

## The Tale of Three Trees

Once upon a mountain top, three little trees stood and dreamed of what they wanted to become when they grew up.

Heres' tree 1, 2, 3

The first tree looked up at the stars and said: "I want to hold treasure. I will be the most beautiful treasure chest in the whole world!" (treasure chest to be put in front of tree 1)

The second tree said "I want to be a strong sailing ship. I will be the strongest ship in the world." (ship put in front of tree 2)

The third tree said "I don't want to leave this mountain-top at all. I want to grow so tall that when people look at me, they will raise their eyes to heaven and think of God. I will be the tallest tree in the world."

One day three woodcutters climbed the mountain. (Invite the woodcutter and axe forward)

With a swoop of the first man's axe, the first tree fell. (Woodcutter knocks over tree 1)

With a swish of the second man's axe, the second tree fell. (Woodcutter knocks over tree 2)

With a slash of the third man's axe, the third tree fell. (Woodcutter knocks over tree 3)

The first tree rejoiced when the woodcutter brought him to a carpenter's shop, but the busy carpenter was not thinking about treasure chests. Instead his work-worn hands fashioned the tree into a feed box for animals (bring up manger)

The second tree smiled when the woodcutter took him to a shipyard, but no mighty sailing ships were built that day. Instead the once-strong tree was made into a simple fishing boat. (bring up boat with oars)

The third tree was confused when the woodcutter cut her into strong beams and left her in a lumberyard. (bring up 2 sticks) "What happened?" The once tall tree wondered. "All I ever wanted to do was point to God."

Many, many days and night passed. The three trees nearly forgot their dreams.

But one night, golden starlight poured over the first tree as a young woman placed her newborn baby in the feedbox. (Bring up Jesus)

And suddenly the first tree knew he was holding the greatest treasure in the world.

One evening a tired traveller and his friends crowded into the old fishing boat. When a storm arose, the second tree shuddered. But when the traveller stretched out his hand and said “ Peace” the storm stopped. And suddenly the second tree knew he was carrying the King of heaven and earth.

One Friday morning, the third tree was startled when her beams were yanked from the forgotten woodpile. (Bring up cross) She shivered as she was dragged through an angry crowd. She shuddered when soldiers nailed a man’s hands to her.

She felt ugly and harsh and cruel.

But on Sunday morning, when the sun rose and the earth trembled with joy beneath her, the third tree knew that God’s love had changed everything. (Hang up heart on cross)

It had made the first tree beautiful.

It had made the second tree strong.

And every time people thought of the third tree, they would think of God.

That was better than being the tallest tree in the world.