

“The Giving Tree” is Shell Silverstein’s beautiful modern day parable:

Once upon a time there was a tree and she loved a boy and the boy loved the tree.

Everyday he would come and climb up her trunk, swing from her branches, eat her apples. When he was tired he

would lie under her shade, when he was active they would play hide and go seek.

One day the boy carved in the trunk of the tree, “tree, I love thee.” And that made the tree very happy.

But for some reason the boy stayed away two whole days. When he came back the tree was so happy she literally

shook with joy. She said, “come boy, climb up my trunk, swing from my branches, eat my apples and be happy. The

boy said, (ungrateful) “no...in the last few days I found out what real happiness is like, so I need some money...do you

got any money?”

“I have no money,” said the tree, but pluck all my apples, sell them in the city, get money and be happy.” So the boy

plucked all the apples and went away and the tree was happy.

But now the boy stayed away a month. When he came back the tree was so happy she could hardly speak. She said,

“come boy, climb up my trunk, swing from my branches, eat my apples and be happy. The boy said, (in a serious tone)

“life’s a lot more serious than fun and games...I want to get married, settle down and have a family, so I need a house.

Can you give me a house? The forest is my house but cut down my branches and build a house. The boy cut down all

the branches and he went away, and the tree was happy, but, not really.

A year passed and finally the boy returned and the tree said, “Come boy, climb up my trunk and be happy.”

He said, “yuk...I am in the middle of life and I’m bored and disgusted with life...I want to get away...so I need a boat...

can You give me a boat?

Cut down my trunk and build a boat the trees aid...so he did and he sailed away.

40 years later he returned and the tree said, “I have no apples so I have nothing to give you to eat.”

the boy (Old and Solemn) said, “My teeth are too weak to chew.” The tree said, “I have no branches so you can’t

swing.” The boy said, (tired) “I’m too tired to swing.” The tree said “and I have no trunk...you can’t climb...”

The boy said, “I’m too old to climb.” The tree said, (sad) I’m so sorry said the tree...I have nothing to give you.

The boy said, “Oh, I don’t need very much anymore, Just a quiet place to sit and rest.”

And the tree straightening herself up as majestically as she could said, “well, an old stump is good for something.

Come boy, sit and rest.” And the boy did and the tree was happy.—The End

It should remind us of Paul’s words when talking about Jesus in Philippians 2:7 when he says Jesus

“EMPTIED HIMSELF” Jesus cried out his heart, stretched out his hands and poured out His blood to help us believe

that He Loves us! ~ Brennan Manning