

An abridged version of 'Where Love Is, God Is' by Leo Tolstoy Martin Avdéiteh, a cobbler, lived in a tiny room in a basement. The room had only one window. Through the window, he could only see the feet of those who passed by. He had lost all but one of his children in their infancy. When his wife died too, Martin was left with a three year old son. When the boy reached an age when he could help his father, he too fell ill and died a week later. Full of sorrow, Martin prayed that he might die too. He stopped going to church.

Now in his old age, Martin wanted to draw nearer to God. One day a man from the monastery visited him and Martin began to complain about his sorrows. "All I ask of God is that I may soon die," Martin said.

The man replied, "You have no right to say such things, Martin. We cannot judge God's ways. You are in despair because you wish to live for your own happiness.

"What else should one live for?" asked Martin.

"Live for God. When you learn to live for Him, you will not grieve," said the old man.

"But how is one to live for God?" asked Martin.

The man answered, "Christ has shown us how to live for God. That day Martin bought himself the New Testament. He read it every night and the more he read, the more clearly he understood how to live for God.

Once Martin came upon the verses from the Gospel of Luke:

To him that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other; and from him that taketh away thy cloak, withhold not thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

Martin felt happy when he read these words. He kept reading till he fell asleep.

"Martin!" he suddenly heard a voice.

"Who's there?" he asked.

Then he heard quite distinctly, "Martin, Martin! Look out into the street tomorrow,

for I shall come.

The next morning, he rose before daylight and after saying his prayers, he prepared his meals. Then he sat down to work by the window. However, he looked out into the street more than he worked.

Then an old soldier named Stepånitch came to clear away the snow. Stepånitch leaned his spade against the wall. He did not have the strength to work, Martin called Stepånitch and gave him some tea to drink.

“Thank you, Martin, for giving me food and comfort for both soul and body,” Stepånitch said.

After Stepånitch went away, Martin continued to look out of the window.

Then a woman wearing worn out summer clothes with a baby in her arms stopped by the wall with her back to the wind, trying to wrap the baby.

Martin called her inside.

“Warm yourself near the stove and feed the baby,” said Martin.

“I haven’t any milk. I haven’t eaten myself since morning,” said the woman.

He gave her some cabbage soup and bread, and took care of the baby while she ate.

“Haven’t you any warmer clothing?” he asked.

“I pawned my last shawl for sixpence yesterday,” she replied.

After the woman finished eating, Martin gave her an old cloak and sixpence to get her shawl out of pawn.

“The Lord bless you. Surely it must have been Christ who made you look out of your window and take pity on me.”

After the woman had left, Martin ate and worked, but did not forget the window.

After a while, Martin saw an apple-woman put down a large basket with few apples and a sack full o chips on the footpath. Just then, a boy in a tattered cap snatched

an apple out of

the basket and tried to slip away; but the old woman caught the boy and threatened to take him to the police. Martin rushed out of the door and said, "Forgive him for Christ's sake i,

The old woman let go.

"Ask for Granny's forgiveness!" said Martin. 'And don't do it another time."

The boy began to cry and to beg pardon.

"He ought to be whipped so that he should remember it for a week," said the old Woman. "Oh, Granny," said Martin, "that's not God's way. If he should be whipped for stealing, what should be done to us for our sins? God wants us to forgive or else He won't forgive us."

As the old woman was about to hoist her sack on her back, the boy offered to carry it. Thus, they went down the street together. Then Martin went back to the house and opened the Gospel, when the dream came back to him.

A voice whispered, "Martin, Martin, don't you recognise me?"

And out of the dark corner, one by one, came all the visitors Martin had met throughout the day. They all smiled and vanished like a cloud.

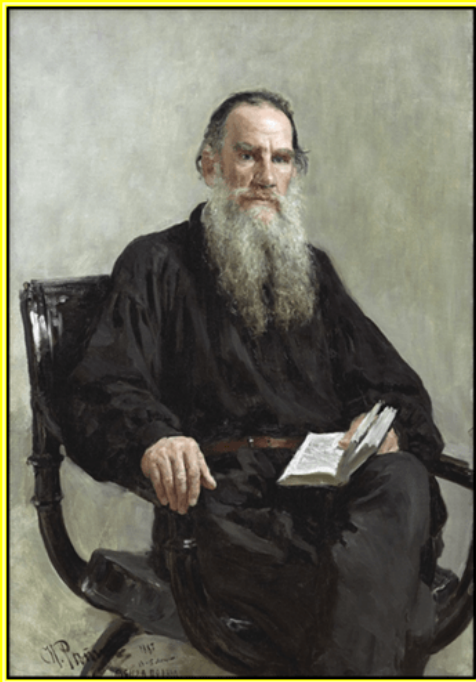
And Martin's soul grew glad. He began reading the Gospel just where it had opened; the top of the page read,

I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger' and ye took me in.

And the bottom of the page read In as much as ye did it unto one of these my brethren even these least, ye did it unto me.

And Martin understood that the dream had come true; and that the Saviour had welcomed him.

Questions & Answers



Leo Tolstoy

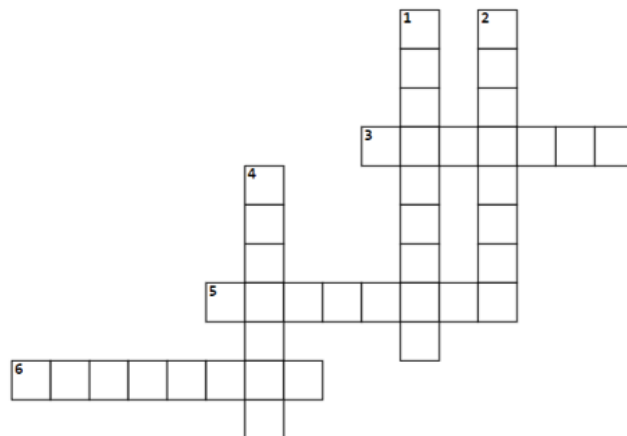
Tolstoy is best known for, *War and Peace* (1865–69) and *Anna Karenina* (1875–77), which are commonly regarded as among the finest novels ever written. Among Tolstoy's shorter works, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* (1886) is usually classed among the best examples of the novella. Especially, during his last three decades, Tolstoy also achieved world renown as a moral and religious teacher. His doctrine of nonresistance to evil had an important influence on Gandhi.

Words and their meanings

Words	Meanings
1. infancy	the period from birth to one year of age
2. monastery	a place where monks live together
3. despair	the feeling of having lost all hope
4. New Testament	the second part of the Bible, which describes the life and contains the teachings of Jesus
5. distinctly	clearly

Words	Meanings
6. pawned	deposit (an object) with a pawnbroker as security for money lent
7. sixpence	a coin worth six old pence (2 1/2 p), withdrawn in 1980
8. tattered	old and torn
9. hoist	to raise something to a higher position
10. vanished	disappeared suddenly
11. saviour	a person who saves someone from difficulty

Solve the Crossword Puzzle



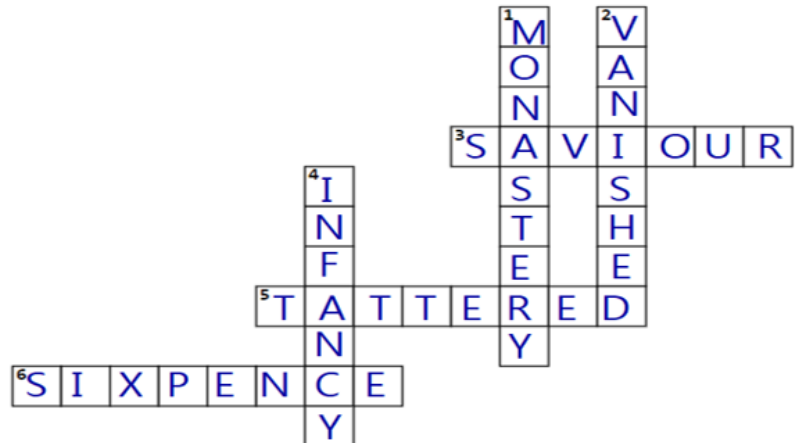
Across

- 3. destroyer of Satan
- 5. torn
- 6. a coin worth six old pence

Down

- 1. a place where monks live
- 2. synonym of disappeared
- 4. antonym of old age

Answers to the Crossword Puzzle



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Quiz

I. Do as directed.

1. Martin went to church every day. **Ans: False (True or False)**
2. A man from the monastery told Martin to live for himself. **Ans: False (True or False)**
3. That day Martin bought himself the New Testament (Fill in the blank.)
4. Martin understood that the dream had come true and he had welcomed the Saviour (Fill in the blank.)
5. What did Martin give the woman after she finished eating?
Martin gave her an old cloak and sixpence to get her shawl out of pawn.

Match the columns.

A	Ans	B
1. Martin read the New Testament to	D	a. he stole an apple from her basket.
2. Martin's life was full of sorrows because	C	b. an old soldier.
3. Stepánitch was	B	c. he was all alone.
4. The old woman threatened to take the boy to the police because	A	d. understand how to live for God.

Q.1: Why did Martin stop going to church?

Ans: Martin lost many of his children in infancy and his wife too died leaving him only with a son who was three years old. However, when that boy reached an age where he could help Martin, he died too. Overcome by immense grief, martin prayed that he too might die, blaming God for having taking his son and hence, he stopped going to church.

Q. 2: What kind of a person was Martin?

Ans: Martin Avdeich was a cobbler. He had lived so long in a place that he recognized people by their boots. He was a hard worker, used good material, did not charge too much and could be relied on.

Q.3: What advice did Martin get from an old pilgrim?

Ans: The old man told him that he had no right to wish for his death. He should live for God as God gives life to us and wants us to live for him. The way will be shown by Christ.

Q.4: What changed Martin's life?

Ans: Martin's life changed when he bought himself the New Testament. He read it every night and the more he read, the more clearly, he understood how to live for God.

Q.5: Who did Martin meet on that day? How did he treat them?

Ans: Martin met an old man, a poor young woman with a small baby, a woman who was selling apples and a young boy who was hungry. He helped all of them and was very kind towards them.

Q.6: Why did Martin look out into the street more than he worked one morning?

Ans: The previous night when Martin was reading the New Testament, he heard a voice saying "Martin, Martin! Look out into the street tomorrow, for I shall come." The next morning, he looked at the street more than he worked because he was expecting Christ to come.

Q.7: Why did Martin invite the woman with the baby inside his house?

Ans: The woman was carrying her baby. She was shabbily and sparsely dressed. On a very cold windy day, she did not have anything to wrap her baby around and the baby was crying, probably because of hunger. Seeing their plight, Martin invited them inside.

Q.8: How did Martin convince the apple-woman to pardon the boy?

Ans: He told her that God's way is more kind. God would not want the boy to be whipped. If the boy should be whipped for stealing the apple, then our sins are far greater.

Q.9: Why Martin's soul did grow glad?

Ans: The soul grew glad, when he realized that the people who he had helped the day before were all messengers of God. He realized that all the good deeds that he did the day before were in fact done for God.

Q.10: What was Stepanitch doing outside Martin's window? Why did he keep his spade against the wall?

Ans: Stepanitch was clearing away the snow in front of Martin's window. He kept his spade against the wall as he did not have enough strength to clear the snow.

Q.11: How did Martin put into practice the bible verse ‘I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in’?

Ans: One night after reading the New Testament, he heard, “Martin, Martin! Look out into the street tomorrow, I shall come.” The next day as he was looking at the street, he saw an old soldier leaning against the wall because he had no strength to clear the snow. So, Martin called him in and served him tea. Then, he saw a woman with worn out summer clothes struggling to cover her baby. He called her in and asked her to warm herself near the stove. He also offered her some food, some money and his old coat. When an old apple-woman caught a boy, who stole an apple from her basket, he asked her to forgive him. In this way, Martin put into practice the bible verse ‘I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in.’

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Q.12: Explain the line: ‘In as much as ye did it unto one of these my brethren even these least, ye did it unto me.’

Ans: The given line means that whatever good work we do for the poor or the needy, we do it for God. For God teaches us that where love is present, He is present there. So, these were the questions & answers of Where Love Is God Is.

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