

Good Night, Justin

“No! No! No night night!” Ellie cried. Poor Ellie, she had a bad day. First she woke up with a stuffy nose then she smashed her fingers in the cupboard door and broke her favorite purple crayon. And now it was time for bed, and she didn’t want to go to sleep even though she was very tired.

“That’s enough Ellie,” Mom whispered as she rocked Ellie in her arms. “Shhh . . .”

Ellie’s little eyelids flickered. Her eyes felt so heavy. But then they popped wide open again, and she whimpered. Mom rubbed her back. Finally, her eyes slowly closed as she gave up and fell asleep.

Mom tucked Ellie into bed and quietly closed her bedroom door. “Phew! I hope she sleeps better tonight.”

“I’m sure she will,” said Dad. “She seemed awfully tired.”

“Yes. Well, Mr. Justin,” said Mom as she came into the family room. “Guess what? It’s your turn now. Go brush your teeth.”

“Aww! I need to finish building my rocket ship,” Justin whined. “Do I have to right now?”

“Yes. Right now. Just leave it there on the table, and you can finish it in the morning.”

“How come there has to be a nighttime when I always have to quit,” grumbled Justin as he picked up his toothbrush and squirted toothpaste on it. He brushed his teeth, washed his face, and got into his pajamas.

As Justin climbed under his blankets, his mom and dad walked in. “Justin, I’m disappointed in your behavior tonight,” Dad

said as he sat down on the edge of the bed. “You owe your mother an apology. When she says it’s time to go to bed, you need to do it without any whining or grumbling. Do you understand?”

“Yes,” Justin replied. He did feel bad for talking to Mom that way. “I’m sorry, Mom.”

“Thank you, Justin,” she said. “I forgive you. And I love you. Goodnight.” Mom kissed him and went out the door.

“Dad, how come I have to go to bed every night even when I don’t feel tired? Why can’t I stay up and finish my stuff?”

“Well, when you think about it, nighttime is actually a gift from God. He made us, and He knows we need to have rest. And during the night, when it’s dark and quiet, is the best time to rest.”

Justin thought hard about this. “So God wants us to go to bed? I never thought about that,” Justin said.

“Remember how God created the light and called it ‘day’ and called the dark ‘night?’” asked Dad.

“Yeah.”

“And each day of creation had one evening and one morning.”

“Just one?” Justin asked.

“Exactly. That’s the way God made each day. Every day has an evening when it gets dark and quiet, and we can rest.”

“But in the morning, I get up and start doing things again, right?”

“That’s right,” Dad smiled. “If we never rest, we won’t have the energy to do anything the next morning.”

“Oh, yeah,” Justin thought for a minute. “Is that why Ellie was so tired and cranky?”

“Well, actually, yes. She didn’t sleep very well last night, so today it was hard for her.”

“I hope she can sleep tonight then. It seems like she was crying all day. Nothing was going right for her.”

“Right. And the same thing will happen to you, too, if you don’t get enough rest. That’s why Mom and I try to make sure you get to bed on time. We want you to have a good day, not a terrible day.”

“Like Ellie had,” smiled Justin.

“Yep. But the same goes for parents, too. God gave all of us work to do and gave us time to rest. If we don’t use that time right, we’re just making it hard on ourselves,” Dad explained.

“And God needs to rest, too? Doesn’t the Bible say God had to rest on Day Seven after He created everything?” asked Justin.

“Well, yes and no. The Bible says God rested on the seventh day. But it doesn’t say

He *needed* to rest. Remember, God is all-powerful. He *chose* to rest on the seventh day.”

“Why?”

“God was giving us an example. He set up the world so people would work and rest.”

“He knew we need to rest ‘cause He made us, right?” asked Justin.

“Yes, that’s right.”

“So God makes it get dark at night, and He wants me to go to sleep so I can get up in the morning and do stuff.”

“Uh huh. That’s a good way to say it,” agreed Dad.

“That means I better go to sleep then, ‘cause I’ve got lots to do tomorrow.”

“You do?” asked Dad.

“Yeah! First I have to eat brefkus and have prayer time with Mom. Then I have to finish my building that I couldn’t . . . (yawn) . . . finish tonight. And then I have to see if Jessie . . . (yawn) . . . will play that new game and . . .”

Justin’s eyes closed. He was still talking as he fell asleep. Dad chuckled as he kissed Justin’s cheek. “Good night, Kiddo. Sleep well.”

