

# A God Story

I love coming across God stories. Real life anecdotes which display the way God works in our lives, God stories can be experienced by Christians and non-Christians alike; it's just a matter of recognizing them and taking the time to be thankful and appreciate them.

I was at our babysitter's house last week picking up my kids, and there was a little girl cuddling a dog. Being an animal lover, I had to say hello to the cute little furball and find out her name and age. The little girl's father said he didn't know the pup's age because they had found her, and then he said, "I have to tell you the whole story." So he begins his story, not knowing me or that I am a Christian who appreciates God stories. His story went something like this:

*"My wife left me; she left me and the kids and even took our dogs, so these poor kids lost their mother and their dogs. I kept telling them I would get them a dog, but I had lots of other things to work out too. So for Halloween, we went to one of those 'trunk or treat' things at a church, and there was a little girl walking around inside the church with a puppy in her arms. I thought, something doesn't seem right there – why is this little girl walking around a church with a puppy, so I asked her about the dog. "We're not even sure what we're going to do with her – we just found her outside." the little girl told him. "Well," I told her, "my kids have been looking for a dog." We took home the little puppy, and she was mangy and starving, just skin and bones. We didn't estimate her to be more than 10 weeks old at that time, and she has been a part of the family for the last few months. She is thriving physically, and she has helped provide some of the healing the kids needed as they spent Christmas without their mom."*

After hearing the story, it was magical to see the little girl

cuddle her puppy. It warmed my heart to see them together, knowing that God brought this little puppy into the lives of a family who needed her – and brought a family into the life of an ailing little puppy who needed them as well. God works in wonderful ways, and being a witness to it is awesome – you just have to stop and look around; He is always there!

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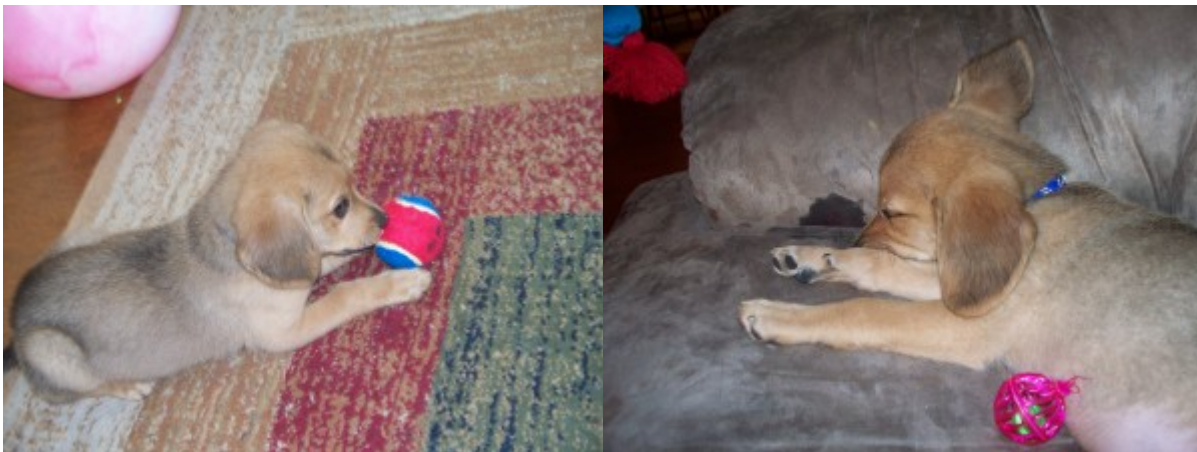
## Introducing: ?

We don't know yet! We have a new addition to our family, but he doesn't have a name yet! It's hard for a family of 6 to all agree on the same name for a new puppy...

As you probably know, our beloved almost 12-year-old dog passed away a week before Christmas. If you know our family and how much we love animals, then it should come as no surprise to you that we are again a 2-dog household. It all started a few Saturdays ago when we decided to take the kids to the Humane Society, "just for fun". Yeah, right – I should have known better! How could I possibly think we'd be able to resist giving a cute homeless pet a loving home? We couldn't. We found a lab mix we all loved, and we went to lunch, talked it over, and decided to turn in an application. But another family turned in an application five minutes before us for the same dog! They said they would look over the apps and call us either Monday or Tuesday either way. Well, the entire week went by, and my husband called them every day because we had 3 anxious kids! Disney (who's 3) kept asking if we were going to take the 'vanilla dog' home; it was so cute! Finally they called on Friday to tell us that the dog had been adopted. We were disappointed but also kind of expecting it since we knew that another family wanted him. But that did it – now we officially wanted another dog. So

Saturday on the way to the zoo, we stopped by another humane society and found another dog we really liked – she was a very unique looking dog, a black Lab / Basset Hound mix. She had the long, stocky body of a basset, complete with long ears, but she was all black like a lab – adorable. We didn't have our checkbook with us, so we had to come back Sunday to put down a deposit. When we came back Sunday, the dog got so excited that she nipped my husband on the mouth – twice. Uh, oh. Can't do nipping on the face with 4 small kids, whether it was intentional or not, so we were back to square one. When we were there on Saturday, we had seen people come in with 2 teeny tiny puppies, so we decided to have a look. I was going to have to housebreak the Lab/Basset, so I figured if I was going to have to housebreak a dog, it might as well be a teeny tiny adorable puppy, right? Never mind that I'm potty training a 3-year-old, have a toddler to chase around, and two other kids to get to school. My days are so hectic, why not add to the chaos?

So here he is, how cute is this puppy?!?



He's a beagle / shepherd mix about 8 weeks old, and yes, he is as sweet as he looks! He just adores our dog Beesly, but she's not sure what to think yet – eventually they'll be friends I'm sure. Squawky the parrot was intrigued with him too, mostly because he has a little bell on his collar so we know where he is. The kids like the names Johnny and Buddy, but we're not taken with either of those. We liked the name

Gizmo, especially because the kids have been into watching Gremlins lately, but the kids don't like the name. My husband and I also think the name "Hank Markdukas" is really cute – it's a reference to the movie I Love You Man. It's a funny movie, not one of our favorites or anything, but there is a funny running joke in the movie about a Hank Markdukas. We also like the name Michael Scott after the main character on our favorite show, The Office, but of course the kids aren't thrilled about any of those names. This sounds like a good poll...

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The bottom line is, our cute little guy needs a name before he starts answering to "puppy". Yesterday I was feeling overwhelmed by the prospect of adding a puppy to my already hectic lifestyle, but it went well today, and he is incredibly adorable! I love to snuggle him; he is so soft and sweet. And the responsibility involved with him is different than the kids; there is much more instant gratification. Kids whine, cry, yell and fight, while puppies wiggle and snuggle. I love our new puppy! That reminds me of an Alan Jackson song – "I'm in love with you baby, and I don't even know your name"!

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## Scooby Update

I would like to thank everyone who offered help to us when we recently had to face the unplanned decision to find another home for one of our beloved pets. Our dog Scooby, had bitten one of our kids in the face. I sent out a plea via email to everyone I knew looking for a new home for Scooby since she was not a vicious animal, just so overwhelmed by fear and tension all the time that a house with kids was not a good

home for her. Lots of people wrote back to me offering support and great tips to help find her a home, and I'd like to thank everyone. I'd also like to let you know that there is now a very happy ending to the story. Scooby was adopted by a board member of the humane society where we took her. She was taken home, and the board member just fell in love with her. She has a fenced in yard and some other dogs to play with, which is just perfect because Scooby LOVES to run and she also LOVES other dogs – it was just kids that made her nervous.

My 8-year-old daughter is a little upset, only because we told her we could go visit Scooby and we never did. We just didn't want Scooby to smell us and get excited about coming with us until she had found a happy home of her own. Now that she has, we don't know who it is that adopted her, and my daughter is sad because she really wanted to see Scooby. It's gotten better for her though, and it's tough for an 8-year-old to understand, but we've explained how Scooby is truly better off where she is now.

So thanks again to everyone who offered their help. It was a heartbreaking decision, and I am certainly not one who is in favor of "getting rid" of animals... but I think anyone in my position with 4 kids would understand how a dog with a history of biting cannot be a part of our household. Thanks goodness she was able to find another forever home!