

Devotion 1

Forgiveness takes strength

Read Colossians 3:13

“You must make allowance for each other’s faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.”

How much do you know about the story of Jonah? Read the story of Jonah in the Bible and then take this quiz on Jonah!

To what city did God sent Jonah? What was Jonah supposed to do in this city? What swallowed Jonah? Why didn’t Jonah want to obey God?

How did you do? God told Jonah to go to the great city of Ninevah and preach there. Jonah was to tell the Ninevites that God was aware of their wickedness. The Bible says that the Lord provided a “great fish” to swallow Jonah.

The last question is trickier to answer. Why didn’t Jonah want to go to Nineveh? Was he afraid the Ninevites would hurt him? Was he afraid they would laugh at his message? What was he afraid of? Jonah was afraid the God would forgive the Ninevites.

Jonah knew God. Jonah knew about God’s perfection, God’s justice, God’s power.....and God’s mercy. Jonah knew God enough to realize that somehow God could love those evil, nasty, awfully mean people of Ninevah. Jonah knew that God could love the Ninevites enough to forgive them for their evil, nasty, awfully mean words, thoughts, and actions—if they asked for forgiveness.

That was the problem. Jonah didn’t want God to show mercy to the Ninevites. He was worried that if he warned the Ninevites about their sin and God’s impending punishment, they just might repent and then be forgiven.

Jonah knew that God had forgiven him, but he didn’t want God to forgive the Ninevites. What about you? When you ask for forgiveness, God is quick to forgive you. Is there anyone in your life that you just can’t forgive? Don’t be a Jonah and run away. Ask God for strength to be like him!

Nothing Should Stop Me From Serving Jesus

Read Mark 10: 46 - 52

Have you ever wondered why God doesn't seem to answer your prayers? Or just been confused about your life? Then you should meet Blind Bartimaeus!

Blind Bartimaeus was....blind. Because he could not see, he only had one job option: to sit outside the city walls and beg for money. That's what Bartimaeus did each and every day to support himself. One day, an amazing thing happened to Blind Bartimaeus. He heard that Jesus was approaching Jericho. Bart wasted no time; he began shouting, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" He shouted so much that people around him got annoyed and told him to stop. He didn't listen; he shouted even louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Bart yelled so loud that Jesus heard him, stopped, and said, "Call him to me." Bart threw his few belongings aside, jumped to his feet, and made his way to Jesus. Then Jesus asked a strange question to Bart: What do you want me to do for you? Why would Jesus say that? Couldn't Jesus see that Bart was blind? Why would Jesus have to ask if he already knew? But Bart replied, "Rabbi, I want to see!" Jesus told Bart, "Go, your faith has healed you." Immediately Bart could see everything—and he joyfully followed Jesus along the road.

What about you? Jesus knows exactly what we need all of the time—but sometimes the missing link is do we know, really know, what we need? Sometimes, Jesus waits for us to figure out what we are missing in our lives—to see Jesus as our LORD and Savior. Whenever we tell Jesus that we want to see him better, to know him better, his answer is always, "Yes!" If you are confused or out of sorts, maybe you need a vision correction today. Talk to Jesus; he loves to restore our sight! Just ask No Longer Blind Bartimaeus!