Hunter had also opened their 1 gift and smiled with delight. "We sure can use this new blanket! Thank you, children."

Then it was Traveler's turn. He didn't know what to do so he stared at the package in front of him. Carla reached down and tore the paper a little. "Here, Traveler, open it yourself."

It didn't take Traveler long to get the idea. He grabbed the package, shook it a couple of times, and then lay down with it between his white paws. His sharp teeth tore at the paper. "Squeak! Squeak!" Traveler jumped backwards. Then he grinned one of his best doggie grins and pounced on the new rubber mouse. "Squeak, squeak!" He seemed very pleased. Christmas was turning out to be a good thing.

Chad and Carla had several other packages to open and Traveler got another present. This time he knew exactly what to do. Holding the paper bag between his paws, Traveler quickly tore open a package of jerky treats. He began

gulping them down as fast as he could. "Hey, wait a minute, Traveler," Carla said as she scooped them up. "You only get one once in awhile."

Traveler was getting excited. This was fun! And the children gave him *another* package! He eagerly tore it open. This time it was a box of dog cookies. Traveler ripped off the end of the box and helped himself to a couple of biscuits. This time Carla picked it up before he ate the whole box.

By now traveler began to think Christmas was just for him. He pestered Chad and Carla, trying to grab their gifts. He ran through the house with pieces of wrapping paper and ribbon. "Let's give him his last present to keep him busy," laughed Carla. Chad handed Traveler another package. He tossed it into the air and landed on it with both front feet. "What a show-off!" said Mr. Hunter.

This time Traveler had to rip through several layers of brown paper. His nose told him he was getting something good. Finally, he pulled a big leather chew from the package.

"That's all, Traveler," said Mrs. Hunter. They all watched as he nosed through the piles of paper and ribbon. Then he crawled under the Christmas tree.

"Come out of there!" Carla exclaimed. Traveler walked out from under the tree. Silver tinsel hung off his face and his brown eyes were sad. His mouth drooped at the corners. "Look at him!" Mr. Hunter said, frowning. "He thinks he should have more! Just like some people, he's not thankful for all he has!"

"Traveler," Carla and Chad sat beside him and patted his head. "You are a very blessed dog! You have a good home, four people who love you and care for you. You have a nice bed, a box of toys, a big yard to play in, lots of food to eat and now you even have Christmas presents!" Traveler tried hard to look sad, but it didn't work. He put his nose on Carla's hand and gave her a kiss. After all, he *did* have a wonderful Christmas morning!

BOYS AND GIRLS: In this story we see that Traveler forgot to be thankful. In fact, the more he got, the more he wanted. Sometimes people are just like that. They forget to thank God for what they have. They always want more and more. The Bible tells us we are to always thank God for what we have. Everything we have comes from God. He made it all—the food we eat, the air we breath, the water we drink and even the things our clothes are made of.

The most wonderful gift of all is the gift of His Son, Jesus. That's why we have Christmas, to remember God sent Jesus into the world to give us eternal life. This means if we love and trust Him, ask Him to take care of us and tell him when we are wrong and that we're truly sorry, then we will live with Him forever.

2

**TRAVELER
AND THE TREE BIRDS**

Traveler was happy when spring came. Spring meant he could spend more time outside on his Idaho farm chasing kitties and other creatures.

One beautiful spring morning, Traveler sat on the large front porch and listened to the chirping and tweeting of birds in the big tree overhead. It seemed to Traveler that they got louder and louder. Finally, their constant chirping began to irritate him. He thought the whole yard was *his*. And, that included the tree those noisy birds were in.

Traveler trotted down the porch steps and went over to the tree. He sat down next to the trunk and pointed his freckled nose straight up to he could see where those noisy birds were. Suddenly, he spotted them straight above him on a long, thick branch.

The sassy birds ignored his steadfast gaze. Somehow they knew he couldn't fly. Besides, they were busy building a nice, sturdy nest. Soon there would be tiny eggs in that nest and then Mr. and Mrs. Bird would take turns sitting on them until they hatched.

Traveler didn't care about baby birds. All he could think about was getting those pesky birds out of *his* tree.

He stood on all four white feet and backed up a short ways. He looked at the trunk and noticed a "Y" shape in the middle. Traveler looked and looked. He tipped his

head to the left and to the right. Then he decided if he ran fast enough and jumped high enough he could get into that part of the tree. Fixing his gaze on that one spot, he charged the trunk, jumped as high as he could and fell flat on his back.

Traveler hopped up, shook himself off and looked around to see if Chad or Carla had seen him. They were nowhere in sight.

The birds seemed to be laughing at Traveler and he squinted at them. He backed up and made another charge at that tree. He almost made it! But, almost isn't good enough and once again Traveler found himself on the ground. It seemed to him those birds were really laughing at him now. There they were, flitting from one branch to another. It was more than he could bear.

With one final mighty rush Traveler threw himself at the fork in the tree trunk. His paws barely made it into the crotch of the tree. For a minute it looked like he would never make it, but Traveler had made up his mind to get those birds. He clawed the tree trunk with his hind feet. After a few moments Traveler finally pulled himself up into the crook of the tree.

The thing Traveler forgot to do, though, was plan what he was going to do next. Now he was tightly wedged in between the two forks of the tree trunk! Try as he might, he could not free himself enough to move in any direction. He was stuck so tight he couldn't even back down.

Mr. and Mrs. Bird began to hop lower and lower in the tree. They had never seen a dog stuck in a tree before. They clucked and chirped, flapped their wings and tipped their heads. Traveler was becoming embarrassed. What a silly thing for a dog to do! Finally he began to cry in a high pitched voice.

Chad and Carla ran out the front door. Chad pointed at the tree with a grin. "Look, Carla! It's Traveler. There! In the tree!" He began to laugh.

Carla's eyes grew very big. She said, "Traveler! What are you doing in that tree? You crazy dog!"

Chad and Carla ran over to the tree and gently lifted him out. Carla said, "Don't you know you're a dog, always have been a dog, and always will be a dog? You're not a bird, that's for sure!" She patted his soft fur. "Dogs weren't meant to climb trees!" she gently scolded.

Once he was safely on the cool, green grass he trotted over to his bed on the back porch. He lay down and closed his eyes. Traveler figured it was time to take a nap. Things were sure to be better after a nice long nap, even if Mr. and Mrs. Bird were still chirping noisily and flying around *his* tree!

BOYS AND GIRLS: We might laugh at Traveler trying to climb a tree to chase birds, but in some ways we do silly things too. Did you know God sees everything we do? He knows when we try to be something we're not. He knows when we get ourselves into trouble by making foolish decisions before we pray about it. Our Heavenly Father also understands we aren't always thankful we are who we are and that sometimes we want to be something we are not.

God loves each of us just the way we are. He made everyone different from everyone else. We are His special creation. He wants us to thank Him for making us the way we are. Even when things go wrong, we can be thankful. Why not thank the Lord God right now for making you, you!

3
TRAVELER
AND PUNK, THE SKUNK

Traveler thought he was pretty smart living with the Hunter's. And everybody who knows Traveler knows he is a very curious dog. In fact, Traveler's curiosity gets him into a lot of trouble. Let me tell you about one bright spring day when Traveler met Punk.

You must remember that nothing makes Traveler madder than spotting a kitty strolling around in *his* yard. Well, on the day Traveler met Punk he ran twice around the old, two-story farmhouse and once around the barn. No kitties were in sight. Satisfied that the kitties were hunting mice elsewhere, Traveler decided to sit on the front porch and watch for slow moving cars to chase.

Because Traveler lives so far from town on a dirt road, not many cars pass by. It was when Traveler finally laid down to take a nap that suddenly he thought he saw something move in the tall grass by the corner of the barn. Jumping up on all four feet, Traveler stared hard in the direction of the swaying grass. Sure enough! Something with black and white fur was sneaking through that tall grass.

Quick as lightning Traveler charged off the porch and ran towards the intruder. And quick as lightning the uninvited visitor turned his back to Traveler. Faster than you can shout "No!" something that tasted awful and smelled horrible hit traveler in the face.

Poor Traveler had never met a “kitty” like that before. Shocked and mad he headed back toward the house. By this time Mrs. Hunter came out to the yard and yelled at him. He could tell she was about as mad as he’d ever seen her. He wanted to jump on her, but decided to roll in the grass instead. Somehow he knew he’d be in a lot more trouble if he jumped all over her.

The rest of that day just got worse for Traveler, for you see Punk has a lot of pride and thinks very highly of himself. He isn’t afraid of anybody or anything and does just whatever he pleases.

Traveler noticed that cocky skunk walking around the barn like it was *his* place instead of Traveler’s. And if that wasn’t bad enough, Chad and Mrs. Hunter gave him a bath and washed him with some red stuff they called tomato juice. After Traveler’s fur dried, Carla took him outside, put him on the tailgate of the pickup truck and started to brush him. Suddenly Traveler spotted Punk strolling right down the middle of the dirt road in front of *his* house!

Knocking the brush out of Missy’s hand, he charged that skunk at full speed. Punk stopped and turned his back to Traveler while both Chad and Carla screamed at Traveler with all their might. He pretended he didn’t hear them, and circled around Punk. Traveler really wanted to get even with that skunk!

Punk turned this way and that. Traveler dodged this way and that too, but as fast as he is, Traveler wasn’t fast enough for Punk! That’s right! You guessed it! Punk got the best of Traveler and all that scrubbing and tomato juice was for nothing. Traveler smelled just like that old skunk for the second time in one day. He knew he was in big trouble.

The Hunter’s made him sleep outside that night instead of letting him into his bedroom on the back porch. Everybody was mad at him and Traveler just knew Punk was laughing to himself.

The next day Traveler got scrubbed again with tomato juice. Then Chad and Carla gave him another bath. "We love you, Traveler," Carla said as she rubbed him dry with a towel. "But you must learn to behave yourself."

Nobody knows if Traveler ever learned a lesson from his experience with Punk because Punk moved down the road to the next farm. But Traveler has never passed up a chance to chase kitties!

BOYS AND GIRLS: In this story we see how Traveler didn't learn a lesson the first time he met Punk. In fact he was very naughty and got into trouble two times. How about you? When you do something you know is wrong, do you learn from that mistake, or do you do it again? You know, that old skunk is kind of like sin. God tells His people not to do certain things because it is sin. Sin "stinks" to God, and even though He loves us, if we sin, then we have to suffer the results, just like Traveler. The Bible tells us that God sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for us and take our punishment for sin. If we believe in Him and ask Him to forgive us, then He will. And He promises to help us not sin anymore!

4

**TRAVELER
MAKES A FRIEND**

Traveler stuck his freckled nose in his toy box. It was a very big box and had Frisbees, stuffed animals and all kinds of balls. There was a rope and some rubber toys that squeaked too.

Traveler pulled out a large stuffed elephant and carried it by the ear to his bed. Then he returned to the box and found a football. That was harder for him to grab, but he managed to hang on to the end of it. He dragged it over to the elephant, dropped it and returned to his toy box. Soon Traveler had most of his toys scattered around his room on the back porch.

Traveler had no idea that this day would be different. No idea at all until suddenly he heard a noise in the driveway. "Bow-wow-wow!" Traveler sounded a warning.

A young couple with two children got out of a blue truck. Traveler barked as loud as he could. He had never seen these people before and he wanted to let Chad and Carla know strangers had arrived. He watched as the man went around to the back of the truck to get something.

Traveler could hardly believe his eyes! A dog! A great big husky dog on *his* grass! In *his* yard! It was more than he could stand so he barked even harder.

"Hush, Traveler!" said Carla who had opened the door to Traveler's room. "Hush up!" These are friends and they are going to be staying with us for a couple of weeks. But Traveler couldn't keep his eyes off of that big dog. He lowered his eyelids and glared out the window.

Soon the visitors had unloaded their truck and were settled in the comfortable living room. Carla let Traveler outside and watched as he raced to the truck, circled it three times and then dashed around the yard looking for that big dog. Suddenly he stopped. She was sitting under one of the trees in the front yard watching him.

Chad was standing on the front porch, watching. He said, "Traveler, this is Cherry. You be nice to her." He turned and went back inside the house.

Traveler eyed Cherry with interest. She was a good-looking dog and was much bigger than he. But he didn't want her to get the idea she could take over *his* yard!

Traveler somehow knew his greatest ability was speed. Darting back and forth in front of Cherry, he tried to coax her into a race. If he could get her to chase him, then he could prove he was in control. Cherry finally made little hops towards Traveler a couple of times, but she grew tired of his games. She sat down with her back to him as if to say she didn't care what he did.

Traveler felt silly so he trotted off to the barn. He pretended he didn't care what Cherry thought. After checking the barn to make sure there were no kitties anywhere, he peeked out the door. Cherry lay under a tree and was sound asleep.

This is not what Traveler had expected. When he first saw Cherry, he felt afraid that she would get all the attention, take over *his* yard and even get some of his toys. Traveler had never shared any of his things with anyone before. But this

dog was different. She seemed content and happy without all the toys Traveler had.

Trotting to the house, Traveler walked into his spot on the porch and nosed through his stuffed animals. Picking up a brown Teddy bear, he walked out to Cherry and put it down in front of her. He stood back and watched. She opened one eye and then the other and stared at the bear. Then she raised her head and looked at Traveler. He gave her his best doggie grin and wagged his tail. Cherry sat up. Traveler pushed the toy toward Cherry and waited. She finally moved over to it and picked it up. Then she dropped the bear and with a puzzled expression on her face stared at Traveler. Cherry didn't have toys and she didn't have a clue what to do with it.

Traveler spent the rest of the day teaching Cherry how to play with his toys. Soon Cherry and Traveler chased one another around the house. By the time the sun set most of Traveler's toys were scattered all over the yard.

Chad and Carla came outside to the front yard. They laughed at what they saw. "It looks like Traveler has learned to share," said Chad.

Carla smiled and said, "Yes, and he has made a friend too."

BOYS AND GIRLS: Do you know what it means to share? What is the greatest gift you've ever received? What is the greatest gift you've ever given? Do you know that Jesus is God's gift to us? Because of God's love for us, He gave us His Son who came in the flesh so that He could take our place on the cross. Jesus died for us so that we could have eternal life with God. The greatest gift ever given is Jesus. The best thing you can share with others is Jesus and His love for them.

5

**TRAVELER
AND THE RIVER MONSTER**

It was a hot summer day and that means Traveler gets very hot. His favorite time of the year is winter. He loves to run and jump and roll around in the snow.

On this particular summer day Traveler walked slowly across the dry grass surrounding the old two-story farmhouse. His pink tongue hung out and his brown eyes were half closed as he made his way to the small gray pickup truck. He crawled under it and flopped down with a sigh. Closing his eyes, he tried to sleep and forget how hot it was.

He must have dozed off because suddenly he heard the tailgate open. He quickly jumped up and nearly bumped his head on the bottom of the truck. Then he saw Chad and Carla put something into the back of the pickup. He crawled out from his shady resting place as fast as he could.

Traveler didn't want to miss out on anything, and in two bounces he landed right inside the back of the truck.

"Hey, watch it, Traveler," yelled Chad as he grabbed for a big jug of lemonade. "You almost tipped this over."

Chad's gray eyes danced with joy as he ran his fingers through Traveler's white ruff. "We're going on a picnic," he said joyfully.

Traveler watched as Chad and Carla loaded the truck with a picnic basket, ice chest, beach towels and extra clothes. His ears stood straight up and his tail wagged non stop. Nothing made Traveler happier than going for a ride.

The Hunter family drove for about an hour to the picnic area by the river. They let Traveler out and unloaded the truck. "Isn't this fun?" Carla asked as she put a spoon in the potato salad.

"I love fried chicken, corn chips, pop and chocolate chip cookies!" Chad said as he licked his lips.

Mrs. Hunter smiled at her son. "Yes," she said, "I am thankful to God for all we have and for His beautiful creation." She picked up the camera and took a picture of the trees with the river in the background. "It's so peaceful here."

Suddenly the stillness was replaced by sounds of loud barking and growling. "Traveler!" shouted Chad and Carla at the same time. "We forgot about him!" They looked around but couldn't see him anywhere. Carla asked, "Where is he?"

"I see him!" shouted Chad. "He's in the river barking at something." Both Chad and Carla ran to the water's edge.

Traveler stood in the river about three feet from shore. His eyes were fixed on something moving in the water. Whatever it was, he sure didn't like it. His body was rigid, and every few seconds he would bark and growl.

"What is it?" asked Carla.

"I don't know. It's hard to see with the sunlight sparkling off the water," answered Chad. "Whatever it is, it's moving. But at the same time it's staying in one spot!"

Traveler was scared, but he wasn't about to leave his spot in the water. He wanted to run but at the same time he wanted to stay and see what that thing was. He just kept staring and barking and growling.

Chad and Carla squinted hard. "It's mostly underwater," Chad said quietly. "It's dark, and it looks like its head is sticking up out of the water."

"I can see it too!" Carla said. "But it's still not clear what it really is."

"Let's wade out there and find out," Chad said bravely. He began taking off his shoes and socks.

"I don't know if I want to," Carla said, stepping backwards.

"What a sissy you are!" teased Chad.

"No I'm not!" Carla shouted. "Just watch!" She began slipping out of her shoes.

Together Chad and Carla began wading out into the river toward Traveler and the strange object bouncing in the water. "I sure hope it's not a snake or anything like that," Carla said fearfully.

Chad looked straight at his sister. "Well," he said, "Traveler is sure it's something strange or he wouldn't be acting like this."

Closer and closer they got to their furry friend and the thing in the water. Suddenly Carla began to laugh.

Then Chad began laughing too. Traveler was the only one not laughing. "Come on, Traveler," Carla finally said when she could catch her breath. "It's just an old weed of some sort sticking up out of the water."

"Ha, ha, ha," Chad doubled over with laughter. Chad laughed so hard he almost fell into the river. He reached under the water and pulled at the weed until it pulled loose.

Traveler sniffed at the dripping plant in Chad's hand, then turned around and began wading up the river's edge. "Look at him," Carla said. "He feels silly."

"Oh, Traveler," Chad called after him, "You are so funny sometimes."

The children laughed and giggled all the way back to their picnic table. "Let's eat," their father said.

“What about Traveler?” asked Carla. “He’s wading around out there in the water.”

“Oh, once he sees we’re eating, he’ll be back for some treats.”

Sure enough, as soon as Traveler realized he was standing out in the river all by himself and that he might miss a picnic he waded to shore. He shook the water out of his fur, looked behind him once more to make sure there were no more “river monsters” chasing him and ran to the picnic table.

“Well, Traveler, you think you know all about *everything*,” Mr. Hunter said. “But you don’t.” Traveler pretended he hadn’t heard Mr. Hunter’s comment. He stuck his freckled nose in the air and waited for a handout. Maybe the next time he came to the river on a hot summer day there wouldn’t be ‘monsters’ in it!

BOYS AND GIRLS: Have you ever been scared of something you didn’t understand? Well, that happens to everyone! There are a lot of things even grownups don’t understand. But what we need to know is God made everything. He made the sun, the moon and the stars. He made this world we live in and all the plants and animals. He made all the people. He made *you!*

God made you special, so you need to remember that God understands everything. And if God understands everything, then you don’t have to be scared of what you do not understand.

God loves you and He sent His Son, Jesus, to earth so we could know about God. Jesus is your friend and He doesn’t want you to be afraid. He wants you to talk to Him when you are scared or don’t understand something. He will always hear you and help you. Talking to Jesus is called prayer. You can pray any time you want. In fact, you can pray *right now* and tell Jesus how you feel about everything. Maybe something you are afraid of is as harmless as Traveler’s ‘river monster!’

6

**TRAVELER
GETS MAD**

It was a perfect summer day and Traveler watched as the horse trailer pulled up next to the corral. He tipped his head as Mr. Hunter gently backed a big animal out of the trailer.

“Ruff-f-f-f-f,” said Traveler. He had never seen an animal quite like this one. He was sure it wasn’t a dog. No, it definitely wasn’t a dog! It wasn’t a cow either. There were cows in the pasture behind the old two-story farmhouse, and this animal didn’t look or smell like any of them.

“Ruff-f-f-f-f!” Traveler jumped at the end of his chain. He didn’t like being tied to a tree. Most of the time he ran free in *his* yard.

Chad and Carla ran out of the house and up to the new arrival. They petted and patted her and then led her around in circles.

Traveler could see long legs and a tail that swished back and forth. He listened to Chad and Carla talking to one another. “Isn’t she beautiful?” asked Carla as she stroked the young horse on the neck.

Chad answered, “She is a pretty color. She looks like smoke with a black mane and tail.”

Chad looked at Traveler. His eyes were bright and his tongue hung out as he leaned on the end of the chain. “I sure hope Traveler and Seeker get along okay,” he said.

After Chad and Carla's dad fed, watered and put Seeker in the corral, Chad walked over to Traveler. As he reached down to unsnap his chain, he said, "Come and meet your new friend, Seeker."

Traveler rolled his brown eyes up and looked into his face as if to ask if he still loved him. "Ha, ha!" laughed Chad. "Don't worry, Traveler. We'll always love you, but you're not the only animal on earth!"

As soon as he was free, Traveler raced to the corral as fast as he could go. Carla yelled, "Sit! Stay!" Traveler didn't want to sit, and he didn't want to stay, but he did anyway. "Traveler, this is Seeker. She's going to live here with us. You be nice to her."

By this time, Seeker had stuck her nose through the fence. She made little snorting sounds. Suddenly, Traveler stiffened in fear and rolled over backwards. He couldn't believe how BIG this new animal was.

Chad and Carla laughed until they almost cried. "Traveler," said Chad, "You did look awfully funny." They left him and walked to the house, laughing and shaking their heads.

Traveler lay down outside the corral and watched Seeker. She looked around her new home, took a long drink of water and munched on some grass. All the time she seemed to be keeping an eye on Traveler.

Chad and Carla had a lot of chores to do and soon forgot about Seeker and Traveler until they heard loud noises coming from the corral. Carla dropped the duster and Chad left the dishes he was washing. Both children raced through the door, across the front porch and out to the corral.

"Traveler! Stop that!" Chad yelled. He could see Seeker galloping around and around in the corral with Traveler right behind her.

“Get over here, Traveler!” Carla shouted. Seeker ran past the children and kicked her heels at the fence. Traveler ran behind her, barking and snapping at her feet.

Suddenly he saw Mr. and Mrs. Hunter dash out of the barn where they had been working. He knew he was in big trouble. Darting under the fence, he dashed across the grass and scooted under the pickup.

Dick opened the gate to the corral and tried to calm Seeker down. She tossed her head playfully and shook her long mane.

Mary looked at Traveler. She bent over and scolded him in his hiding place under the truck. “You naughty dog! Come out of there!” He just rolled his eyes at her. “All right, Traveler! That does it!” Chad and Carla watched their mother stomp toward the house.

Traveler knew that she would return with a rolled up newspaper. He decided he better give in quick. He crawled out from under the truck and walked behind her. His ears drooped and his eyes were half closed. “Get into your room!” Mrs. Hunter ordered. Traveler walked slowly into his room on the back porch and lay down. Mrs. Hunter shut the door with a bang.

A few days went by before Traveler went into the corral to visit Seeker. He liked to see her race around the corral. It was fun chasing her. He looked around and didn't see anyone watching him. Walking quietly behind Seeker while she munched on oats, he nipped one of her hind legs.

Quicker than you can say “Ouch!” Seeker kicked him. Traveler didn't get hurt bad, but the wind got knocked out of him. And that made him mad. He was so mad he decided to really bite her hard.

Just then Carla and Chad yelled. “Traveler! You get out of there!” He couldn't figure out how they always knew what he was up to, but there they were, frowning at him.

Traveler was so mad he crawled out of the corral and trotted right past them. He went straight to bed.

Days passed and Traveler was still mad. He just didn't understand that what had happened to him was his own fault. Even after a few weeks, Traveler held a grudge. When Seeker was put into a distant pasture with other horses, Traveler was still angry. If Chad or Carla even mentioned "Seeker," Traveler would growl and nip at their feet.

"Traveler," Mrs. Hunter said one day, "You just don't understand do you? What you did to Seeker was wrong and you suffered as a result of it. You should not be mad!" She laughed at him.

Chad and Carla kneeled down beside him and patted his head. "C'mon, Traveler!" Chad said cheerfully. "Let's all go outside and play ball!"

Traveler's ears perked up and he wagged his tail. Playing ball with his two favorite people was far better than being mad all the time.

BOYS AND GIRLS: In this story we see Traveler getting mad because he was naughty. Sometimes it's hard for a dog, no matter how smart he is, to understand they cause a lot of their own problems. But with people it is different. *We know* when we do something wrong.

If we do something wrong and we get hurt because of it, then we should not get mad. Yes, sometimes things happen to us because it's our own fault. God wants us to be honest when we do something we shouldn't and ask Him to forgive us. We need to forgive other people when they do things to us that hurt.

Remember, God sent His Son, Jesus, to die in our place and to show us how to love others. Instead of being mad, we can be happy and thankful that God loves us very much and forgives us.

7

**TRAVELER
LEARNS TO TRUST**

Big, black storm clouds filled the afternoon sky. Wind beat against the old two-story farmhouse and lightning flashed in the distance.

Traveler, who had been looking for kitties, ran towards the pickup parked in the driveway. He crawled underneath and flattened himself to the ground. Thunder rolled overhead in the darkening Idaho sky and great drops of rain began to pound the earth.

“Traveler! Traveler! Come in here!” He listened to Chad call him from the porch.

“Traveler! Traveler! Come in, right now!” Carla yelled.

Traveler was very scared and he didn't intend to move one hair. “Hurry, Traveler. Come!” Chad shouted above the noise of the storm. “Come here!” Traveler huddled up into a ball of black and white fur and shivered.

The wind blew harder. He heard Chad and Carla shut the front door as they went back inside the house. Suddenly he felt terribly alone. Lightning lit up the sky and thunder boomed, shaking the ground. Traveler was so scared he didn't know what to do. Little streams of water began to run under the truck, making a pool of water where Traveler lay. He shook from both fear and cold.

Crack! Crash! A limb from one of the big trees broke and thudded to the ground. Its sharp branches just missed his hiding place. Maybe being under the pickup wasn't such a good idea after all.

Traveler raised his head and peeked through the fallen branches. It was raining hard and he couldn't see anything. The water was getting deeper under the truck. Traveler knew he had to find another hiding place soon.

"Meow!" Traveler cocked his ears. It couldn't be a kitty! Why, he had worked all day chasing kitties out of *his* yard. But, there it was again, plain as day. "MEOW!" Traveler turned himself around in the cramped space until he faced toward the barn. There it was again! "MEOW!"

Traveler heard another sound. It was Chad and Carla calling him once again to come to the house. But he decided to make a dash for the open barn door. Traveler inched his way out from under the truck and ran to the barn. At the same time lightning zigzagged across the black sky. Traveler jumped under a pile of hay and lay shivering while thunder boomed overhead.

All of a sudden Traveler jumped straight up out of the hay. Something had tried to jump on him! He found himself staring straight into two glowing green eyes. The kitty that was so much fun to chase in the daytime had turned into a scary cat in the dark. Its fur stuck out in all directions and a deep growl came from its throat. Traveler backed away from the huge cat as it stiffly walked towards him. When he reached the open barn door, he turned as quick as a flash, dashed through the door and headed for the house.

Just then he bumped into something. "Yike!" he said. An object was thrown over his head and he couldn't see. He could feel himself being picked up off the ground. Traveler just knew it was the end of him.

"Traveler, Traveler, it's okay." He heard Carla's soft voice.

Then he heard Chad say, "Yeah, you should've come in the house when we first called you."

The children carried Traveler to the warm house and dried him off with the towel they had thrown over him. He was so happy to be safe and sound he took turns sitting on each of their laps for a long time. Finally, after eating his dinner, he fell asleep in front of the fireplace.

Traveler learned to really trust Chad and Carla that stormy night. They were, after all, watching out for his safety. And he was glad for that!

BOYS AND GIRLS: There are a lot of valuable lessons in this short story. For one thing, we see how we need to trust those who are looking out for us. We need to listen to them and do what they tell us. These people can be parents or other people who care for us. Then we also know that God loves us and cares for us. He sent His Son Jesus into the world to die for our sins so we can trust Him. He wants the best for us and told us not to be afraid because He is always with us.

Traveler made his own choices rather than trust those who look out for him, and he was sorry. So, remember, God loves you and He knows what is best for you!

8

**TRAVELER
GETS INTO TROUBLE**

Traveler awoke earlier than usual. He could hear birds chirping noisily as they flitted from branch to branch looking for a fresh bug breakfast.

Early mornings were usually always a time of peace and beauty out in the Idaho countryside. Traveler yawned, stood up and stretched one white leg after the other. Then he shook his fluffy coat and walked stiffly to his water bucket.

After his morning drink, Traveler sat and stuck his freckled nose up in the air. He wished either Chad or Carla would open the door to his back porch room so he could go outside. He was anxious to check his yard to make sure there were no kitties anywhere.

Finally Carla came through the kitchen door that opened onto Traveler's porch. She looked at her little friend and then around his room. "You are a spoiled dog, Traveler," she said with a smile. "Just look at all the stuff you have."

Traveler wagged his tail at her. She gave him a hug. He stuck his freckled nose in her blonde hair and licked her ear. Carla giggled as she let him go and stood to open his door. She stopped for a moment and looked around at all the toys he had. There were Frisbees, balls, stuffed animals and toys that squeaked.

Traveler was growing impatient. He wanted to chase something besides toys. "There you go, Traveler," Carla said as she swung the door open. He dashed past her and ran out into the fresh air.

In less than half a minute he chased every bird off the bright green grass. He even jumped up in the air a few times as if trying to fly. "Traveler!" Carla's voice rang out through the still morning air. "Leave those birds alone!" Traveler ignored her and ran toward the big, red barn.

By this time Chad had joined Carla on the porch. "What's going on?" he asked. They could hear Traveler barking and growling inside the barn.

"Look!" Carla pointed at the barn door. Two cats, one gray and one white, raced out the open doorway and headed for the corral fence. Traveler was right behind them.

The cats jumped to the top railing and arched their backs. Their fur stuck out all over as they hissed at Traveler. He barked and jumped, trying to reach them.

"Stop it! Stop, Traveler!" yelled Chad. "You come here, right now!" Traveler ignored him and just kept jumping and barking.

Chad and Carla looked at each other and then back at their black and white pet. "He's being very naughty this morning," said Carla. "Let's get a newspaper."

They went in the house together, found a newspaper and rolled it up tight. "That should do it," Carla said as she went back outside. She marched out to the corral with Chad behind her. Traveler was still busy jumping, barking and growling at the two kitties.

Suddenly Traveler spotted Carla and the newspaper just as she raised her hand to swat him. Quick as a flash he dodged the newspaper, tore past her and

raced to the house. Carla tried to catch him as he bounced up the porch steps, but he ran between her legs, knocking her down.

By now Traveler knew he would probably be locked up for the rest of the day in his room. Circling the old two-story farmhouse, he raced across the backyard and ran under the pickup truck.

Chad and Carla were out of breath. "That dog is so fast," panted Chad. His gray eyes rolled up toward the blue sky. His brown hair stuck out in all directions.

Carla looked at Chad with her bright blue eyes. "Let's go sit down for a minute." She went into the house and sank into a chair. Chad followed her and flopped on the couch.

Carla was about ready to get up and go back outside when the phone rang. She picked it up and said "Hello, this is Carla Hunter speaking."

The voice on the other end asked for Mrs. Hunter. "Okay," Carla said, "I'll go find her." She set the phone down and ran into the kitchen. "Mom, it's for you. It's some lady."

Mrs. Hunter smiled at her daughter. "Hello," she said into the phone.

Chad motioned for Carla to follow him and they went out the front door. They both looked toward the pickup at the same time to see if Traveler was still there. He was nowhere in sight.

"I bet he's off hiding somewhere," Carla said.

"He's really full of spunk today," Chad replied. "I have a feeling he's going to get into some kind of trouble before the day is out."

Mrs. Hunter came to the door and motioned for Chad and Carla to follow her indoors. "Children," we are going to have company. The pastor and his wife are coming out for a visit." Chad and Carla looked at each other. "So, I want you to finish your morning chores and then wash up."

Chad pulled on his boots and headed for the barn to help his dad while Carla went into the kitchen to help her mother fold clothes. Some time passed and both children had forgotten about Traveler. Then, all of a sudden they heard him barking and growling in the driveway.

"Traveler!" Mr. Hunter yelled. "Stop that, right now!"

Chad and Carla ran to the front yard. "Look!" shouted Carla. "It's the pastor and his wife!"

Traveler ran around and around their small white car. His teeth were showing and his fur stuck out in all directions. They were scared to open the car doors and get out.

"Traveler! Come here!" Chad yelled as he ran toward the car.

Traveler scooted out of reach and headed for his hideout under the pickup. Chad, Carla and Mr. Hunter walked their visitors to the house. Once again Traveler escaped punishment.

Chad and Carla brought punch and cookies to their visitors. The pastor's wife smiled and said, "We just love to come out here where it's so peaceful and quiet." She took a cookie and then said, "Look! Out on the fence post by the barn! Look at that beautiful big hawk."

Everyone turned and looked out the window. Suddenly a flash of black and white fur charged the fence post. Startled, the hawk flapped his huge wings and soared out of sight.

"Oh, my!" said the pastor's wife. It was obvious she did not like the Hunter's Border collie.

Chad and Carla looked at each other. Carla said, "Traveler has been very naughty today. He is going to be locked up as soon as we can catch him."

Finally, the guests pulled out of the driveway. The sun was beginning to set, and Traveler was hungry. Slowly he walked toward the house from his hiding

place under the truck. He looked to the left and to the right. He didn't see Chad or Carla. Maybe they forgot all about him.

He walked into his room and stuck his freckled nose into his dinner dish. Traveler was so busy crunching his dinner he didn't hear Carla close the outside door. "All right, Traveler!" she said. "You were very naughty today!"

Traveler's ears flattened out as he lowered his head. He rolled his brown eyes up so he could see her face. "You look so guilty. You *know* you were a very bad dog."

Traveler closed his eyes and lay down. Carla said, "Tomorrow you have to stay on a chain until you learn to mind. Goodnight!"

Traveler sighed. Getting into trouble may have been fun for a while, but it sure wasn't any fun in the end.

BOYS AND GIRLS: Have you done things you knew were wrong? Of course you have! Everybody has done things they should not have done. We can never make up for the wrongs we have done, but that's why Jesus came. You see, God sent His Son Jesus into this world to take our punishment. That means if we are truly sorry for the things we have done which are wrong, and we believe Jesus was punished and died in our place, we can ask God to forgive us. God is our Heavenly Father and He promised to forgive us if we believe in Jesus and ask His forgiveness. Remember, God loves you. Jesus loves you and He wants to help you do what is right every day.

9

**TRAVELER
AND THE BURIED BONE**

Traveler sneaked in and out of the bushes bordering the yard. He carried a big, juicy bone in his mouth which Carla had handed him that morning.

Carla and Chad loved to pamper their fluffy friend. Whenever their parents drove the fifteen miles to town to grocery shop, Carla and Chad would remind them to bring home a nice big bone for Traveler.

Traveler heard the front door open and hid under a thick shrub. Peeking out between the branches he watched Mr. and Mrs. Hunter walk out onto the large front porch.

"It's such a beautiful day!" Mrs. Hunter said as she looked up at the cloudless blue sky.

"Sure is that all right!" Mr. Hunter smiled. "Isn't God's creation wonderful? He has made such a variety of things."

Just then the telephone rang. Traveler watched the Hunters go back into the house. He quietly crawled out from under his hiding place and trotted around to the back of the house. He was still carrying his new bone.

Suddenly he heard the back door open. He quickly dropped out of sight in the tall grass and lay very still.

"I wonder where Traveler is," Traveler heard Chad's voice.

"I don't know," answered Carla. Traveler could see her long blonde hair blowing in the gentle breeze. "I haven't seen him since we gave him his new bone."

"Well, I suppose he's out enjoying it somewhere," Chad said as he turned and went back inside. Carla followed him shutting the door behind her.

Traveler waited until no one was in sight. Then slowly he crept through the tall grass until he was hidden behind the old woodshed.

Later that day Carla and Chad were busy playing catch in the front yard when Traveler suddenly ran up to them. He started jumping up in the air, trying to catch the ball.

"Well, hi, Traveler," said Chad. "Where have you been?" Traveler made a giant leap at the ball in Chad's hand, grabbed it and tore off across the yard.

"Hey! That's our ball!" yelled Carla. "You have your own balls!" She and Chad started running after him.

Traveler dodged this way and that and zigzagged back and forth across the green grass. Carla and Chad fell on their backs, laughing. "Okay, Traveler, we give up!" Carla panted.

Traveler lay down a few feet from them with the ball between his two white paws. He seemed to be very pleased with himself.

"Hey, wait a minute!" Chad said, sitting up. "Where is that new bone?"

Traveler cocked his head when he heard the word "bone". Then he began to look guilty.

"You're not supposed to bury your bones in the yard," Carla said, pointing at Traveler. She stood to her feet. "Okay, where is that bone?"

Traveler watched as Chad and Carla began looking through the bushes and around the trees. He left the ball and trotted over to them. "Where is that bone?" Carla looked him square in the eye. Traveler pretended not to hear.

Instead, he picked up a short tree branch and tried to tease Carla into chasing him.

"Traveler," she said firmly, "You know what I'm looking for. Where is your bone?"

Traveler dropped the stick. He looked to the right and then to the left as if to say, "I don't know."

Carla and Chad refused to give up. Finally Traveler stuck his freckled nose into the air and led the way to a tree trunk. He looked at Chad and then at Carla, grinned his nicest doggie grin, and said "Yip".

Chad walked up to the tree and looked carefully all around it. "That bone isn't here. You are being funny." He put his hands on his hips and frowned.

Traveler then ran toward a big bush. Chad and Carla followed. He began digging under the thick branches. Traveler looked up at them and wagged his tail. He had mud all over his face. "So, you hid it there, did you?" Chad asked.

Traveler backed up and sat down while Chad tried to crawl under the bush. He dug at the dirt with his fingers, but there was nothing there.

"Aw, come on, Traveler. We know you hid that new bone!" Chad frowned. He was beginning to get mad.

"Traveler!" said Carla firmly. "Where is that bone?" She was growing tired of his silly games.

This time Traveler knew he better be good. It wouldn't be long before he was in big trouble. Slowly he walked to the back yard with Chad and Carla right behind him. He circled the woodshed once, and then trotted out toward the chicken house. Halfway there he stopped beside an old fence post and pawed at the soft dirt. Soon he had his new, but rather dirty, bone in his mouth.

"Okay, Traveler," said Carla. Take it to your room. The game is over."

Back in his room on the back porch, Traveler dropped the bone with a thud. He lay down and began chewing on it. He decided he might as well go ahead and enjoy it now since he wasn't allowed to bury it. Maybe the Hunter's would give him another bone to bury some day soon!

BOYS AND GIRLS: Did you know that we can act just like Traveler sometimes? You see, just as the Hunters gave Traveler a bone, God gives us things too. He gives us talents and abilities. For example, some people can sing. Others can draw, or cook, or fix things. There are people who can invent new machines. Some people are good at writing stories or taking pictures. Other people can write music or poetry. There are people who are able to raise wonderful vegetable gardens and who are good with animals.

Everything we are able to do is because God has given us that ability. It is a gift from God. We are not to "hide" or "bury" our talents and gifts.

The greatest gift God ever gave us is His Son, Jesus. Jesus came so you and I can have life forever with Him. Jesus wants to come into your heart and give you the gift of life. All you have to do is ask Him to come into your heart and really mean it. Then you need to tell others about Jesus and not be like Traveler who tried to hide his gift!

10

**TRAVELER
AND THE LOST TRAIL**

Traveler perked up his ears. He was sure he heard the word “go”. That was one of his favorite sounds. It usually meant he got to go for a ride in *his* pickup.

There it was again! “Go!” Traveler cocked his head to make sure he heard right. Yes, Chad and Carla were talking about “going” somewhere. Traveler figured this could turn out to be a real good day. As far as Traveler was concerned, it just wasn’t a fun day unless he got to go for a ride.

Suddenly Mr. and Mrs. Hunter walked out the door. Traveler took one look at the picnic basket Mrs. Hunter was carrying and ran as fast as his four white legs could go to the back of the truck.

“Ha, ha!” laughed Carla. “Look at Traveler. He sure is named right!”

Chad grinned as he opened the back of the pickup. “Whoa, Traveler!” he exclaimed. “Take it easy! You almost knocked me over!” Traveler bounced into the truck and sat down in the corner.

Mr. Hunter started the engine and drove the truck out of the dirt driveway. He turned toward the main road. “I can’t wait to get way up in the mountains,” he said. “It’s such a beautiful Idaho day!”

Mrs. Hunter nodded in agreement. “The Lord sure created a wonderful world. I’m so thankful to be alive and to know Jesus.”

Mr. Hunter smiled and reached over and squeezed her hand.

An hour-and-a-half later the Hunter family and Traveler came to a stop in a small parking area. A faded wood sign pointed to a path winding its way through the forest. It read, "Crystal Lake - 2.5 miles".

Chad and Carla shared their picnic lunch with Traveler. Then they locked up the truck and walked toward the narrow trail. Sunshine streamed through the tall trees. There was no one else on the trail except for birds, squirrels and chipmunks.

Traveler looked like he was grinning as he ran back and forth through the woods. He sniffed at almost everything in front of him. "I wonder what he smells," Chad said.

"Well," Carla answered, "whatever it is, he sure is excited about it. It's amazing the sense of smell God gave to dogs!" Carla looked up at the sky. "Only God could make all this!"

Suddenly, the trail split into two different directions. "Which way is the lake?" asked Mary.

"I'm not sure." Mr. Hunter answered. "It looks like the sign has been removed."

"What should we do, Dad?" asked Chad as he leaned against a tree.

"Look!" shouted Carla. She pointed at Traveler. He was already running up the path to the right. "Let's follow him!" Carla began running after him.

"We might as well," Dick said. They all began following Traveler and Carla.

The trail narrowed as it climbed higher and higher. Many times they had to crawl over fallen trees.

"I'm tired," Carla panted at last. "Can we stop for awhile?"

"Sure, honey," Mrs. Hunter said, sitting on a large rock. "Come over here and sit down for awhile."

Mr. Hunter looked around at the thick forest. "I wonder where the lake is. It seems we've walked a lot longer than we should have."

Mrs. Hunter answered, "I keep thinking we must almost be there, but then there is always another turn in the trail." She looked worried. "Maybe we should turn back. It's getting late, and we certainly aren't prepared to be caught up here in the woods without a flashlight."

"Come on Chad, Carla and Traveler. We're going back to the pickup." Mr. Hunter helped his wife to her feet and started back down the trail.

In a flash Traveler bounced back down the trail, raced past the Hunters and disappeared behind some bushes.

Everyone carefully picked their way around tree roots and rocks. It seemed like they would never reach the pickup. Soon the light began to fade, and then it grew very dark. "Mrs. Hunter whispered to her husband, "I'm afraid. I think we're lost."

"Here, take my hand," Mr. Hunter said. "Everybody hold hands and stay close to me."

"This isn't good," Mrs. Hunter said. "We never should have let ourselves get caught in the forest at night!"

"I know," Mr. Hunter said. "I can't see a thing!"

"Oh, Jesus, help us!" Chad prayed out loud.

"Yes, we need to all stop right here and ask the Lord to get us safely home." They all stopped, and still holding hands, prayed.

Traveler stayed right in front of the small family and they began to follow him. He always seemed to know where that pickup was.

Suddenly, the trail divided. "Do you remember which way to go? Everything looks so different in the dark," Mr. Hunter said, "But we have to keep moving." He started to walk to the right.

"Hey! Where's Traveler?" asked Chad. Everyone turned around, trying to figure out what had happened to him. "Traveler! Where are you?" Chad began to yell.

"I thought he was in front of us," Carla began to cry. "Bow-wow-wow!" Traveler barked. "Bow-wow!"

"He's back there, where I turned to the right," Dick said. "He seems to be telling us something. Come on, let's turn around." They all made their way back to the place where Traveler sat.

"Where's the truck?" asked Chad. Traveler jumped on him, and then took off in the other direction. "He's telling us where the pickup is, Dad." Chad shouted. "C'mon."

The Hunter family followed as fast as they could. Finally, they came to the edge of the forest. Traveler let out a sharp "yip" and ran to the truck as if to say "Hurry up and let me in! It's time to go home!"

"Thank you Lord," Mr. Hunter said, then everybody cheered when he added, "Let's all go into town for a pizza!"

BOYS AND GIRLS: The Hunter family chose the wrong trail. They didn't mean to, but it got them into trouble. Sometimes we make bad decisions and choose the wrong way to go in our lives. Just like the Hunters, we think we are going the right direction, but we are wrong. That's why God gave us His word, the Holy Bible, to help us.

When we read God's directions to us, then we know which choices to make. We understand what He wants us to do. We also understand which ways are not good for us.

Jesus, God's only Son wants us to choose the right way so we will be safe and happy. You can ask Him to show you the right way and He will help you. Jesus always knows the way we should go so we won't get lost!