

DEVOTIONAL SET #6 - KNOTS

Devotion #1 - Isaiah 61:1

At the end of World War II, it was the job of some of our soldiers to free people who had been held in German concentration camps. Some of those people had not had much to eat. Others had been tortured and injured. Many of them had seen their friends and relatives die during the war.

If you had been one of the soldiers who freed these people, how would you have felt when you saw them? What would you have done for them first?

Whenever we see people suffering, we want to help them. Whenever we see innocent people being held captive, we want to free them.

Maybe you can understand better now how God feels when he looks at us. He knows that we should be free from sin in our lives, but we still have bad thoughts that go through our minds, and we still do bad things. He knows that we should be free from the fear of death, but we still don't like it when people close to us die. He knows that we should not have to be afraid of the devil, but we are.

In today's Bible reading, Jesus is talking about why God the Father sent him into the world. When God looked at us, we looked like prisoners in a concentration camp. That's why he sent Jesus—to free us.

Sometimes when people get freed from concentration camps, they have to go right away to the hospital. What happens to people in hospitals? If they have broken legs, what happens? If they have broken hearts, what happens?

Our Bible reading for today says that Jesus binds up our hearts whenever they are broken. Unlike the knots we tie to bind up broken things, the knots that Jesus ties are so strong that no one can break them. The knots that Jesus uses to fix our hearts are His promises. When Jesus promises things, those promises always come true.

When we hear those promises in church and in *Pioneers*, God is tying knots in our hearts to hold us together for all of our lives. Listen carefully whenever the Bible is read or spoken--God never wants your heart to be broken!

PRAYER: Dear Father in heaven, thank you for sending Jesus into the world to bind up my broken heart with his forgiveness. When I see other people with broken hearts, tell me what promises of God to speak to them so that Jesus will bind up their hearts too. Amen

HYMN: 464 (TLH) 494 (CW)

Devotion #2 - Psalm 116:3,4

THEME: God Cuts the Knots In Our Lives

When someone says that they have knots in their stomach, what does that mean? What causes those knots?

Psalm 116:3 says that knots in our lives are caused by death. How do you feel when someone close to you dies? How do you feel when you think about your own death? The Psalm verse also says that knots in our lives are caused by trouble and sorrow. When there is trouble in your family, how do you feel? When someone else is sad, it usually makes us sad or angry too.

Psalm 116:4 describes how God loosens the knots in our lives. When we pray to God, he begins arranging things to make bad situations turn out better. Even when it comes to death in our lives, God promises to save us and keep us alive.

He can make that promise because of what Jesus did while he was on the earth. Even when someone made knots into a crown of thorns for him, Jesus did not give in. Instead, by dying and rising again, he loosened all of the knots in our lives. He set us free.

PRAYER: As we learn to tie knots today, Lord, help us to remember that you set us free from them.

HYMN: 387, v. 1-4 (TLH) 377, v. 1-4 (CW)

Devotion #3 - Deuteronomy 11:18

THEME: Tie God's Word Into Your Mind

- (1) When God makes a promise, he wants us to remember it
- (2) He wants us to think about those promises all of the time

Additional references for the topic.

Genesis 38:28, Exodus 28:28, Joshua 2:18, Psalm 18:4, Proverbs 3:3, Isaiah 6:10, Ezekiel 37:6, Daniel 3:23, Matthew 21:2, 22:13, 27:29, Mark 9:42, Acts 21:11, 2 Peter 2:20