

COSTUMES

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

NAME		COSTUME
Alden	11	Race Driver
Andrew	10	Pooh Bear
Janel	9	Rabbit
Mary	8	Peasant woman, perhaps Mother of Jesus
Calli	8	Dancer
Sayra	6	Nurse
Josiah	6	David as in David and Goliath
Lissa	3	Tinker Belle
Grandpa Dick		Doting, not quite senile, Grandfather

Genesis 3:21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

Exodus 34:33-35

II Cor. 3:13-15 We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts.

Into the room like a flock of Magpies the children exploded with great noise and confusion. They were excited, full of happiness and laughter. It was Halloween and they had just been to a Halloween party. They had sacks of candy, apples, and other fruit but most of all they were just overflowing because of the great fun they had had with the other kids. Grandpa Dick was sitting in his favorite chair drinking a HOT cup of coffee and, before the children rushed in, staring silently into space. For a good while the children talked and laughed and took turns climbing all over Grandpa Dick who enjoyed this part of life tremendously.

Finally, all the children settled down, formed a small circle around Grandpa Dick and began to talk amongst themselves. AYou know@, Alden exclaimed, Awhen I am in my costume I actually feel like someone else.@ AI know what you mean@, said Andrew. A When I am dressed up like Pooh Bear I can just feel like I am really him. I find myself thinking like him and everything@. Soon all of the

children were talking about how they actually >felt= like another person when they put on their costumes. Costumes are a lot of fun. You can almost become another person. When they were >dressed up= they not only felt like >actors= but they seemed to feel like another person. They were almost taking on another identity. Grandpa Dick sat by listening to the children chatter and slowly he began to have a far-a-way look in his bright blue eyes.

AGrandpa@, Janel said, AI know that you are >thinking=. When you get that look you are >thinking= about something.@ Mary chipped in with AYes and I bet we can hear a Bible story if we ask@! With a slight smile lifting the corner of his mouth Grandpa Dick agreed that he was, indeed, thinking of a >spiritual principal= related to costumes. ACostumes are worn by almost everyone. Did you know that@? AOh no@, they all cried at once. AOnly actors and TV people wear costumes@. ADo you remember the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden A, he asked? AOh sure@, Josiah quickly responded. AThat is one of the neatest stories in the whole Bible@.

AWell, at that time no one had EVER died. Adam and Eve were the only people living and even the animals thrived and were very healthy. It was a time when the creatures and the creation were in total harmony. Adam and Eve loved the animals and the plants. They tended them and cared for them and the animals loved them in return with a great affection. Even the plants responded to the gentle hands of those who cared for them. Wolves and sheep lay side by side with no harm to the sheep. The great saber toothed Tiger walked peacefully with smaller animals and would even lay his great head in Adam=s lap to be petted. There was a harmony amongst the different creatures which we who live now simply can not imagine. There were no thorns to stick your fingers. Even the snakes were friendly and never, ever would bite anyone. It was a very special time. Everyone did just what they were created to do and so no one ever had to >hide= anything they ever did. In those days no one EVER wore costumes. In fact, they wore nothing at all ! No one had bad thoughts and even though Adam and Eve wore no clothing they never thought anything about it. They were what we now call >innocent= although today we are so far from being innocent that we hardly even know what that word means. AI know what happened nextA, cried Sayra. AWhat was that@, asked Grandpa Dick? AAlong came that mean old serpent and talked with Eve about the apple@. ARight. Eve was fooled by the serpent and ate some of that forbidden fruit which opened her eyes to the knowledge of good and evil. Adam loved her so much that he also ate, though he was not fooled. What happened next? AI know@, said Calli. AThey got scared and hid in some bushes so God would not find them@ ARight again@, said Grandpa Dick. AThey hid

because they knew they were naked and now they had things in their minds they wanted to hide. Adam got an idea which both he and Eve thought was really good. They made a covering for themselves out of fig leaves and they worked pretty well with each other. When God came along however, they realized that their covering didn't hide anything from Him. We still do the very same thing today@, Grandpa Dick said. AWhat do you mean@, Mary asked? AI have never seen anyone wearing fig leaves. I am not even sure that I know what a fig leaf looks like@. AWell Mary@, Grandpa Dick responded, A we do not wear >actual= fig leaves but we do wear things to hide from each other. We do often wear a kind of costume that hides how we truly feel way down deep inside. Have you ever smiled at someone when you were really angry at them?@ ASure@, shouted Josiah, AWe have been taught to be polite but sometimes I don't >feel like= being polite.@ Grandpa Dick continued, AMany times we put on attitudes or words or expressions to hide how we really feel. We pretend to be brave when we are afraid. We have lots of things we want to hide and so we find ways to be around people, but not let them know how we really feel. I call these things >fig leaves= or >costumes= @ AI see@, said Andrew. A Sometimes when I am afraid or uncomfortable , I act like I am angry so no one will push me. Is that it@? AAbsolutely@, said Grandpa Dick. A I have seen people put on an attitude of shyness just so they will not have to talk and share what they truly feel. Let's see now, can you children find other >fig leaves= that we use@? Sayra raised her hand shyly. ASayra, what do you have@? AWell, sometimes when I don't think I am very good at something I will just say that I really do not want to do that. Is that part of what we are talking about@? AIt certainly is@! Calli raised her hand enthusiastically, ASometimes when Mommy wants me to help her with some work I don't want to, so I tell her that I have some homework to do. I really do not want to do the homework but I think that it will help me get out of doing the other things.@ AWonderful@, Grandpa Dick replied. AYou are catching on really well. It always helps us to make good decisions if we understand what we are doing. When we put on faces, words, or attitudes that fool people, we are actually >hiding behind fig leaves= because we do not want other people to know how we are truly feeling. We are wearing a >costume= only it isn't even Halloween @ . AIs there some way that we can stop doing this@, asked Alden? AIt seems to me that it would be a lot better if we were like Adam and Eve and didn't hide at all@. AWell, yes. There is one way but ONLY ONE. Do you remember what God did with Adam? He made a covering FOR HIM. Well, He has done the same for us. In just the same way that God provided a covering for Adam by the shedding of blood, He has also provided a covering for us by the shedding of blood. God went

out and killed some animals and used their skins to make a covering for Adam and Eve. These were the very first deaths. For us, God has done something even more wonderful. Do you have any idea what that might be? Almost everyone raised their hands because these children had been taught well. AYes, Mary@. AHe sent Jesus to be a sacrifice for us@! AExactly@, Grandpa Dick replied. AThat is exactly what He did. When we accept Jesus, we accept His sacrifice for us. This means that we can accept His covering and quit using our own coverings. Isn't that super@! They all thought for awhile, then Janel asked ADoes that mean that we can't use those other coverings any more@? ANo my dear girl. That is not exactly what it means. It really means that you do not HAVE TO use those coverings any more. You CAN when you feel weak but you do NOT HAVE TO because His covering will always be enough. He has set you free to just be honest. You do not have to pretend any more, not about anything.@ Alden spoke up softly, AWhat if I am REALLY bad. I sure don't want everyone knowing. Especially if I am a Christian, won't people think bad things about God if they know I have been bad@? AWhat a good point Alden@, Grandpa Dick responded. AThat very thing causes many Christians to >hide= their thoughts and behavior. I think that our being embarrassed for God=s reputation causes us to wear costumes much of the time. It had always been one of the wonderful things about God that HE DOESN=T CARE ABOUT HIS REPUTATION. He only cares ABOUT US. Our Lord wants us to be honest even if it makes both He and us look terrible. It is what goes on in our Spirits that is important, not what people think.@ Calli pitched in with AWhat we should do is look around for all the >fig leaves= we can find and pull them off. People shouldn't hide from other people so we will just help them by getting rid of those bad old costumes@. At first they all thought this was a grand activity for the Lord but then Grandpa Dick asked a question, AHow would you feel if you had a big fig leaf and were thinking hard about giving it to the Lord. You really wanted to, but you were still thinking about how it would feel and THEN someone comes along and rips it off. How would you feel about that? A Janel cried out AWe had a caterpillar in a cocoon one time. When the butterfly started to come out, Daddy told us that if we pulled him out too soon we would hurt him real bad@ AThat is just exactly the way it is when we pull off someone else=s fig leaf@, Grandpa said. AWe hurt them real bad@.

The water was getting pretty deep for the children but Grandpa Dick just waited while they thought about these things. Finally Calli spoke up AThere is more isn't there? You are not finished teaching us yet.@ AThank you, Calli@, Grandpa said. AYes there is a little more I can tell you though it may be a bit hard for you to understand right now. Do you know why Jesus taught in parables? It

was for people who did not really understand what He was teaching. With a short story they might remember the stories later, when they were ready to know what the story meant. You may remember another story that is VERY interesting. This is the story of Moses when he had been with the Lord God way up on the mountain. When Moses came down from the mountain his face had a glow. It glowed so much that he would wear a veil over his face. In the New Testament we discover that Moses started wearing the veil to hide the glow but later on he kept on wearing the veil so that the people would not know that the glow had gone away. Do you understand children? At first he was protecting the people but later on he was protecting his reputation. He did not want the people to know that the Glory of the Lord had departed from him. AWow, said Josiah. AThat is weird. Do people today ever do anything like that A? AWhat do you think children? Do you think that Christians would do anything like this? They were still for quite awhile {quite awhile for children is a matter of seconds, not minutes or hours}. Finally Andrew raised his hand. AWould this be like when I am asked to pray and I don't really feel that close to the Lord but I pray like I am anyway? ANo, Andrew, that is something different. Then, you are probably doing your best and the Lord knows that and He takes it. We should always be very careful when we pray to be sure that we are talking to the Lord and not to those who may be listening but when we pray, we just believe that He is listening whether we feel like it or not. This is called faith. After that the children sat for awhile until Janel said AOkay Grandpa. Tell us what you just told us. I sure do not understand. Grandpa Dick continued, AMoses was a great leader of the Israelites. He had been called to do wonderful and important things, yet he was also just a man. He didn't >feel= important and he didn't >feel= like he knew how to lead the nation. When his face >glowed= he thought that this would make the people know that he had authority and when the glow left he was afraid that the people would think that his authority was also gone. God still uses people for important things. Sometimes the Lord wants us to lead others in some job. When He does, He also gives us special tools to do that job. Perhaps we need some special knowledge, good ideas, or even the power to do miracles. Most of us at some time in our lives will be called to lead others and be and used in special ways. Now with most of us this power to do special things makes us feel special and important, both to ourselves and in the eyes of others. It is very tempting for us to try to pretend that the power is always with us so that others will keep on treating us special. This is not because they are bad or evil but because they are not very grown up. Even grown-ups are sometimes not very grown up, you know.

Listen very carefully. This story is **not** so you can decide if others are

>wearing a veil= when the power is gone {and perhaps tear it off}. This story is for **YOU. You** must never >wear a veil= so others will think you can do things you can not do. Just like you do not >NEED= to wear fig leaves neither do you >NEED= to pretend that you are more important than you are or that you have power which only God truly has. If you can=t remember the meaning of this story, just remember the story about Moses. It can save you lots of embarrassment later on@. Mary chirped in with AI think I understand. It is kind of like a babysitter. Perhaps Natalie is taking care of Lissa and her Mommy and Daddy gives her authority for a little while. This is good. Sometime later she may act like she still has that authority even though Lissa=s Mommy is close by.@ AMary@, Grandpa exclaimed with a shout. AThat is perfect. That is a great example of what happens between God and His children. He loans us His authority while we are doing something special. This is good. Sometimes we want to act like we still have that authority when that time is over. Very good A!!

Just then all of the Mommies and Daddies came in and story time was over. It had been a good time of learning but now was time for a different time. After all, **Halloween can be lots and lots of fun.**

Written under the auspices of New Life Inc., a non-profit Christian organization. If you are interested in other writings contact: R. L. Pendleton, 322 Quincy St., Rapid City, SD 57701 or contact us at our Web Page: www.rapidnet.com/~newlife. There are no charges for writings and there will be no request for donations.