

# Jesus and the Bird Cage

The late, great Paul Harvey, radio broadcaster of news and commentary whose programs reached 24 million people a week, told this story – and it's one of my favorites.



*A Boston preacher, Dr. S.D. Gordon, placed a beat-up, bent, rusted old bird cage beside his pulpit one Sunday morning and explained why it was there.*

*An unkempt, unwashed little lad about 10 years old was coming up the alley swinging this old, caved-in bird cage with several tiny birds shivering on the floor of it. The compassionate Dr. Gordon asked the boy where he got the birds.*

*He said he trapped them. So Dr. Gordon asked what he was going to do with them. The boy said he was going to play with them and have fun with them.*

*The preacher said, "Sooner or later you'll get tired of them. Then what are you going to do with them?"*

*The lad said, "I have some cats at home. They like birds. I'll feed them to my cats."*



*Dr. Gordon said, "Son, how much do you want for the birds?"*

*The boy, surprised, hesitated and said, "Mister, you don't want these birds. They're just plain old field birds. They can't even sing. They're ugly."*

*The preacher said, "Just tell me. How much do you want?"*

*The grubby little lad thought about it. He squinted up one eye. He calculated and hesitated and said, "Two dollars?"*

*To his surprise, Dr. Gordon reached into his pocket and handed the boy two one-dollar bills.*

*The preacher took the cage. The boy, in a wink, hurried up the alley.*

*In a sheltered crevice between buildings, Dr. Gordon opened the door of the cage, and tapping on the rusty exterior, he encouraged the little birds, one at a time, to find their way out through the narrow door and fly away.*

(more)

*Thus, having accounted for the empty cage beside his pulpit, the preacher went on to tell what seemed, at first, like a separate story. About how once upon a time, Jesus and the Devil had engaged in a negotiation. Satan had boasted how he'd baited a trap in Eden's garden and caught himself a world full of people.*

*"What are you going to do with all those people in your cage?" Jesus wanted to know.*

*The Devil said, "I'm going to play with 'em, tease 'em. Make them marry and divorce and fight and kill one another. I'm going to teach them how to throw bombs on one another. I'm going to have fun with them!"*

*Jesus said, "You can't have fun with them forever. When you get tired of playing, what are you going to do with them?"*

*Satan said, "Damn them! They're no good anyway! Kill them!"*

*Jesus said, "How much do you want for them?" Satan said, "You can't be serious. If I sell them to you, they'll just spit on you. They'll hate you. They'll hit you and beat you. They'll hammer nails into you. They're no good."*

*Jesus said, "How much?"*

*Satan replied, "All of your tears and all of your blood. That's the price."*

*Jesus took the paid the price, took the cage and opened the door.*



What a powerful allegory Paul Harvey presented! I believe it was God-inspired. And there are deep spiritual truths within it.

– Beecher Hunter