

Keeping a Stray Dog

A dog once wandered to a preacher's home, and his three sons played with it, fed it and soon became quite fond of it. It so happened that the dog had three white hairs on its tail.

One day, the preacher and his sons spotted an advertisement in the city newspaper about a lost dog. The description of the stray they had taken in matched perfectly. The minister later said, "In the presence of my three boys, we carefully separated the three white hairs and removed them from the dog's tail."

The real owner of the dog eventually discovered where his stray pooch had gone and came to claim him. The dog showed every sign of recognizing his owner, so the man was ready to take him away. At that point, the minister spoke up and asked, "Didn't you say the dog would be known by three white hairs in its tail?" The owner, unable to find the identifying feature, was forced to admit that this dog did not fully fit the description of his lost dog and he left.

Years passed, and the minister noted with sadness, "We kept the dog, but I lost my three boys for Christ that day." His sons no longer had confidence in what their father professed to be true.

Remember: Not only do your children watch the choices you make in all areas of your life and base their opinion of you on them, but so do others. Others, like co-workers who depend on the value of your input as a team player; others, like residents who place their lives in your hands; others, like family members who search for trust among those who care for their loved ones.

Be a person of integrity -- one they will admire.

--Beecher Hunter