

## ***Harvey Meets Jesus***

A film released back in the 1950's shows the actor James Stewart playing Elwood P. Dowd as a mild-mannered pleasant man. Elwood just happens (he says) to have an invisible friend resembling a 6-foot rabbit. After his sister tries to commit him to a mental institution, a comedy of errors ensues. Elwood and Harvey become the catalysts for a family mending its wounds and for romance blossoming in unexpected places.

What is Harvey? Harvey is an invisible six foot tall white rabbit that is Elwood P. Dowd's best friend. He is called a *pooka*, which is from old Celtic mythology - a fairy spirit in animal form - always very large. The *pooka* appears here and there - now and then - to this one - and that one - a benign but mischievous creature - who is very fond of rum-pots and crackpots.

In our society today, Elwood and Harvey prove to be an able illustration of reality. Let us follow a scene from the movie:

**KELLY** - What is it you do, Mr. Dowd?

**ELWOOD** - *(As he smiles and sits on bench & leans against brick wall - hugs himself as he soliloquizes).*

Oh, Harvey and I sit in the bars and - have a drink or two - play the juke box. And soon the faces of a-all the other people - they turn toward mine - and they smile. And they're saying, 'We don't know your name, mister, but you're a very nice fellow.' Harvey and I warm ourselves in all these golden moments. Uh - we've entered as strangers -- soon we have friends. And they come over and they - they sit with us, and they drink with us, and they talk to us. And they tell about the big terrible things they've done and the big wonderful things they'll do. Their hopes and their regrets, their loves and their hates. All very large, because nobody ever brings anything small into a bar. And then - I introduce them to Harvey. And he's bigger and grander than anything they offer me. And - and when they leave, they leave impressed. The same people seldom come back, but - that's - that's envy, my dear. There's a little bit of envy in the best of us. That's too bad. Isn't it?

**CLOSE UP KELLY-** *Looking off - deeply touched.*

People with hurts and hopes come together. They “congregate” at a neutral place, in company that accepts them. They warm themselves in the glow of this atmosphere and partake of drink or spirits and leave changed. This is a lot like what a significant portion of people do today. They flock to bars and hobby interests and, if at least for a moment, try to find fulfillment and meaning for their lives.

Now, let us compare Elwood to what a Christian's life should look like- same story, but let's change the words a little:

**SEEKER** - What is it you do, Christian?

**CHRISTIAN** – *(As he smiles and sits on a pew & leans against brick wall - hugs himself as he soliloquizes).*

Oh, Jesus and I sit in the church and – sing a song or two – worship and fellowship; maybe even share a story or two from the Bible. And soon the faces of all the other people - they turn toward mine - and they smile. And they're saying, 'We don't know your name, mister, but you're a very nice person.' Jesus and I warm ourselves in all these golden moments. Uh - we've entered as strangers -- soon we have friends. And they come over and they - they sit with us, and they worship with us, and they talk to us. And they tell about the big terrible things they've done and the big wonderful things they'll do. Their hopes and their regrets, their loves and their hates. All very large, because nobody ever brings anything small into a church. And then - I introduce them to Jesus. And he's bigger and grander than anything they offer me. And - and when they leave, they leave changed. The same people often come back, but - that's - that's love, my dear Seeker. There's a little bit of love even in the worst of us. That's great. Isn't it?

**CLOSE UP SEEKER-** *Looking off - deeply touched.*

The Christian and Jesus Christ become the catalysts for a family mending its wounds and for love blossoming in unexpected places. Living such a natural, purposeful and fruitful life creates such an impact. It restores others. It helps puts everything in perspective. This is what “Living for Jesus” is all about...way grander than an invisible rabbit.

May I introduce you to Jesus today?