

"Dad, why don't you come to church with us?"



ILLUSTRATIONS BY NADIAH SUVATNA

A SUNDAY SURPRISE

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(Based on a true story)

This story took place in Malaysia.

Janarthn liked going to church each week. He didn't want to miss a single Sunday! He was the only child in his family, so his friends in Primary were like his siblings. He liked learning about Jesus with them and singing with them. His mom went to church with him, but his dad never did. Dad wasn't a member of the Church.

One night at dinner, Janarthn asked, "Dad, why don't you come to church with us?"

Dad looked up from his plate. "I'm pretty busy on Sundays."

"But, Dad, it's important to keep the Sabbath day holy," Janarthn said. "It says so in the scriptures."

Mom looked surprised. "You really listened during your lessons at church. But it's OK that your dad doesn't come with us. He helps us in many other ways."

While Janarthn got ready for bed, he thought about what it would be like if Dad came to church. He sometimes felt a little sad when he saw his friends sitting with their parents. He wished Dad could be there with him and Mom.

Before bed, Janarthn knelt to pray. "Dear Heavenly Father," he said, "please let my dad have time on Sundays so he can come with Mom and me. I'd really like to sit with him at church."

One Sunday a few weeks later, Mom called Janarthn to her room.

"I'm sorry, but we can't go to church today," she said. "I'm not feeling well."

Janarthn frowned. "But I will miss my friends and the lesson today. I really want to go to church."

"Don't worry," Mom said. "It's just one Sunday. And if you want, we can call your Primary teacher so you know what the lesson is about."

Janarthn kissed Mom's forehead. "It's OK. Just rest, Mom. I know Heavenly Father will know why I can't come to church today."

Janarthn went to his room and grabbed a copy of the *Friend*

magazine. Even if he couldn't go to church, he could still read the stories to keep the Sabbath holy.

"Janarthn!" Dad called.

Janarthn came out of his room. "What is it, Dad?"

Dad was smiling. "Get dressed. I know how much you like church, and I don't want you to miss it. I'll go with you."

Janarthn's eyes widened. He couldn't believe it! He had a big smile while he hurried to get ready.

At church Janarthn introduced Dad to his friends. Dad sat beside him during sacrament meeting. Janarthn felt so happy to be with his dad at church!

After the meeting, Dad said, "I need to go somewhere. I will pick you up after your Primary class, OK?"

"OK," Janarthn said. He wished Dad would stay, but he was glad he had come. It really was a great Sunday surprise! ●

