

Crooked Horn

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Texts- I Thes. 4:11, Ephesians 2:8,9

Twelve-year-old Chuy and his family lived on a ranch in the mountains of Central Mexico. The weather was not too hot and not too cold, most of the time. It was a nice place for the family to live. One thing that Chuy really liked was the animals that lived all around. There were chickens, goats, dogs, cats, and cattle, lots of cattle. He liked to help his papa feed them and watch them eat. His cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents also lived nearby so he had some good play buddies.

Sometimes he and his cousin Lalo would saddle up the horses and go for a ride. In late fall, they searched for the Monarch butterflies that fluttered along the trail, on their way up the mountain for the winter. On these rides, Chuy always had to be the leader. He decided where to go and when to turn back. Lalo didn't mind so much, most of the time, that his cousin was bossy.

Chuy accepted Jesus as his Savior when he was eleven. Since then, he tried very hard to be a good leader; at school when he was asked to lead the class outdoors for recess; at home when he was taking care of the animals and at church where he would always arrive early every Sunday morning to help his teacher. He expected everyone else to be on time and listen, as well. When someone walked into class late, he told them to get to class on time. If there was any talking going on while the teacher was speaking, Chuy was the one who hushed them. He really wanted to be a **good boy** (and maybe be admired) but it wasn't working out.

The children started calling him *Señor Bossy Pants*. Lalo began turning down horse-riding outings. His cousins made excuses for why they couldn't come over and play with him.

When Chuy and his little brother did their chores at home, Chuy got very impatient at the way Juan was sweeping the floor.

Juanito, he began as he shook his finger at his brother, *that's not how you sweep the floor!* He grabbed the broom out of his brother's hand to show Juan his way of sweeping. *Watch! You do it like this!* he said, swishing the broom back and forth at a much quicker rate of speed, causing dust to fly everywhere!

Chuy, I was doing it the way Mamá showed me. Juan said as he walked into another room. *I'll work in here by myself*, he thought to himself, *away from Señor Bossy Pants.*

Papi heard the scuffle and spoke with Chuy. *Mijo, you are older. You may do a better job at some things, but you will not have any friends if you keep trying to fix them by insisting that they do things your way.* Juanito wasn't doing his job wrong, he was doing it different from your way. Papa patted his son on the shoulder and said, *Do your business.*

Chuy knew what Papi meant. It was a Bible verse the family has been trying to memorize AND obey. It says- *..aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.* (1 Thes. 4:11) Chuy knew that it really wasn't his business to be minding everyone else's business. He went outside to think. Papa followed and, without a word, they watched the cows for a few minutes. It wasn't long before Crooked Horn made his way close to the fence.

Mijo, Papi pointed the crooked horn and asked, What do you think would happen if I tried to fix his horn?

Chuy thought for a moment and answered, *Well, Papi, I think that Crooked Horn would use his other horn to hurt you.*

Papa nodded at his answer. *Do you think he would let me get close to him after that?* he asked as they continued to watch Crooked Horn enjoy some grass.

Probably not, Papi. Chuy thoughtfully replied.

Mijo, that's kinda' the way people are. All of us have imperfections and we get hurt when someone tries to fix us instead of love us like God loves us. Papi challenged his son- *Instead of trying to fix people, love them and show grace when you see imperfections. That's what GOD does for each of His children.* Without grace, he continued, *none of us would have a home in Heaven.*

Dad walked back into the house. Chuy knew that he was right. Out there as the cows ate, he remembered some of his own flaws and sincerely prayed:

Dear GOD, I know that I need to work on fixing myself. Please forgive me for only seeing the imperfections of others. Help me to mind my own business and love people like You love me. I don't understand grace but thank You for it.

Papi saw his son praying and knew that GOD was at work in shaping his family to be more like Jesus.

Chuy had peace in his heart after he talked with GOD. That day he decided to look for the blessings in his friends and family instead of flaws. And when he searched for the blessings, he found them.

It took a while, but when the other children noticed the change, they quit calling him *Señor Bossy Pants*.

Loving people is so much better than trying to fix them. Chuy said to himself before rushing out the door to play.