

## *The Art Collector*

The story is told of an elderly man, a widower, who had an only son. Over the years he had amassed several hundred thousand dollars of valuable paintings. It was his desire, upon his death, to leave his inheritance to his only son. However, Vietnam came along and his son got drafted. In the course of the war his son was killed. Upon hearing of his son's death, the old gentleman sank into a deep depression which lasted almost two years.

Then, one day, there was a knock at his front door. When he opened the door, there stood a rather young hippie-looking fellow with a beard and long hair. The young man said, "Sir, you don't know me, but I served in Vietnam with your son. In fact, if it weren't for your son, I wouldn't be here today because he gave his life to save my life. Now I know you collect artwork, and while I am not a great artist, I painted a portrait of your son when I was in Nam and I would like you to have it."

Well, sure enough, it wasn't great artwork, but it really did capture the likeness of the son. The father loved the painting so much that he took down one of his very valuable paintings above his fireplace and hung the picture of his son there. Often at night he'd have a fire going, some soft music playing, and as he'd look at the painting he would feel encouraged.

As the years went by, eventually the old art collector also died. Because there was no one to leave his inheritance to, art dealers from all around the world came to bid on his very valuable paintings which were to be auctioned off.

As the auctioneer began, he said, "It was in the father's will, the first painting to be auctioned is the picture of his son."—As you can imagine, no one wanted it because it wasn't great artwork, and there was silence. Eventually, the old gardener spoke up. He said, "Ya know, I worked for that family for many a year and their son was like a son to me. Now, I'm not a wealthy man, but I will gladly bid \$35."

Again, there was silence. Eventually the auctioneer said, "Going . . . Going . . . Gone!" Then he said, "The auction is now over!"—There was a loud gasp and a stunned silence. The auctioneer said, "It was in the father's will, 'Whoever receives my son, receives it all.'"

If you have received Jesus Christ into your life (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8,9), then you too have received it all (I Corinthians 3:21,22; Ephesians 1:18).