Jeremiah Learns Uganda's Motto

Jeremiah had learned a new song, and he loved it! Every morning, as soon as he woke up, the song filled his room.

"Always say please, sorry, and thank you!" he sang, his voice bubbling with joy.

Singing the song over and over helped him remember these three special words, always knowing just when to use them.

One morning, Jeremiah hummed his song as he sat on the edge of his bed and pushed his feet into his school shoes. His father chuckled from the doorway.

"Jeremiah," he said, "that song has become like a motto for you!"

Jeremiah stopped humming and looked up with his shoe half-laced. "A motto?" he wondered. What could that big word mean?

His father smiled. "A motto is a special saying, Jeremiah. It keeps reminding people what's truly important to them. Just like your song reminds you of those three important words: 'please,' 'sorry,' and 'thank you.'"

Jeremiah's face lit up. His song was his very own motto!

"And guess what, Jeremiah?" his father continued, sitting beside him. "Our country, Uganda, has a motto too! It's a special saying that reminds everyone in Uganda what's really important to us all."

Jeremiah leaned in, and asked. "What is the Uganda motto?"

His father stood up and proudly placed his hand on his heart.

"It's 'For God and My Country.'"

Jeremiah jumped up and placed his little hands on his heart.

"For God and My Country!" he repeated, trying out the words with a big smile. "What does it mean?"

His father's face glowed as he saw his little boy. "Well, it means that for us, the people of Uganda, we should do everything as if we are doing it for God first. Imagine if you were doing your homework for God, you would make sure you do it very well, right?" he asked.

"Oh yes!" Jeremiah responded, swinging his arms. "I would want God to be happy with my homework, so I would do it carefully!"

"That's true," his father continued. "Now, also imagine if you were dressing up, and God was going to be your fashion judge. You would make sure you dressed beautifully, right?"

Jeremiah looked down at his shirt and smoothed it with his hands. "Oh, I would make sure my clothes were clean and ironed!"

"Very true," his father chuckled, tying the last shoelace for him. "Then the second part of our motto says 'For My Country.' That means, after putting God first, we should do things that help our country."

Jeremiah stood up and tapped his foot as he listened.

"For example, would it help your country if you dropped rubbish anywhere on the street?" his father asked.

Jeremiah shook his head. "No, Daddy, that would make the country dirty!"

"Right," his father said, picking up Jeremiah's school bag. "And what if you stopped doing your homework, shouted at your teachers, and stopped going to school?"

Jeremiah slowly shook his head. "That would be bad... But how would it be bad for Uganda?"

"Good question," his father said. "The answer is, Uganda needs you educated. That way, when you grow up, you can give valuable services to the country. So, you should also study knowing that it is going to be for the good of the country!"

"Wow!" Jeremiah exclaimed. "That is a good motto!"

He grabbed his bag, stood up and put his hand on his heart, and repeated the words with even more confidence, "For God and My Country!"

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