

# THE PROMISE OF DANNY THOMAS



The late Danny Thomas was a comedian, singer, actor and producer whose career spanned five decades. What was the springboard to his success?

In 1943, Thomas was struggling to raise his family while playing \$5-per-week gigs in second-rate nightclubs when his uncle offered him a job cutting meat in his butcher shop. He struggled with doing the seemingly responsible thing versus following his dream.

One day, Thomas stepped into a church and prayed for direction and guidance, with the promise to God that he would someday show his gratitude for discovering the right path to follow.

Soon after, he was discovered and his act was booked at the Chez Paris club in Chicago. The act lasted five years and ended up launching his television career. The long-running sitcom *Make Room for Daddy* – also known as *The Danny Thomas Show* – ran from 1953 to 1964; in it, he played the lead role of Danny Williams.

But his television stardom didn't prove to be his greatest legacy. Rather, it was the founding of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital that holds that honor. How did it come about?

Well, at first, Thomas forgot his promise to God to express his gratitude for His guidance. But several years later, while contemplating his new-found success, it all came back to him. Thus, in 1957, he began building the project.



Plenty of impossible things were made possible because Thomas stuck to his promise like a bulldog. In 1962, only 4 percent of victims of acute lymphocytic leukemia survived the disease. By 1991, the year Thomas died, 73 percent survived. Only 7 percent of patients with non-Hodgkin lymphoma recovered; now about 80 percent do. The list goes on and on.

When people tell you about the impossible, just think of St. Jude Hospital.

Are there any forgotten promises in your life? Great things – seemingly impossible things – can happen when you keep your word.

*If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth (Numbers 30:2 NKJV).*

– Beecher Hunter