

# I WAS THE NEEDY ONE

A few years ago a beat-up car appeared in our meetinghouse parking lot. It belonged to a single father of four children. He had come to ask for assistance. Our ward found them housing, and the father began bringing his family to church.

Sometimes the children's clothes were clean and sometimes they were dirty, but their hair was always messy. We never knew how snarled and tangled it would be. Each week the Primary president brought hair detangler and brushes. She and a teacher would work to fix the children's hair before Primary.

I was a counselor in the Primary presidency, and I admired the ability of these two sisters to embrace these unwashed children. I could not bring myself to touch their hair, and I wondered how these sisters did it. I eased my conscience by telling myself that I could help by watching the rest of the children while these women worked.

The youngest child in this family was three years old. She could not speak intelligibly, but she tried to make loud musical sounds when we sang. This irritated me.

Because three-year-old children have short attention spans, I began putting this little girl on my lap to help her listen. She would smile at me in appreciation, and I began to feel the joy and love that Heavenly Father had for this unwashed child—His child. Eventually, I found myself overlooking

the dirt and grabbing a brush to smooth out her tangled locks. I even decided that her attempt to sing was a joyful sound.

A few months later the children's father got up in testimony meeting and thanked us for helping his children.

The next week the family was gone.

I am grateful for the chance I had to serve those children. When they arrived, I felt they were too needy, but I found out that I was the one who needed them to help me change. ■

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