



The MISSING

By Sheila Kindred

(Based on a true story)

"I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men" (Doctrine and Covenants 64:10).

Mom, my coat's gone!" Brad said. It was time to go home from church, but Brad couldn't find his coat on the rack.

"Are you sure that's where you hung it up?" Mom asked.

"Yes. It was right here." Brad's coat was bright blue and red. It was hard to miss.

"Maybe it got moved. Let's look around the building," Dad said.

Mom, Dad, and Brad split up to check different rooms. They looked in the lost-and-found box, in the chapel, in Brad's classroom, in the Primary room, and on every coat rack. They even looked in the bathrooms, but they didn't find the coat.

"Somebody probably took it by accident. I'm sure they'll return it next week as soon as they realize it isn't theirs," Dad said.

"In the meantime, you can wear your old coat," Mom said.

Brad frowned. He didn't like his old coat. It was thin, faded, and too small for him. He loved how his new red-and-blue coat made him look like a superhero.

Someone probably saw how cool my coat is and stole it, Brad thought. How could that happen at church? Everyone there was supposed to be honest. Brad wouldn't let that robber get away with it.

COAT



He had a plan. Next Sunday, he would watch carefully to see who was wearing his coat. Then he would snatch it back and yell, “Stop, thief!” They would be sorry they ever took it.

Brad could hardly wait for Sunday to carry out his plan. But the next Sunday was too warm for coats, and so was the next Sunday.

The Sunday after that, Brad looked around suspiciously at all the boys in Primary, wondering who stole his coat. Was it that tall boy? Or maybe it was a girl. He felt like he couldn’t trust anyone. Brad didn’t like that feeling.

After church Brad hurried around the building, watching families put on their coats. But he didn’t see his coat anywhere. He even checked the lost-and-found box again . . . but no coat. Where could it be?

On the way home, Brad thought of a new plan. He would pray. He knew Heavenly Father could find lost things. That night Brad prayed and said, “Heavenly Father, please tell me who took my coat. I want it back.”

Brad waited for the robber’s name or face to come to mind. But instead he started thinking about his friend Carl. Brad usually sat by Carl in Primary. They joked and laughed together a lot. But Carl hadn’t been to church in a few weeks. Brad missed him.

What if *Carl* had taken his coat? Maybe Carl was afraid to come to church now because he thought Brad wouldn’t be his friend anymore. Brad wanted Carl to come to church again. If Carl had taken his coat, Brad decided, he wouldn’t yell at him. He would forgive him.

Brad climbed into bed, feeling better.

The next Sunday in Primary, Carl wasn’t there, but a new boy was. He was wearing a red-and-blue-striped tie.

“Cool tie,” Brad said, sitting by the new boy. “It makes you look like a superhero.”

The boy smiled.

Brad smiled too. He wasn’t looking for robbers anymore. He was looking for friends. ●

The author lives in Iowa, USA.

See family manual page 63, Primary manual page 61.