

# TIDY THOMAS

Thomas enjoyed putting things away where they belonged. It felt like a game.

He also enjoyed chores, such as clearing dishes off the table and sweeping the floor around and under the table after a meal. He liked how nice the floor looked after being swept, and he enjoyed how it felt clean under his feet. He especially loved how Mother and Father would thank him afterwards. They were proud of how he could complete chores with great care.

Today he had decided to help hang up the laundry for Mother. Usually Kate would help, but today he had noticed that Kate looked tired and he thought she might like a break.



When the washing machine made a beeping sound, Thomas pulled his wagon up to the machine, piled the laundry high, and set out into the yard.

It was a bright and breezy day. *Just perfect for drying wet clothes!* thought Thomas. He hummed a happy tune as he hung a shirt on the clothesline.

“Hey, Thomas! Whatcha doing?” It was Zuri, Thomas’ best friend. Zuri was tossing a baseball up into the air.

“Hanging laundry. See how straight I hang the shirts? I’ve been practicing!” Thomas was quite proud of this accomplishment. When he had first tried to hang laundry, a number of shirts had fallen to the ground and would need to be washed again. But he didn’t give up, and soon learned to hang them well.



“That can’t be any fun! Come play with me!” Zuri demanded.

“It is fun,” Thomas insisted. “You can’t say it’s not fun unless you’ve tried it for yourself.”

Zuri thought this over. Thomas was right. Zuri had never tried hanging laundry before. Zuri put his baseball and mitt down. “Okay, I’ll try. But if I don’t like it, let’s do something else.”

“Here, take this peg and this shirt and copy what I do.”

Thomas showed Zuri how to hang a shirt so that there would be no wrinkles in it when it dried. He helped Zuri straighten the shirt on the clothesline. Pup, Thomas’ dog, ran over and tried to help, which made both of the boys laugh.



Kate appeared a short time after. “Oh, Thomas!” cried Kate. “You’re hanging the laundry for me!”

Thomas flushed with pride. “Zuri is helping.” Thomas snuck a look at Zuri and found Zuri with a grin as wide as his own.

“You’re both so kind! I know what I’ll do—I’ll prepare a little snack we can eat together once you’re done.”

“You were right. This is fun,” Zuri said to Thomas as Kate ran back into the house.

“Hanging up the laundry is half the fun—the other half is making others happy,” agreed Thomas. When they finished with the chore, they played a quick game of catch and enjoyed a snack of milk and pumpkin bread that Kate brought to them.

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Verse: Whatever your hand finds to do,  
do it with all your might. Ecclesiastes  
9:10 NIV

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