

## *Whatever Things*

The books in the new “Whatever Things” series (named for the exhortation given in Philippians 4:8) have been specially selected and edited to ensure wholesome reading content. Our primary motivation in producing them is to have quality literature for our children and future grandchildren to enjoy. Far from being “cut and paste” reprints, these books have been carefully read through and altered wherever necessary (in the writing style of the original author) to remove the dross and allow the solid heart of the story to shine through. Dross may include anything from God’s name being used in vain, to sinful behavior being glorified, to allowing worldly philosophies to stand uncontested, etc. In addition to redeeming the text itself, occasional editorial notes have been added at the end of some chapters to point the reader to appropriate Scriptures for properly understanding a passage in light of a Biblical worldview or to clarify anything requiring further notation. It is our desire to add to this series over time, Lord willing, until it becomes a true library builder for the Christian family.

### **Are these stories simplified / abridged / “dumbed down”?**

No, absolutely not. While there *are* things that have been cut or changed, they are not “abridged” in the sense of being simplified or intentionally shortened. It is our hope that they have actually been improved. And, while some things have been cut or modified, other things have been added – for example: one novel ended very abruptly and begged a more satisfying conclusion; elsewhere lines have been rearranged to flow better when read aloud, and so on. These books are a labor of love and are painstakingly edited and modified with an eye toward refining them, not diminishing them.

### **What kinds of things have been changed in these books?**

In general, alterations include: vocabulary exchanges (less repetitive synonyms worked in, an occasional archaic word replaced, unsanctified expressions removed), enhanced readability (such as: run-on sentences split and reworked), the application of discretion to the storyline (so the books are useful for a wide range of ages and suitable for repeated readings), and the removal of dross (as explained above). Additionally, approximately a year after publication of a given novel, it is our intent to revisit the text of that *Whatever Things* title and determine if any further revisions are needed for future printings. Specific examples of a few of the modifications within various titles:

- In *Little Princess*, disrespectful speech was removed to make Sara a better role model, and the confusion of “magic” was written out of the end of the story.
- In *Just David*, Perry Larson’s language was cleaned up; various scenes were tweaked to improve other characters.
- In *Understood Betsy*, notes and appendices were added to include poems referenced in the work.
- In *Pilgrim’s Progress*, a dream that mashed the Rapture, the Second Coming, and final Judgment all in one was split into three dreams, each dealing with its own event, and some scenes have an added touch of discretion.
- In *The Birds’ Christmas Carol*, Santa Claus was removed so that the emphasis would be on Christ alone, and three different old Christmas anthologies were culled for the “best of the best” stories to include alongside *Carol Bird*.

### **What qualifies you to make changes to children’s classics?**

I’m a Christian mother who loves the Lord and who desires to please Him with the media in our home – books, magazines, CDs, etc. I believe in being very careful what I set in front of my children and what I recommend to others. (My oldest daughter, who is also doing some of the editing for this series, was trained under my hand, has experience with various writing projects, and works closely with me.) I appreciate good literature; I have always loved to write; I enjoy a good story – especially one that inspires. I’ve been reading aloud to my family daily for over twenty years now and homeschooling my children from learning their ABC’s through graduating (two graduated so far). Lastly, I have used a great deal of white-out in my day. ☺ Truth be told, I don’t edit these stories because I believe I’m “qualified” so much as I believe it is part of what the Lord has for me to do. It is a gift I can give my children and future grandchildren, and if other families can benefit from it as well, then the glory belongs to the Lord for blessing me with that opportunity.

### **How will I know what you’ve changed?**

If I’ve done my job right, you won’t. If it concerns you that something the author originally wrote might be different now, then you will want to find and purchase a copy of the original, because these absolutely are changed works. But if it concerns you instead that your child be exposed to quality literature and have excellent things to think on (and what we read *does* influence us either for better or for worse), then try one of the *Whatever Things* volumes and see what your family thinks. Our children love them – we expect yours will, too. ♥

**“What of my dross thou findest there, be bold / To throw away, but yet preserve the gold.” – John Bunyan, 1678**