

A BOY AND HIS DOG

Once upon a time there was a boy named Phil. He wanted a dog. A big dog. When he grew up he married Gail. She didn't like dogs. She was afraid of dogs. Poor Phil. Poor Gail, because Phil was pretty hard to live with for many years. He still wanted a dog. A big dog. Gail didn't say he couldn't get a dog, she just said she would leave if he got a dog. This went on for many years and several marriage counselors.



Gail prayed and prayed that God would tell Phil he didn't really need a dog. She prayed that God would take away this "unmet childhood need." (She read some psychology books about this.) One day Gail was walking along and she saw a lady with a Bernese Mountain Dog. It was a big dog. She stopped to talk to the lady to ask about her dog. The dog laid down beside her as they talked. It didn't



bark. This breed of dog does not bark much.

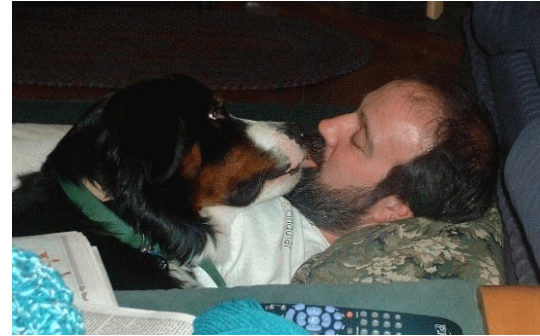
As Gail walked home, something very remarkable happened. In a still, small voice, the Lord spoke to Gail. When Phil got home from work that day, Gail said: If you get this kind of dog, full grown – NOT a puppy – and if you promise to vacuum every day, then I will consider letting you have a dog. Phil thought vacuuming was a small price to pay, and so he agreed.

It was not easy finding a full-grown Berner. After a couple months, Phil found a possibility. He had to fudge on the "no puppy" stipulation. He got a dog named



Rushmore who was 11 months old. Rushmore was a BIG PUPPY. To Gail he was HUGE.

Now Phil and Gail have a dog. Phil loves having a dog. He lets the dog lick him. He lets the dog jump up and give him dog kisses. Gail thinks that's gross.



She doesn't like the dog licking her. Gail is not overly thrilled with having a dog, but she has grown fond of

Rushmore. When he's not misbehaving or barking, he is a nice dog. He is the right kind of dog for Phil.



At Phil and Gail's house there is dog hair everywhere. Phil does not vacuum every day. Gail is resigned to it.

Phil is happy. Gail is happy that Phil is happy (but she wishes he would vacuum more often). Phil has a dog. A big dog. A big reminder that God can do the absolute impossible.