Good morning, boys and girls! How many of you have a pet at home? [Select a few and ask what sort of pet they have at home.] Today, I have a story for you about a dog name Rufo!

Mr. Charles was on his way home after a hard day. He was very tired, barely moving his feet as he walked. The sun was about to set. The wind was cool, and a few leaves were falling from the trees. Suddenly, a stray dog appeared, flea-ridden, malnourished, and smelly, with a totally destroyed coat. The dog’s face expressed tenderness and compassion. Mr. Charles was moved by the sight, and he had mercy on the little dog. He took it in his arms and brought it to his house to help it.

That night, Mr. Charles bathed the dog. He tried to get rid of the fleas and heal his wounds. He gave the dog a name: Rufo. Mr. Charles left Rufo at home for a few moments, while he went to buy dog food at the nearest store. When he returned, Mr. Charles fed Rufo. The puppy’s face changed. You could see how happy he was. Rufo had found a person who loved him.

Mr. Charles prepared a place inside his house for Rufo to sleep. He chose a fluffy and very comfortable blanket. It was the best night for the little dog. The next morning, Mr. Charles went to the little bed where he had left Rufo. The dog was able to sit up and wagged his tail as if to say, “THANK YOU”. Mr. Charles had to go to work, so he left Rufo in the yard of his house, in a safe place. Mr. Charles left water and food so that the little dog could be comfortable during the day.

In the evening, Mr. Charles returned to take care of the puppy. After a week, with hugs and many loving gestures, Rufo had changed dramatically. His coat was shiny. He had put on weight, and no longer looked like a dog abandoned in the street.

One night when Mr. Charles got home from work, he decided to clean his car. Unfortunately, he accidentally left the door of his house open. And in an instant, Rufo had escaped.
“Oh, after all I did for Rufo and now he’s gone,” said Mr. Charles, “But I'm left with the satisfaction of having helped him.”

The next morning, Mr. Charles heard barking outside his house. He opened the door and saw Rufo with a couple of strays, flea-ridden, foul-smelling dogs. Rufo had gone to fetch his “canine friends” to receive all the goodness and care of Mr. Charles.

This story is well known, but it leaves us with a great lesson. God sees us with mercy—just like the man described by Jesus in the Parable of the Good Samaritan who helped a man who had been mugged and left half dead. Jesus has healed our wounds. Jesus has restored our lives. But now, it is up to us to go, with our friends, to tell them that there is someone who can help them and heal them. People need the Lord. It is now our turn to bring others to Jesus.

Let’s pray.