

“KEEPER”
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By Chris Lubold

It's been several months since we have seen Jeremy and his new dog Keeper. Jeremy has been teaching Keeper the same commands he had taught Hooper not long ago and Keeper has been an eager student!

Jeremy – Keeper – sit! (Keeper jumps up) – Keeper – roll over (Keeper barks) – Oh Keeper – you are such a silly dog (Jeremy gives Keeper a hug) – don't you think about anything else other than the snow!

Keeper was having a tough time paying attention. Jeremy and his family, along with Keeper, have just moved to Alaska. Alaska is really far away – up where the winters are very cold. But it is also very beautiful there with lots of mountains and lots of snow. Everyone loves it there especially Keeper. Jeremy has become convinced that Keeper wants to be a racing sled dog, but that is a story for another day.

Jeremy's dad left his medical practice in Pennsylvania to help out at clinics in Alaska. Jeremy tried to understand when his parents told him about the move. His dad wanted to show God's love by helping to care for those who did not have easy access to medical care. He didn't want to leave his friends, but Keeper was allowed to come with them.

Today we find Jeremy and Keeper sitting in their living room talking with their new babysitter ... Mrs. Beasley.

Jeremy - Do you have a 2?

Mrs. B. - Go fish. Do you have a King?

Jeremy - Aw man. I just got that one.

Mrs. Beasley? When do you think mom and dad will be back?

Mrs. B. - Well. They are at a clinic this afternoon until 4 - - but you know how that usually goes. They will probably be a bit late.

You know, having you father and mother here has been a real blessing for this community. It has been a long time since we have had a doctor in town.

Jeremy - Yeah, I know. Mom and dad really love it too. I have never seen them so happy. Guess leaving Pennsylvania worked out alright after all.

Mrs. B. It certainly did.

Jeremy - Mrs. Beasley?

Mrs. B. - Yes Jeremy.

Jeremy - You're pretty old, sooo...you know a lot of stuff...right?

Mrs. B - Oh dear me. I suppose that was a compliment. Go ahead and tell me what's on your mind deary.

Jeremy - I've been thinking that I don't understand what the pastor was talking about in church today. What does it mean that Jesus' new friends would be 'fishers of men?' I thought you fished for fish. I mean, did they use a hook and yank 'em in? What did they use for bait?

Mrs. B - (laughs) Oh Goodness – that would be sight to see, wouldn't it! But no, they did not use hooks and bait to catch men. You see, Simon, Andrew and the others were actually Jesus' first disciples.

Jeremy- What's a disciple?

Mrs. B - Let's see –The word “disciple” means devoted follower, a person learns and believes the teachings of a master and then tells others about what they have learned. In this case, the “master” is Jesus.

Jeremy- And there are 12 disciples – right?

Mrs. B- Yes, back then, when Jesus called the first disciples, there were 12. You see, Jesus told those men that God wanted them to follow and they did so without hesitation. They followed Jesus, they learned from him, and then they went on to spread His word. Two thousand years later, there are many, many followers of Jesus – and each follower is called to be his disciple.

Jeremy - You mean the *grown-ups* are called to be disciples.

Mrs. B - Oh no, I mean ALL of us – even you, Jeremy.

Jeremy - How can I be a disciple – I'm just a kid!

Mrs. B. - It's not a difficult as you think. Any time you are doing something for someone else in Jesus' name, you are being a disciple.

Jeremy - What do you think I could do?

Mrs. B. - Let's see, what is a gift you feel God has given to you?

Jeremy - That's easy. ---KEEPER.

Mrs. B. - Yes, of course, and how do you think you can you use that gift to spread God's joy to others?

Jeremy - Well.....Keeper spreads joy everywhere he goes. He makes EVERYONE smile, even mean Mr. Gump at the post office who almost never smiles.

(Jeremy thinks to himself for a bit)

Jeremy - Mrs. Beasley?

Mrs. B. - Yes Jeremy.

Jeremy - Do you know anyone that might need some cheering up? Maybe Keeper and I can visit and tell them the story about the fishers of men?

Mrs. B. - I'm going to the nursing home later this afternoon to play games with some of the residents, why don't you and Keeper come along with me....

Jeremy – Do you hear that Keeper?! God needs us!

The end.