Brock and the Bad Word

By Julie C. Donaldson
(Based on a true story)

"I'll try to repent, to do better, to pray" (Children's Songbook, 98).

"You think you're better than everyone else because you don't swear," Jared said at recess.

"That's not true," said Brock.

"Then why won't you say one swear word? Just one? It's not going to kill you. Everybody else swears."

Brock shrugged. "I just don't want to."

Brock knew swearing is wrong and makes the Holy Ghost leave. Brock wanted the Holy Ghost with him. So he didn't swear.

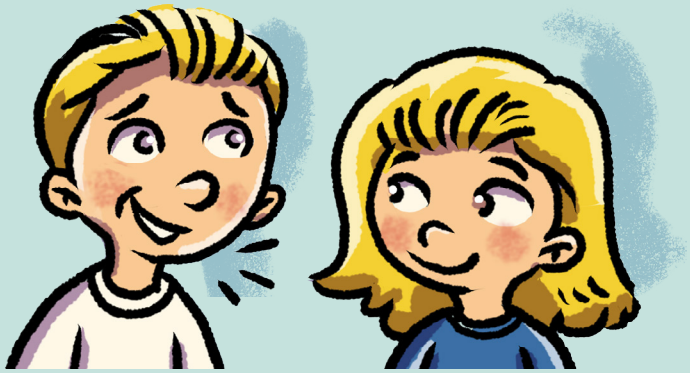
Brock was new at school, and so far, Jared was the only one in his class who wanted to be his friend. But Jared bugged him about swearing every single day. And every day Brock got a little more tired of saying no. Besides, Brock was afraid that Jared would stop being his friend, and then he'd really be lonely.

"Just say one swear word," Jared said after school. "Then I'll leave you alone."

Finally Brock was so tired of being bothered that he said one swear word—one that wasn't *too* bad.

Jared nodded. "Good. Now you're one of us."

After that, Jared's other friends talked to Brock too. They ate lunch with him and played football with him at recess. But



being in Jared's group of friends was like walking into quicksand. The more Brock hung out with them, the more he talked and acted like them. And they all swore. A lot. They laughed at and insulted each other. They said rude things about their teachers. They got mad and acted mean a lot. Slowly Brock started feeling angry more often and found more and more reasons to swear.

One night when Mom and Dad were gone, Brock and his sister Katie got into an argument about what show to watch. Before Brock even thought about it, a swear word jumped out of his mouth.

Katie looked shocked. "I'm telling Mom."

Brock ran to his bedroom and slammed the door. What was wrong with everyone? Why were they making him mad all the time? When his parents came home, Brock cracked open his door and heard Katie say, "Mom, Brock swore at me."

"What?" Mom sounded surprised. "Brock would never swear."

Brock closed the door and slumped down on his bed. He thought about how different he'd become since he started swearing. It had been a long time since he had felt the Holy Ghost.

Brock knelt down by his bed and prayed. "Dear Heavenly Father, I'm so sorry I've been mean and angry. I'm sorry I started swearing. Please help me do better."

As Brock prayed, a warm feeling filled his heart. For the first time since he started swearing, he felt really happy. He knew God loved him, and he could feel the Holy Ghost. He felt forgiven and knew he could change. Heavenly Father would help him.

After his prayer, he told Mom the truth and apologized to Katie. Brock felt better after that. It felt good to repent.

The next day at school, Brock didn't eat lunch with Jared's group. Instead he sat next to some kids he didn't know. It would take time, but Brock knew he would find friends who were kind and happy and didn't swear. Just like him. ◆

The author lives in Utah, USA.

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CTR CHALLENGE

"I will use the names of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ reverently. I will not swear or use crude words" (My Gospel Standards).

- [ ] Write or draw on one side of a paper how good words make you feel and, on the other side, how bad words make you feel.
- [ ] Read Leviticus 19:12. Why do we respect Heavenly Father and Jesus's names?
- [ ] Ask a parent or leader why they use good language.
- [ ] I challenge myself to . . .

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY BRAD TEARE