

Better Choices

by Susana Martinez

Happy Sabbath, boys and girls! It's my opportunity once again to bring you the story.

Now, last week was the first Sabbath in January, and the sister talked about making resolutions or making better choices for that coming year. Now, as soon as we begin the year, we're all excited because we get a holiday, right? And it's about Martin Luther King Jr. We take that holiday in remembrance of him. Now, he also made better choices.

I have a book here that's called "I am Martin Luther King Jr." I'm gonna read a few pages because he also talks about making good choices. I want you to think about what good choices can you make in this year.

"I am Martin Luther King Jr. When I was little, I used to get in a lot of accidents. One day, my little brother hit me in the head with a baseball bat. Two other times, I mistakenly got knocked over by a car. Another day, I tumbled over the banister, then bounced through an open door into the basement. This little kid's asking, 'Whoa, are you okay?' 'I'm okay.' No matter how many times I fell, I kept getting back up.

Even before I could read, I knew I liked books. My dad always talked about how I kept a lot of books around me. I used to tell my parents there is power in words. Big words were in my future. He was right about that, boys and girls. When I was six years old, one of my best friends was a boy whose father owned a grocery store across the street. My friend was white, and I was black. It didn't matter to us. We would play games and have fun together. They're playing tag here. I hope you play tag with your friends too.

But when we started going to school, everything changed. He went to a school where all the kids were white. I went to a school where everyone was black. Soon after that, he told me, 'I can't play with you anymore.' 'Why?' 'My dad said he

doesn't want us being friends.' 'But why?' 'You're one of my best friends, aren't you? Aren't you?' I didn't understand. It didn't make sense. Oh, let's see what happens, boys and girls.

At dinner, my parents explained, 'It's because you're black and he's white.' I was so mad that day. How could someone treat me differently just because of the color of my skin? I want to hate my friend and his father, but my parents told me to do the opposite. That I should love my friend even though he hurt me. They taught me that it is better to have more love in your life than hate. Then my mother taught me one of the most important lessons of all. 'You are as good as anyone. You must never feel that you are less than anyone else.'

I'm going to stop here, boys and girls, because Jesus wants us to be the same. Jesus wants us to love others. When they are mean to us or they don't show us kind things, we need to show them what Jesus would do. We need to show them how it is to be a good friend.

Now I invite you as we begin another year for you to make good choices, better choices, so that other kids in your classroom can see that you serve a wonderful God. I invite you to make good choices everywhere you are, boys and girls, in your classroom, at home, when you're playing outside, make other kids see Jesus in you.

Let's bow our heads, boys and girls. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you, dear Lord, for another year. Thank you, dear Lord, for the opportunity you've given us to make better choices. Allow us to be an example wherever we may be, so that others can come and follow you. Keep us safe and always protect us, for we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Bye, boys and girls. Till next time.