

THE PRINCE'S
POISON CUP



R. C. SPROUL

ILLUSTRATED BY JUSTIN GERARD

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Summary: In order to persuade a child to take her bitter-tasting medicine when she is sick, her grandfather tells her a story in which a prince saves the people from sin by drinking from a poisoned fountain.

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To Ella Ruth Cobb,
our delightful first great-granddaughter

- R. C. SPROUL





“Shall I not drink the cup
that the Father has given me?”

JOHN 18:11B





ONE MORNING not so long ago, in a snug house in a small town, a little girl was feeling sick. Her name was Ella Ruth, but her family simply called her Ella.

Ella had a bad tummy ache, so the doctor had given her some medicine. Ella's father poured some of the medicine into a spoon. But as soon as Ella saw the medicine, she frowned and said: "Oh, Daddy, this medicine looks yucky. Do I really have to take it?"

Her father smiled and said, "Yes, dear, you have to take your medicine if you want to get well."

So Ella worked up her courage and finished the medicine just as her father told her. But then she asked, "Daddy, why does medicine taste so bad if it's going to make us well?"

"Well," her father said, "that's a question that you should ask Grandpa. He always can answer your hard questions. He's coming to visit this afternoon. Get some rest so you'll be feeling better when he gets here."





Ella took a nap and woke up when Grandpa arrived. He hugged Ella and asked her how she was feeling, and Ella told him she was feeling better. Then she looked up at him and said, “Grandpa, may I ask you a question?”

Grandpa nodded and replied, “Of course, my dear.”

“Grandpa, why is my medicine so yucky if it’s going to make me well?”

Grandpa looked thoughtful. “That’s a very good question, Ella,” he said. “Some things that look or taste or smell wonderful are really awful. But sometimes things that seem terrible are actually very good. I even remember a story in which both of these strange things were true. Would you like to hear it?”

“Oh, yes!” Ella said. She loved the stories Grandpa told to explain things. So Grandpa sat down and Ella snuggled up close beside him. Grandpa began by saying:

