

Devotional Thought
Week of March 30, 2008

THEME: God of a Second Chance

“For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found. So they began to celebrate.”

Luke 15:24

As a young boy the children in our neighborhood would go to the neighborhood center. A familiar sight was watching my sisters and some other girls playing a game called jacks. In playing jacks, according to one rule of the game, you win by picking up all the jacks without missing; then in the next game you get what are known as “overs.” That means, if you throw your jacks out on the table and they do not fall to your liking, you get another chance.

In the story of the Prodigal Son, the son left his father home’s and went to the far country where he spent his life on riotous living. When the son came to his senses and returned to his father he found a loving and forgiving father with open and receptive arms. This caring and affectionate father provided his son his “overs.”

There is a sense in which God gave Jonah his “overs.” When the Word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, he obediently went to Nineveh as God had directed, and the whole city responded in repentance.

Jesus had provided our “overs” through His blood on Calvary. Many scoff at the forgiveness of God as a license to do wrong and then run to God for forgiveness. However, God knows the intent of the heart. He knows the difference between genuine repentance, which is a change of mind and will, and the abuse of His grace. The Prodigal Son and Jonah received a second chance, and we should be thankful that God still provides a second chance for each of us.

Prayer: Gracious and Almighty Father, we thank You for knowing us better than we know ourselves. Forgive us the wrongs of our yesterdays and teach us to forgive others as You have forgiven us. May our lives be drawn closer to You because of Your love and forgiveness. *Amen.*

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