

NEVER GIVE UP

by Christine Ferguson



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**CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS
EDUCATIONAL SERIES**

NEVER GIVE UP

Parable: The Fig Tree

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SYNOPSIS: Troy disrupts the entire youth group, but the sponsors decide to give him one more year. Where else will he find love, acceptance, and God?

BIBLE VERSE: Luke 13:6-9

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 females, 4 males, extras)

MR. CROPPER (m).....	Youth group leader. (16 lines)
MRS. CROPPER (f)	Youth group leader. (15 lines)
TROY (m).....	The troublemaker of the youth group. (10 lines)
BOY 1 (m)	Youth group member who thinks Troy is funny. (2 lines)
BOY 2 (m)	Another male youth group member. (2 lines)
GIRL 1 (f).....	Youth group member who is exasperated with Troy. (2 lines)

EXTRAS: Youth group members.

DURATION: 10 minutes.

SETTING: Youth group meeting

TIME: Present day.

SET

Mr. and Mrs. Cropper's chairs are placed on one side of the stage and chairs for the youth group are arranged in rows on the other side.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Parables are earthly stories intended to reveal a heavenly meaning. They are by nature stories that people could relate to and which would inspire questions and discussion, thus providing the opportunity for revelation of the truth. We have brought these parables into present time where the listener can relate and once again ask questions, which will reveal the true meaning.

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PARABLE: ⁶Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. ⁷So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’ ⁸“‘Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down!’” (*Luke 13:6-9*).



AT START: *The youth group members assemble, talking among themselves as they take their seats. TROY sits in the first row between BOY 1 and GIRL 1.*

BOY 1: Hey, Troy! I’m surprised to see you here. I thought you weren’t coming back after what happened last time.

TROY: Yeah, well, it’s kind of a game to see what I can get away with. And you thought it was pretty funny.

BOY 1: (*Chuckling.*) When you took that salamander out of your pocket and let it run down the aisle, Mrs. Cropper screamed so loud, it almost broke the sound barrier!

BOY 2: Mr. Cropper was so mad, you could almost see the steam coming out of his ears!

TROY: And then I got all profound and poetic about the beauty of God’s creation. Thought I’d die laughing!

GIRL 1: Well, you’d better not pull anything like that again. You’re such an idiot.

TROY: But I’m a lovable idiot!

BOY 2: He makes our boring little world more fun!

GIRL 1 rolls her eyes. MR. CROPPER and MRS. CROPPER enter.

MR. CROPPER: Hi, everyone! It’s great to see you all here.

TROY: (*To BOY 1.*) I’m here, are you here?

MRS. CROPPER glares at them angrily. Some of the kids laugh as this exchange goes on.

TROY: I'm here. Or maybe I'm a deer. (*Puts hands up to head with fingers spread like antlers.*) I look like a deer.

MRS. CROPPER: (*Moving towards TROY.*) Consider this a warning, Troy.

TROY: (*Innocently.*) Who, me? I'm just here to study the Bible.

MR. CROPPER: OK, Troy, that's enough horseplay.

TROY: Neiiiiigh! I was talking about deer, but OK.

MR. CROPPER and MRS. CROPPER sit down. MRS. CROPPER is still irate, but MR. CROPPER is trying to keep peace.

MR. CROPPER: When we last met, we were trying to come up with ideas for service projects.

MRS. CROPPER: If we say that we believe in Jesus and know his teachings, it's important that we put his words into practice, serving others just as he did.

MR. CROPPER: My wife is right. We show our love for the Lord by loving our neighbor.

TROY: I'm all for that! (*Nudges GIRL 1 sitting beside him.*) Howdy, neighbor! How 'bout some looooooooooove?

GIRL 1: Cut it out!

The BOYS in the group laugh while the GIRLS give TROY dirty looks. MRS. CROPPER stands up.

MRS. CROPPER: (*Angrily.*) I've about had it with you, Troy. Why do you even come here?

TROY: (*Leaning back in his chair.*) To meet babes!

Some of the BOYS laugh.

TROY: Why do you come here?

MRS. CROPPER: I don't even know anymore! (*She stalks away, almost crying in frustration.*)

MR. CROPPER: (*Rising.*) Uh, kids, I'll be right back. (*Walks over to MRS. CROPPER and takes her arm.*) What's wrong, honey?

MRS. CROPPER: What's wrong?! Isn't it obvious? Troy is a disruption and a terrible influence on the whole group. He doesn't belong here! We need to kick him out of youth group. I mean it.

MR. CROPPER: I know he's a difficult case, but we need to give him a chance.

MRS. CROPPER: Give him a chance? He's been in this group for three years. Three years! We've been teaching, praying, and pouring our lives into this group for three years, and there's nothing about him that shows it made any difference. Nothing! We're wasting our time!

MR. CROPPER: Now dear, look at me.

MRS. CROPPER turns to face MR. CROPPER.

MR. CROPPER: I know you've been working hard. We both have! It would be wonderful to see the results of our labor, especially with Troy. But it doesn't always work that way.

MRS. CROPPER: But some of these kids have really grown and blossomed. With most of these students, we can tell that we've made a difference. But not with Troy. *(Shakes head.)* He's a hopeless case, and we'd be better off without him.

MR. CROPPER: Maybe... but would he be better off without us?

MRS. CROPPER: What do you mean?

MR. CROPPER: Our group is just the place for someone like Troy. Where else is he going to hear the gospel and be influenced by our example? He may not "get it" yet, but he's still coming. He hears us. He's hearing the Word.

MRS. CROPPER: *(Sighs.)* So we shouldn't give up on him?

MR. CROPPER: It's like the Parable of the Fig Tree. The tree showed no growth, no fruit, and was in danger of being chopped down.

MRS. CROPPER: So the vinedresser asked for more time, to fertilize it and dig up the soil.

MR. CROPPER: Let's give him one more year. He'll be graduating then, and who knows? He might come to maturity.

MRS. CROPPER: Or it might be time to cut ties with him.

MR. CROPPER: Yes, sadly. Remember that our Lord was patient with unbelieving Israel while he was here on earth. But—

MRS. CROPPER: But there was a point when their time was up.



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