

# Bread on the Plate

A boy was consistently coming home late from school. There was no good reason for his tardiness, and no amount of discussion seemed to help.

Finally, in desperation, the boy's father sat him down and said, "The next time you come home late from school, you are going to be given bread and water for your supper – and nothing else. Is that clear, son?"

The boy looked straight into his father's eyes and nodded. He understood perfectly.

A few days later, the boy came home even later than usual. His mother met him at the door, but didn't say anything. His father encountered him in the living room, but he didn't say anything either.

That night, however, when they sat down together at the table, the boy's heart sank. His father's plate was filled with food, and his mother's plate was filled with food. But his own plate contained only a slice of bread. Next to the plate was a lonely glass of water.



The boy's eyes stared first at the bread, then at the glass of water. This was the punishment his parents had warned him about. To make matters worse, tonight he was absolutely starving.

The father waited for the full impact to sink in, then quietly took the boy's plate and placed it in front of himself. He took his plate and put it in front of the boy.

The boy understood what his father was doing. His father was taking upon himself the punishment that he, the boy, had brought upon himself by his own delinquent behavior.

Years later, that same boy recalled the incident and said, "All my life, I've known what God is like by what my father did that night."

It hits home. I am grateful that my Heavenly Father took my punishment upon Himself – through His Son, Jesus – for the times I have disappointed Him and failed to live up to His commands.

Perhaps that is your story, too.

But we can rejoice in His grace and His forgiveness.

– Beecher Hunter