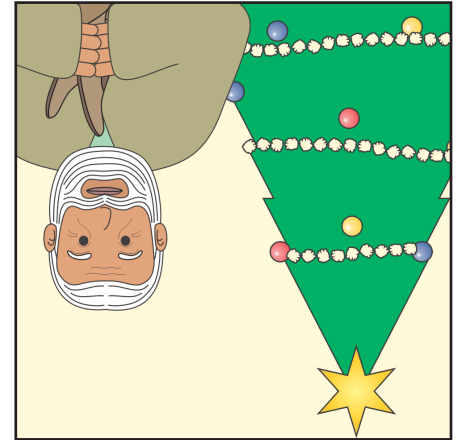


He waited all morning but nothing happened. There was only an old man who came by asking to rest in the shop for a while.

Martin saw that the old man's shoes were very worn. After he had warmed by the fire and drank some coffee, Martin offered him a new pair of shoes.

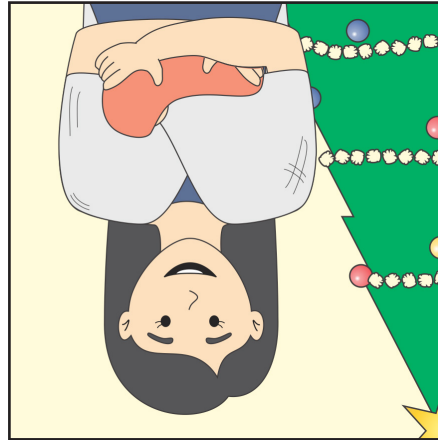
"Thank you, kind Sir," said the old man happily when he was ready to leave. "These are the best shoes I've ever had in my entire life!"



Now it was noon and the cobbler was still expecting a visit from Jesus. But the only thing that happened was that a woman with ragged clothes came in carrying a baby.

Martin felt very sorry for her and gave her a cup of coffee with hot milk and a few coins. He even offered her a blanket to wrap the baby in because it was very cold outside.

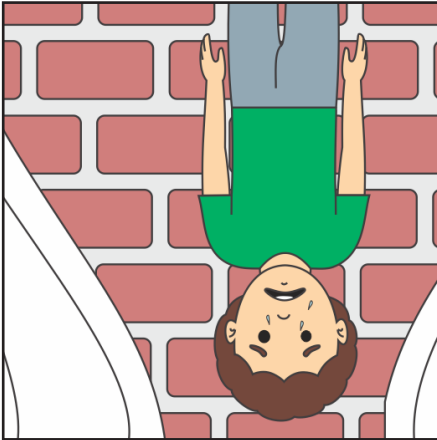
"The Lord bless you, my good man," she said with tears in her eyes, as she was leaving the shop.



It was late afternoon and the Lord Jesus had still not come to visit the shoemaker. Martin looked up and down the street but did not see Him anywhere. He just saw a boy standing on the corner, crying.

The child was lost, and Martin felt a little upset because he had to leave the shop to help the child find his house.

"What if the Lord Jesus appears at the shoe store when I'm not there?" Martin thought, a little worried. But he knew he had to help the lost child. It was the right thing to do.



Returning to the shop, he was sure that the Lord had already come and gone. He imagined what it would have been like to have Jesus visit.

As he was daydreaming, he heard a voice in his ear saying, "**Martin, Martin, do you not know Me?**" Then out of a corner came the tired old man. He smiled and then vanished like a cloud.

"**That was Me,**" the same voice said. And in the darkness, the woman with the baby also appeared and then faded into the shadows.

"**That was Me,**" he heard again. Then Martin saw the boy who had been lost, smiling at him from the other side of the room before he also disappeared.

At that moment he realized that Jesus had visited him three times that day.

- Jesus was the old man with worn shoes.
- Jesus was the woman carrying the baby.
- Jesus was the lost boy.

Martin understood that what we do to help others is as if we do it for Jesus. That night he slept very well. He was so happy to have received Jesus' visit in the people who came to His door.

To Martin, the shoemaker, that was the best Christmas day of all!

Read in Matthew 25:31-46 what Jesus said about what we do for others in his name, that it is like doing it for Him:

I was hungry and you gave me something to eat
 I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink
 I was a stranger and you invited me in
 I needed clothes and you clothed me
 I was sick and you looked after me
 I was in prison and you came to visit me

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40,NIV

A Cobbler's Christmas



It was Christmas Eve. Martin the shoemaker was sitting beside the most beautiful pair of shoes he had ever made. He was so excited, hoping that the Lord Jesus might pay him a visit on Christmas day. He had made the shoes especially for Him.

That night he dreamed that the next day the Lord would visit. He got up early the next morning to get everything in order. He cleaned every corner of the shop. He wanted everything to be beautiful for Jesus' visit.