

HUGGS

Heartfelt, Uplifting, Guest Stories

DEVOTIONS FROM OUR CHURCH FAMILY
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As Simple as a Smile

We all have daily interactions with those we don't know. Most times we carry on without a thought as to how others see or feel about these interactions. I suppose I had never really thought, or realized, how the behavior of those around me affect my actions and feelings or, more importantly, how my behavior affects others! One such interaction at a fast food restaurant made me realize just how important carrying myself as a compassionate person, and especially as a Christian really is.

It was a typical lunch with long lines. Orders were taking longer than it normally would have. Some patrons were getting agitated and voicing their frustrations to the ladies at the registers. As the orders were filled, I made my way up to the counter. The lady then said, "I'm sorry for your wait sir, may I help you?" I said to her "No problem, I'm not really in a hurry." I then smiled, gave her my order, and stepped back to wait. After a few minutes the food was ready, and she called out my order. As I walked to the counter, she smiled at me and said, "Thank you for your patience, and for smiling!"

Every action is seen by someone. Christians are examples to those around them. As Christ taught the disciples on the mountain... "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden" (Matthew 5:14). "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

--Matt Hall

Influence

There were men in our town who had good jobs but who would sometimes stop by a bar on the way home from work on Friday evenings and never made it home with any money. However, there was one man I noticed who was different. He was a teacher and was respected by everyone. I never heard a bad word said against him. I saw this man buy kids' lunches from his own pocket because they had no money. Later, I saw him take widows who had no car or money to the grocery and buy them groceries from his own pocket. His wife was also a teacher and I am sure that she supported him in this benevolence

In 1954 we began school in a new high school. This man was moved to the new high school as principal. He no longer taught classes because the job at the new school required his full time. We also had a different teacher for basketball coach, but we were still very close our friend, the principal. He was involved in every activity that had anything to do with the school. He did not allow any kind of school activity that included dancing in any form. Many people wanted to have dance parties or proms, but his judgment prevailed. It was only in years after he retired that they were allowed.

After I graduated from high school and was married, I realized that, because of his influence a whole generation of kids had grown up with God in our schools and society. I was privileged to have

a mentor who believed in what was right, and who cared about other people. I am convinced that the Christian life is the happiest life that there is—no cheating, no fighting, no selfishness—just supporting your spouse and being the example and mentor for your children. If our leaders in our government had the qualities of my friend, we would be in a much better situation than we are today.

--Robert Hall

A Place Blessed by God

As a child, I was always excited to fill out an application and prepare to attend West Kentucky Youth Camp. I vividly remember losing courage and changing my mind about attending during the Sunday morning invitation song. Although never a camper, later I served on staff. I was blessed to become actively involved while Gayle served as president. I enjoyed mowing, cleaning the cabins and bathhouses, and supplying camp board meetings with plenty of Red's Donuts.

I learned to love and respect every aspect of the camp. The beauty and peacefulness of God's creation was always evident on the grounds of camp. But, the true spirit of youth camp came to life when the campers and staff arrived. I observed this many years while my sons were attending. The excitement of children arriving, the buzz of finding their cabin, meeting new friends, and hearing the beautiful voices sing praises to God - that is what WKYC was all about.

The children who attended were blessed to reap the benefits of godly men who taught Bible classes, devotionals and lessons from God's word. They reaped the benefits from godly women and men who worked tirelessly to provide meals and show them the love of Jesus through serving others. What a blessing it was to see my sons and other children's faith grow through the years.

It is my prayer that children will continue to find the courage to attend WKYC and enjoy the blessings they will receive as they strive to be like Jesus. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

--Wava Hall

Bravery

People recognize bravery when they see it. Bravery is courage in the face of danger or fearlessness. Someone who demonstrates bravery becomes a hero to many people.

Jesus is the perfect example of bravery. Jesus faced death and suffering without a whimper. During his short life on this earth, he turned the earth "upside down." Time was measured by his death (BC/AD). That affects believers and non-believers alike. My husband faced death calmly. His last words were, "I want to die; let me go." These words are burned in my

memory forever. How brave he was! Jesus was his savior and his hero.

So many people benefit from the lives of heroes. A friend, whose husband needed a bone marrow transplant, searched diligently far and wide to find a donor, without success. However, her efforts found donors for many others who had no hope. How wonderful!

The life of Jesus benefits all people, believers and non-believers. His human heart prayed, "let this cup pass from me," but that did not deter him from doing God's will. Because of his bravery, we have so much to look forward to. God's power raised him from the dead and now we look forward to his return. Jesus said, "In my father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" (John 14:2-3).

What a great big wonderful God we have, who gave us such a precious savior!

--Imogene Hulsey

Jonah, Through the Eyes of a Child

Here is the story of Jonah and the big fish in Davis' own words at 5 years old. The scripture for the story he is telling can be found in Jonah 1:1-3:10.

God told Jonah to go to Nineveh. He wanted Jonah to tell the people there that they were acting badly and to stop doing bad things. Jonah was afraid to go to Nineveh, so he ran away and went on a boat. He sailed across the sea. Then there was this really, really, really bad storm. He said to the sailors, "God has sent this storm." He told the sailors to throw him in the water and the storm will go away. They threw him in the water and the storm stopped. Then, Jonah saw a big fish and "gulp," the fish got him and ate him. That fish kept him in his belly for three days. It probably smelled really bad in that fish's belly. Jonah prayed to God for help. Jonah wanted God to forgive him because he didn't listen to him. He wanted that fish to spit him back out on some dry land so he wouldn't have to be in that fish's belly any longer. Then, God said to that fish, "Spit Jonah out on dry land." Jonah obeyed God and went and told the people of Nineveh to stop doing bad things. God was happy that Jonah listened to him. God is happy when we listen to him, too. We can listen to God today by doing what he tells us to do in the Bible.

--Davis Hunt

