

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Joyce Meyer is a Christian motivational speaker and best-selling non-fiction author. She is also internationally known as a celebrated author, speaker and television personality (“The Penny: Joyce Meyer”). Although she has written a number of Christian books on various topics, The Penny is her first novel, in which she works with a best-selling fiction author, Deborah Bedford (“Joyce Meyer: The Cost of a Penny”).

I choose to analyze The Penny by Joyce Meyer with Deborah Bedford for my thesis because I find that the characteristics of the protagonist in this novel, Jenny Blake, are interesting and “The situation in the novel itself is so well depicted” (Conrad), because it is based on Meyer’s own life. The story of The Penny revolves around a fourteen-year-old girl named Jenny. Jenny is a victim of a hereditary abusive pattern in her family. She is sexually, mentally and physically abused by her own family members, especially her father. However, through the hard life, there is a point that “leads Jenny into a personal relationship with Jesus that gives her strength to confront her father and break the pattern of

abuse in her family” (“Joyce Meyer: The Cost of a Penny”). The struggle and the development of the characteristics of the protagonist make this novel more interesting but still easy to read. Jenny’s characteristics here emphasize the essence of Christianity and the need to forgive which becomes the main issue in this novel. “This book is definitely a story of hope, courage, and God’s redeeming love for us. It’s about the process and courage of giving God control over our lives. Giving control to no one else but Him” (Nora).

As Robert in Writing about Literature has mentioned, a character is “a verbal representation of a human being as presented to us by authors through the depiction of action, conversations, descriptions, reactions, inner thoughts and reflections, and also through the authors’ own interpretative commentary” (66). Therefore, I decide to analyze the portrayal of the character because this novel tells about a young girl who has a difficult life but she is highly determined to have a better life and break the pattern of abuse in her family.

Statement of the Problem

1. How is the protagonist portrayed in the novel?
2. What is the purpose of the author in creating such a protagonist in the novel?

Purpose of the Study

1. To show how the protagonist is portrayed in the novel.
2. To show the purpose of the author in creating such a protagonist in the novel.

Method of Research

I use library research in writing this thesis. I begin by reading The Penny by Joyce Meyer and Deborah Bedford as the primary text. Furthermore, I gather some resources and references taken from books and the Internet to support my analysis. Finally, I draw some conclusions from what has been discussed.

Organization of the Thesis

I divide this thesis into three chapters, which is preceded by the Acknowledgement, the Table of Contents and the Abstract. Chapter One is the Introduction which consists of the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study, the Method of Research and the Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two is the Portrayal of the Protagonist by Joyce Meyer and Deborah Bedford. The last chapter, Chapter Three is the Conclusion of what has been discussed in the previous chapter. This thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendices, which contain the Synopsis of The Penny and the Biographies of Joyce Meyer and Deborah Bedford.