

foundations[®] for Kidz!



20 Day Devotional for KIDS!
Making Disciples



SOUTHLAND
CHURCH

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Versions of scripture quotations are noted.

Welcome to...

**foundations[®]
for Kidz!**



foundations[®] for Kidz!

Dear Parents,

The short eBook is a devotional tool that we hope will help your children to connect with Jesus and develop a regular devotional walk with Him. These devotions are based on stories called “The Animal Underground” which follow Ravi Raccoon and his friends on many adventures. Each week there will be five days’ worth of devotions; the first day is always a story followed by 4 days of activities to reinforce the message.

Our desire is that elementary school children of all ages will *enjoy* the booklet and grow to enjoy spending time in the Word, in prayer and with Jesus! Our desire is that, for the younger kids (grades K-2) the stories help create a meaningful family time, and that if your kids are bit older (grades 3-4) they will be able to do the reading and activities on their own as they grow increasingly responsible for their personal walk with Jesus.

In Him,



Thom Dick
Pastor of Resource Development
Southland Church

We welcome any ideas you have to make *Foundations for Kidz* better. If you want to offer some feedback or have questions about how to use *Foundations for Kidz* effectively talk to the pastor in your child’s ministry area or email Pastor Thom Dick at thom@mysouthland.com.

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Hey Kids!

My name is Ravi Raccoon and I am looking forward to telling you some of the amazing adventures that I have had with my crazy friends! I hope that as you read these stories you will learn lessons about Creator-God and you will also avoid making some of the silly mistakes that my friends and I made growing up. But MOST of all...I hope that our stories help you meet with Jesus! Jesus is my friend and I have come to love Him so much! He is the most important person in the world and He has a special plan for your life!

We are going to write an eBook like this every month and inside you will find there is one story and four activities you can do every week. Try them all! The story you read is an adventure with ME! And after that, come four more days of activities you can do to grow closer to Jesus. If you miss a day, don't worry, you can do it on the next day! Remember it's all about getting to know Jesus!

If you want to *read* more stories or *listen* to some of my adventures, your parents can download them at www.therenewedfamily.com. And if you EVER have a question about God that you want to ask someone, ask your parents to help you email me, at RRaccoon@mysouthland.com and I will be sure to email you back!

In Him,

R. Raccoon 

Ravi Raccoon

Memory Verse

*But Jesus spoke to them at once.
“Don’t be afraid,” he said. “Take
courage. I am here.”*
Matthew 14:27 (NLT)

Day 1

Not far from here at the end of a dusty road is an old country farm. In almost every way it's a regular farm with animals, gardens, barns and fields; owned by a mean old man named Willy Walters. Lying beyond the farm is a pasture, and beyond the pasture is a fence, and that fence is the boundary between the human world of fields and farms and the animal world of the forest.

If you were to go through the pasture and over the fence into the forest you would find yourself walking into a very different world! It's not that the trees are so different, or the rocks and boulders are different, or the moss or creeks or smells or sounds are all that different from what you would expect, but the animals, well they are just a little bit different. Because this forest world, is the world of the Animal Underground!



Brighton Beaver the third sighed as he walked slowly through his dam. It was that time again; time to tidy up his winter storage room. This was something he did not necessarily enjoy doing, but it had to be done, so Brighton begrudgingly made his way into the storage room and took a quick look around. The room was a mess! There were papers and boxes scattered everywhere, he could hardly see the floor. With a smirk of disapproval Brighton moved into the room and began to gather the scattered items, when he noticed an old, faded letter. He paused for a moment as he picked up the rather fragile piece of paper. The letter did not look familiar to Brighton. With curiosity sparked in his eyes, Brighton placed the other items in his hands on the floor and sat down in a nearby chair. Carefully, Brighton unfolded the old paper to discover that there were words written inside. At this Brighton felt a thrill of anticipation, for not many animals in the forest knew how to write. Eagerly his eyes sought out the first words, and as he began to read he remembered where this letter had come from.

“Dear Brighton,” the letter began. “I am so glad to know you have made it safely home. After such a grand adventure I was concerned about your welfare. But I am relieved to have received your letter stating that you were all right, and I continue to pray that you stay that way. Thank you again for everything you have done for me and for the Creator, truly you are a very great and bold beaver. You have my respects and my regards. Jo.”

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Brighton leaned back slightly in his chair as he read over the letter again. It was from Jo, a friend of his he had not seen in a very long time. Years actually. And as he re-read the letter, many memories flooded his mind of a time when he was a young beaver, chasing after the Creator on grand adventures, filled with excitement, fraught with dangers...



It was a cool winter day, not one of those nasty blustery days, but one where the sun was warm and the gentle breeze was refreshing. The snow glistened brightly as it softly crunched beneath the small feet of a young beaver. He was a very normal beaver, with nothing at all extraordinary about him. Nonetheless, on this particular winter's day his life would be forever changed.

Brighton sighed as he began to gnaw on the hard wood of a tree. This was what he did all day; he cut down trees and wood for other animals. He was good at it, very good actually! It was the same job he had done since he was small, and his father had done the same thing before him. Brighton was content with his life; unaware that everything he knew was about to change.

As Brighton began to work on the next tree trunk, he thought he heard a swooshing sound, like that of large wings. Quickly he stopped and looked up, for he knew that most birds were not around in winter, they flew south where it was warmer. Questions filled his mind as he searched the skies. What bird of that size would be foolish enough to remain out here in the cold? Only little birds, like sparrows, were tough enough to wait out the frigid winter. Large brown eyes searched the clear blue sky before hesitantly turning back towards the tree. Brighton supposed it must have been his imagination. With slight curiosity remaining, Brighton went back to work, chomping on the wood. But before long he heard the swooshing sound behind him again, this time it was much louder! Quickly Brighton spun around and, lo and behold, a great white owl stood before him.

"Yipe!" Brighton cried in shock, astonished to see such a great owl standing so close to him.

"Brighton Beaver?" she asked softly. Brighton was surprised, for he had not expected an owl to have such a smooth and gentle voice.

"Yes, I am Brighton," he responded quizzically, "how do you know me?"

"Someone very dear to me knows you well, but I have been sent here to call you to a mission." The great owl said kindly. Now Brighton was confused.

"Me? On a mission?" he laughed quietly, "I think you might have me confused with someone else, I am just a beaver. I don't go on great missions,"

he said in amusement. The owl was unfazed.

“No, you are the one I am looking for. Come, leave your wood cutting and follow me, for I have something that will supply you and the other animals with something much better than wood.” At this, Brighton’s curiosity grew. This owl had something greater than wood? What could possibly be greater than wood? Wood was used to supply most of the forest’s needs, fire to stay warm, furniture to sit on, dams to live in, you name it! What could she possibly have that was better than this?

“Come and follow me Brighton,” the owl said again. Brighton wanted to laugh, why would he leave his job and the chance to help others to simply follow after some owl? Yet as simple as it seemed to just say no, he could not bring himself to do so. The look in the owl’s deep blue eyes seemed to say something, but Brighton couldn’t quite understand what. It felt like looking into an ocean, when you know that there is something in the deep water but you don’t know what, whether it is good or bad. Right or wrong. Safe or dangerous.

Brighton still could not say no, for though he did not know who this owl was, he felt as though he needed to follow her. There was a pull inside of him that he couldn’t resist. Something deep within him told him that he needed to go on this mission she had invited him to join. Brighton hesitated before he nodded.

“All right,” he said softly, “I will follow you.” Brighton wasn’t sure, but he thought he saw a hint of a smile on the owl’s face.

“Now where is your friend Jo? For I also am in need of him.” The great owl said sweetly. Brighton was dumbstruck, how did this owl know Jo?

“Jo is further back in the woods, stacking up the wood so that it will be ready for the animals to come and take it.” Brighton stammered, still in shock that the owl knew his friend Jo. The owl nodded and took flight, soaring off deeper into the woods. Without any hesitation or asking any questions, Brighton took off after her. They moved through the woods quickly and soon Brighton began to hear the sound of wood being stacked. They were getting close to Jo now.

Jo was also a very simply creature, he was a jackrabbit. He and Brighton had worked together for many years, cutting down, stacking and giving away wood to the animals of the forest. They made great work partners and wonderful friends. They were the best of friends, so close that one might go on to call them brothers. To them it didn’t matter that they were of different species, they were brothers at heart, and no colour of fur nor type of tail could change that.

Jo smiled to himself contently as he picked up an armload of logs and began to carry it over to the pile of wood that was stacked neatly several feet away. But halfway there he paused, his long ears picking up the sound of swooshing wings. Big wings. Quickly Jo turned and saw a great white owl flying straight

towards him.

“AAAAHHH!” the jackrabbit cried as he threw his logs to the ground and prepared to take off running, for owls and rabbits often do not get along.

“Wait Jo!” Brighton called. “STOP!”

At Brighton’s command Jo slowed to a halt, trusting his friend for he knew that Brighton would never tell him to stop if he was in danger. Jo hesitantly turned around to face the two animals. He watched nervously as the owl landed on the ground before him and seemed to wait for Brighton to catch up. Once the beaver was at the owl’s side, the great white owl turned her head towards the jackrabbit.

“Jo,” she said kindly, “I have a mission for you.” Jo looked at the owl questioningly before he glanced at Brighton, as if asking if this was a joke. Brighton simply nodded in agreement with what the owl had said.

“Wait, are you being serious?” Jo asked in disbelief. The owl nodded.

“Will you follow me?” the owl asked kindly.

“Well what kind of mission is it?” Jo asked suspiciously. The owl paused for a moment, not in hesitation, but in thoughtful silence.

“Will you follow me?” she simply asked again. Jo stopped and thought for a moment. What kind of mission was this? He did not know if this owl was good or bad! Jo glanced at Brighton and studied his friend for a moment. Brighton was a very wise and stubborn beaver; if Brighton trusted this owl and agreed with her then she must be good. Plus, if Brighton had said yes then he must have known more details than Jo did now, though Jo didn’t know that Brighton knew just as little as himself about the mission. Regardless, Jo knew that he could trust Brighton’s decision. These feelings aside, Jo felt something else deep inside that assured him that this was a good choice for him to make.

Jo had a similar feeling to what Brighton had earlier. He felt as if he could trust this owl, that she was honourable and honest. He felt that this mission she was asking him to come on was one that would be safe, in some way, shape, or form. He felt as though there was some kind of promise of safety and security hidden in the eyes of the owl.

“All right,” he said quietly as he submitted to the owl’s request. “I will follow you.” The owl again seemed to smile.

“Excellent.” And with that the owl took off into the clear blue sky. Brighton and Jo looked at each other in question for a moment, then they took off running after her, abandoning their wood where it was to follow this mysterious owl.

“Where are we going?” Jo called over to Brighton as they chased after the owl.

“I have no idea!” Brighton called over to the Jackrabbit. “But I have the

strangest feeling that things will never be the same after this!” At these words Jo smiled.

“I think I can live with that!” Jo called back with an adventurous glint in his eyes.



Brighton leaned back in his chair and smiled slightly, oh how he remembered that day so clearly. He remembered the thrill and rush of leaving on an unknown journey. His smile broadened as he thought about the brashness of his decision to follow the strange white owl, but he held no regrets for what he had done. *The Creator truly had some magnificent plans for our lives.* Brighton thought as his mind travelled back to the adventures he and Jo had lived with the great white owl.

What do you think?

Wow, that takes a lot of courage to drop what you're doing and follow someone you don't know! But it actually happened! A similar adventure happened to a man named Peter and a couple of his friends. You can read about their story in the book of Matthew.

Day 2

Read: Matthew 4:15-25

In this chapter Jesus is starting up His ministry for the first time. And He starts by going to some simple fishermen named Simon Peter and Andrew, as well as their fishing partners, James and John. It is incredible how they were so willing to drop their nets to follow after this guy they didn't even know. How amazing is that?

Day 3

Grab your siblings, parents and/or friends! Since this story was all about the obedience to following God and those little promptings of our hearts, let's practice and play some games of Simon says!

Brighton chewed off a mouthful of branches and swam upstream with them.

Spring had come to the forest, melting the snow and causing the ice to break into pieces over the pond. One of these big pieces of ice had hit the muskrat's home and done a lot of damage. Brighton was working on helping the muskrats fix their home.

The great white owl had come to him and Jo earlier, and told them what had happened. She told them to go and help, and not to ask for payment when they were done. A gift of help. The Creator had asked it of them.

Even with so many jobs like this, where they didn't get any food or reward for their work, they had enough to survive and be satisfied. The Creator had looked out for them through it all and this job was no different. Brighton was glad to work, knowing that the Creator would provide for him.

Brighton continued swimming up the river with the branches firmly in his mouth, and soon the muskrat's home came into view. He had been working the whole day long with them to get it fixed. He was glad to help, but looked forward to resting at the day's end.

Back and forth he went until the sun was beginning to set. The whole time he stayed carefully away from the rapids downstream. From where he was it looked like only a few rocks, but Brighton knew that those rapids were actually the start of a waterfall. The water tumbled down into the ravine far below. He had been careful not to go too close to the rapids all day long, and continued to do so.

As the sun began to set and the work was nearly done, Brighton sat down on the shore and sighed. "We got a lot done today!" He shouted to Jo in the woods, as he scanned the shore line. "Did you find more wood?"

"Not just yet!" Jo yelled back from deep in the forest. "We cleaned up most of the dead trees already... I'll keep looking..."

Brighton nodded as he searched along the stream again. What else could he use to finish the repairs...?

Just then a log downstream caught his eye. He had cut it down earlier, but hadn't used it yet. Now he had the perfect spot for it.

Brighton swam downstream to retrieve the log, excited that his work was nearly done for the day.

He sank his teeth deep into the log before he turned back to the muskrat's home, swimming as he went. This was the last log they needed to get the repairs done. But the more he swam, the harder it seemed to be to go anywhere. In fact, the longer he fought the river's current, the more he noticed he was not simply at a standstill, he was going the wrong way. He was going backwards! Towards the waterfall!

Hastily he let go of the log in his mouth. He did not want the log to drag him

deeper into the current. In a matter of seconds the log was swept away over the raging waterfall's edge.

Now he swam frantically with his full strength. He clenched his teeth together and fought the river as hard as he could. But still he was having little success!

In a frantic search for help, Brighton looked to the shore and saw Jo come walking out of the forest towards the river. The Jackrabbit had probably found a good tree to cut down and was coming to get him. But as soon as Jo saw Brighton so far downstream the big rabbit jumped in fear.

"Hold on!" Jo yelled. "I'll get something to pull you in!"

Fear rose up in Brighton's chest as he realized that there wasn't enough time for Jo to help. He looked around him, below and above the water, for something to grab onto. Anything to not get swept away!

In the corner of his eye he saw a flash of white wings. He looked up in hope. Yes! It was the great white owl! "Help me!" he shouted when he got his head above the water.

The owl flapped her wings as she came down towards him, calm as always, but concern for his safety was clear on her face. Then, to Brighton's surprise, she landed. Not on the shore, or on a branch, or even on a rock in the stream. She landed on the rushing current. Brighton thought she would surely be swept away by the fierce white water. But she shook her wings and stood up tall. She was standing on the water as it rushed beneath her.

"Come." she told him. "Walk to me!"

Brighton was too afraid to question her. He knew she had a plan. She always did. So with a deep breath he grabbed a handful of water and pulled himself up.

To his surprise the water became firm and strong beneath his paws, enabling the beaver to push himself up. He laughed from deep inside, full of wonder and awe as he walked on all four paws across the top of the raging rapids.

The owl smiled. "That's it. Come to me."

Brighton continued to walk on the water. Jo was staring from the shore with his mouth wide open. This was clearly a miracle from the Creator to save Brighton. Incredible!

But as Brighton walked towards the shore he looked down to his left. He was right on the edge of the water fall! He could see all the way down to the pool below where the water landed. It sure was a long way down...it was terrifying! Fear began to grip his heart and he found himself doubting his safety.

Then he felt the water under his feet grow soft again. And just like that he plunged under the water with a yelp.

He sank right down to the bottom of the river. There were rocks on the

bottom and he grabbed at them frantically, but they merely came free from the ground into his hands. He couldn't stop himself! The current was too strong and it threw him backwards towards the edge of the waterfall. The edge came closer and closer until, suddenly, he was thrown out, off the edge of the cliff. For a moment he floated in the air, staring down at the river far below.

Then he felt strong hands grab his arms and haul him up into the sky. He looked up to see the great white owl. She had caught him!

She flew him back to the shore and dropped Brighton gently on the dry land. At once Jo jumped onto Brighton in a tight embrace. "I thought you were going to die! I was so scared! Oh thank the Creator!"

"Yes!" Brighton exclaimed once he found his shaky voice again. "Thank You Creator!"

They both turned to face the owl. She still smiled, but shook her head a little.

"Why did you not trust in the Creator? What do you think is more powerful; the river or the One who made it? The waterfall or the One who put it in place? You need not be afraid of this world Brighton. The Creator is greater and stronger than all of it. And He can help you through any danger or problem."

"Yes...I know," Brighton said in agreement. "It's just...it was so high! I was afraid. I'm sorry."

"You do not need to apologize for your fear Brighton." The owl said in gentle correction. "Only for not trusting the Creator more."

She hopped closer. "Let me see what is in your hand."

Brighton looked down and saw that in his left paw he still had one of the stones from the riverbed. "Keep it Brighton," the owl told him. "And every time you see it remember this; the Creator is your protector. And He is stronger than anything."



Brighton smiled to himself as he held the smooth rock in his aged paw. "The Creator is my protector. And He is stronger than anything!" he whispered softly as he curled his fingers around the stone and held it to his chest, ever thankful for the beautiful reminder.

What do you think?

Wow, what incredible faith! What kind of trust does it take to be willing to step out and walk on the water at a waterfall's edge! This is exactly what happened in Peter's life, though he wasn't on the edge of a waterfall, he was on a raging sea in the middle of a terrible storm. But nothing could stop him from obeying

Jesus. Jesus called him out of the boat and Peter trusted Jesus enough to step right onto the water and walk on the surface. How incredible is that?

Day 7

Read: Matthew 14:22-33

This took place right after Jesus finished feeding the five thousand. Jesus told His disciples to cross over the sea while He sent the people home and went to pray by Himself. However, while Jesus was praying, a horrible storm struck the sea and the disciples became terrified that they would die! In the middle of the storm Jesus came to them walking on top of the water and they were even more terrified because they thought He was a ghost. But He called to them and said that He was Jesus and then proceeded to call Peter out of the boat after Peter tested him saying, "Tell me to walk on the water". So Jesus did. Peter did as he was told, got out of the boat and began walking towards Jesus on the water. But he became scared when he saw how big the waves were and he began to sink and drown. He cried out to Jesus and He saved him. Jesus then asked Peter why he had doubted. After this miracle the disciples believed that Jesus was the Son of God.

Day 8

Trust is really important, and it's through trust that we do great things. So let's try that! Grab some crayons and a friend. Colour a picture! But...do this with your eyes closed and get your friend to guide your hand. Now you have to trust them to draw the picture you have in mind. Be sure to tell them what the picture is so that they know what to draw.

Day 9

Make a list of ways you could practice trusting Jesus more. For example, maybe you need to trust Him when you aren't allowed to go to your friend's house because of a storm or because your friend is sick. God always has a better plan; maybe instead of getting grumpy and upset, we should seek God and see what else He has in mind instead of our original plans.

Day 10

Work on memorizing **Matthew 14:27 (NLT)** *But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here."*

Day 11

Brighton sighed, that had been a crazy adventure. He had trusted the Creator so much that he had actually walked on the water at the edge of a waterfall. But he had also lost faith in the Creator and fallen off the waterfall because of it. Had it not been for the owl he knew he would have been badly hurt. These thoughts brought his mind to another time when he had lost faith in the Creator and had become afraid; he had even denied that he knew the Creator.

"That was a hard lesson to learn," he said sadly as he remembered that day vividly. Sure, he knew he had been forgiven, and he had learned his lesson, but he simply wished he had not been so afraid to the point of denying his Creator.

Thank You for Your forgiveness, he thought with a small smile as he thought back to that day he had so foolishly let his fear control him.



Jo and Brighton walked through the forest as the afternoon turned to evening. The great white owl had given them a new mission. This one was a job that the two of them were supposed to do alone. They were supposed to go to a deep part of the forest that was known for having dangerous wolves to meet someone. Then the three of them would tell the animals who lived in this part of the forest about the Creator together.

"Who are we supposed to meet here again?" Brighton asked Jo.

"The owl didn't really say..." Jo replied thoughtfully. "But she said we would know for sure when we meet him." The two of them kept on walking. It was nearly sunset, but they would be there soon.

"There it is!" Brighton exclaimed. "That giant rock she told us about."

Through the woods ahead was a huge bolder. It stood almost as high as the trees and was about twenty feet wide. It stood tall and narrow, with white stripes running through the grey granite.

They came right to the base of the rock and looked up impressed. "Sure is pretty." Jo commented. "This is the spot where we will meet him, right?"

"Right." Brighton agreed. "But...I don't see anyone."

They searched all around the rock but found no one. And now it was almost

dark out.

"Do you think he forgot?" Jo asked. "Or maybe..." His words were interrupted by a noisy howl. It rang over the hills and through the trees, sending chills through both the animals.

"Or m-maybe he ran away from the coming wolves!" Brighton said in a shaky voice.

Another howl rang out, this time behind them. Both of the animals yelped and bolted into the cover of the woods in fear, Jo going left, Brighton going right.

Brighton ran as quick as he could, trying to get to safety. But unlike Jo, Brighton was not a fast runner. He could swim with great skill, but on land he was rather slow. He could hear the howls and barks of the wolves behind him. They were getting closer! The river was only a few hundred feet away when he saw the first wolf. It had silky black fur with green eyes!

When it saw him it threw its head back in the air and howled loudly. "I found one!" it yelled to the others.

Brighton tried to make it to the river, but found himself quickly surrounded by an entire wolf pack. There were seven of them, all much larger and stronger than Brighton.

One of the wolves stepped forward into the circle the others had made. Brighton assumed that this was their leader. He had grey fur, almost silver, with coppery-brown around his neck and throat. His eyes were yellow, almost gold.

"We heard of a group of animals around here." the wolf said to Brighton in a growl. "They claim that they serve 'the Creator'. Ha!" The wolf raised its head and shook its fur. "A ridiculous idea! We want to..." The wolf paused and considered his words. "Correct their ideas and set them straight. Do you know anything about them?"

Brighton was absolutely terrified! Every time he looked for a way to escape he found there was another wolf blocking his path. There was no way out.

"He's awfully quiet." A female voice said behind him. He turned to see a silver wolf looking at the leader. "I think he is hiding something."

The leader nodded. Brighton was suddenly picked up off the ground. He looked up to see the black wolf holding his back loose skin in its mouth!

"Please!" Brighton pleaded as he swung his legs and tail in the air. "Let me go!"

"We will." The leader said stepping closer. "As soon as you tell us what you know. Where are the followers of this 'Creator'?"

"I've never heard of them. I don't know what creator you are talking about!"

A charcoal grey wolf snorted. "Not likely! I have seen you before beaver. Weren't you the one that used to cut down trees with that jackrabbit? You two

have both been doing work for the Creator. You are one of His followers!"

"No I'm not!" Brighton exclaimed, short on breath. He could barely hear their words over the sound of his heart beating in his ears.

"Yes!" said a pale grey wolf on Brighton's left. "You are! You're that beaver who is chasing after that white owl all the time aren't you?"

"No, no, no!" Brighton screamed. "I don't know any owls, I've never heard of this stupid creator, and I do not follow Him! Now let me go!"

The lead wolf snorted. "Let him go. He is useless to us."

The black wolf growled and threw Brighton towards the river. The beaver landed in the dead leaves and rolled a few times. He scrambled to his feet and raced to the water.

As soon as he was under the water he felt a stinging in his skin. He looked to see a little bit of blood in the water. One of the wolf's teeth had cut him! Oh it hurt.

But he suddenly noticed a much worse pain in his gut, deep inside him. It felt like a knife, and made him feel sick. It also was horribly cold, and made feel weak.

He had called the Creator stupid...and said that he had never heard of him. He had denied that he was a follower.

Tears filled his eyes even though he was under water. *What had he done?!* After all that the Creator had done for him, Brighton had turned his back on Him.

He turned and swam away down the river as fast as he could.



Jo crawled out of the bushes and walked slowly towards the river. It had been a long night of hiding, but he had stayed safe from the wolves.

After a good long search in the morning he had finally found his friend. Brighton was sitting on the edge of the river, chewing on a log.

At first Jo was relieved to see that his friend was safe. But very quickly he noticed that something was wrong. Brighton had made it through the night safely, but he was not all right. The log in his paws had random tooth marks all over it. Brighton would gently gnaw on it for a few seconds and then sink his teeth into it with violent force and strength. Then go back to nibbling. Brighton was angry but also sad.

"Brighton?" Jo called coming closer. "Glad to see you made it through the night." Brighton didn't respond. He just kept in chewing on his wood. Jo wasn't sure what to do. He had never seen his friend this way before. So he sat down

next to him and said nothing. He put his arm around his friend's shoulder.

And with that Brighton broke down in tears. "I denied Him," Brighton managed to say between sobs, "I denied that I serve the Creator! I called Him stupid!"

"And He heard every word." They both turned to see none other than the great white owl sitting on a fallen tree behind them. "He heard what you said Brighton" the owl said again. "And it broke His heart."

Brighton covered his face with his paws. "I'm such a bad creature...I am so sorry."

The owl nodded. "He knows that. And He has a question for you."

Brighton didn't answer her. He only looked at the ground with sad, despairing eyes.

"Are you ready to try again?"

"What!?" Brighton exclaimed looking up. "After what I did? The Creator doesn't want me anymore. I turned Him away."

"Yes you did Brighton. But the Creator didn't turn you away. He still waits with an open hand to lead you again. He still loves you, and if you repent, He can use you once again."

Brighton continued to cry, but now he folded his hands in prayer. He prayed for forgiveness and told the Creator he was sorry for what he had done.

When he was finished the owl jumped into the air and began flying away. "You still have a job to do!" she called back to them as she flew away.

Brighton looked over at Jo. They smiled and took off running towards the massive rock again. Maybe their new friend was there waiting for them again. And when they found him a new adventure would begin.

What do you think?

Wow, that was a pretty hard lesson for Brighton to learn. Sadly, sometimes we are so stubborn or misled by fear that we make bad choices that often lead to hard lessons to learn. Fear is hard and can be a big struggle in all of our lives. In Brighton's case it led to him really hurting himself, but also hurting the Creator. I am so thankful for God's forgiveness! Even though we mess up, or let fear change our minds from what Jesus wants, He is willing to forgive us. That's amazing! Christ is always ready to love and forgive us if we truly have hearts that are sorry. How encouraging!

Day 12

Read: Matthew 26:69-75

Peter was afraid because Jesus had just been arrested. He was afraid that he would get arrested too if people found out that he followed Jesus. So he lied! Three times we was asked if he knew Jesus and all three times he said he didn't know Him and even said bad things about Jesus. Afterwards he was more afraid when he realized what he had done. However, after Jesus' death and resurrection Jesus redeemed Peter's mistakes and forgave him.

Day 13

Let's play a game! It's called two truths and a lie. Grab some friends, siblings or your parents and sit down in a circle. Here's how you play: one person will start by saying two things that are true about them and then one thing that isn't true. Next, everyone else has to try and guess which one is not true. Fun!

Day 14

I hope you don't forget who Jesus is in your problems! It is so important that we never forget who Jesus is and that He is always worth the price! Let's spend some time in prayer, asking God for His strength. Let's pray that we will continue to shine the truth of Christ to people, even if others are teasing us or being mean, and to have the courage to stand up for who Jesus is!

Day 15

Work on memorizing **Matthew 14:27 (NLT)** *But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here."*

Day 16

Brighton smiled to himself as he got up from the cluttered floor. The Creator was truly faithful! He was forgiving and just, He was loving, and He was a healer. At this thought a memory stuck out in Brighton's mind of a time when he had seen just how great of a healer the Creator was. It had all started with a flightless blue jay named B.J. and Brighton and Jo's faithfulness to be used by the Creator even after a hard day's work.

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Brighton and Jo found themselves walking through the wood again, only this time the job was done, and they were on their way home. "Another good day's work." Jo said with a sigh. "Thanks for all the help."

Brighton smiled with his big teeth. "My pleasure. Looking forward to doing it again tomorrow."

It was true, regardless of how exhausted they both were from a hard day of work, they always looked forward to doing what the Creator was calling them to next. Brighton sighed as he stretched his back; he was getting a bit sore from all this work. Jo smiled at Brighton as the beaver grunted and stretched, clearly stating that he was feeling sore. However, the beaver's stiff back flew to the back for his thoughts as he stumbled upon something far more important.

As they turned the corner they discovered a bird sitting on the side of the path. They could see that the bird was a blue jay and it seemed to be sleeping on the side of the road. As they got closer the blue jay's feathers seemed to be ruffled and he looked incredibly sore as his wings were stiff and splayed out on the grass.

"Um...excuse me." Brighton said in concern as they approached the bird, worried that the bird may have fallen from a tree.

The bird's head popped up from under its wing and it looked at them with tired, sad eyes. "Am I in the way?" the bird asked. "I'm sorry. I'll move." Before they could respond the little bird bounced to its feet and hopped weakly to the other side of the road. As it jumped, Brighton noticed that its right wing was hanging limply at its side.

The bird began to settle down again to sleep, but Brighton interrupted him, "What's your name?"

The blue jay looked up at him again, his eyes seemed nervous. "My name is B.J."

"Why are you here on the ground? Did you fall?" Jo asked in concern. The blue jay seemed hesitant to answer, but then he answered sheepishly.

"Yes, I am afraid I did fall."

"Were you sleeping on the ground for the night?" Brighton asked in confusion, thinking back to when they first approached the bird and how it had seemed that he was sleeping. "That doesn't seem safe." Brighton said with concern.

The bird shrugged. "No it's not, but I don't have a choice." He lifted his limp wings and showed them. "I cannot fly into the trees. So I live here on the

ground. I need people's help to get food."

"If I may ask, why can you not fly?" Jo asked in a caring tone.

B.J. sighed. "When I was a young hatchling, I fell from my mother's nest and could not catch myself because my wings were still too small to help me fly. So I hit the ground and broke both my wings. I have never been able to fly since."

B.J. stated sadly.

Brighton looked over at Jo and found that Jo was already looking at him. They both knew what they were feeling inside, and what they should do.

"You don't by any chance have some extra food with you, do you? I have not been able to catch any bugs nor reach the birdseed in the farmer's feeders because I am too slow.

"I'm sorry B.J.," Jo said to him, "we don't have any food."

"But," Brighton said after him, "what we do have we want to share with you." Brighton paused and gave B.J. a gentle smile before he spoke again. "By the power of the Creator be healed."

Brighton put a gentle hand on the bird's limp wing and lifted it into place. The blue jay watched in fear and amazement as Brighton let go and the wing stayed in place, instead of falling limply to the side like it had always done. B.J. spread both of his wings wide and laughed. He jumped into the air and flew.

"I've never done this before!" he yelled in excitement as he dove and glided around the forest.

He landed back at Brighton's feet and hugged the beaver's legs. "Thank you, thank you, thank you!" he exclaimed.

"Don't thank us." Jo said sincerely. "Thank the Creator, He is the one who has made you well."

"The Creator?" B.J. echoed in curiosity. "Tell me more about Him!"

"That's why we are here B.J., the Creator wants to do more than just heal you, He wants you to know Him. We would be honoured to tell you all about Him."

"I'd like that," B.J. whispered with tears of joy in his eyes. He was healed!



Brighton laughed slightly as he remembered that day. B.J. had never been a good singer, but he was still amazed at the beautiful words the bird had sung in praise of the Creator. With a content sigh Brighton straightened and looked about his room. There had been so many great lessons he had learned over the years. From bold missions and life threatening circumstances, to dinner with wolves and being with those that others ignored. All of it had been important,

and all of it was very dear to his heart, both the good and the bad. For from all of it he had learned many great and valuable lessons. Because of those adventures he had been weathered into becoming a great and wise beaver, and his trust in the Creator seldom wavered. Though he was far from perfect and though he knew there were many more lessons to come, he was proud of the distance he and the Creator had walked together.

“Thank You Creator for Your greatness,” Brighton said with a content smile.

“Now if only He could help you clean up this room.” A feminine voice called from behind him. Brighton gasped and spun around to see none other than his wife standing in the doorway. “You have spent all day in here and what have you accomplished? Not a thing. Brighton Beaver you are, without a doubt, the most distracted beaver I have ever met!” Brighton’s wife exclaimed in exasperation, though there was a laugh in her voice

“Ah, you are right, distracted by the goodness of the Creator,” Brighton said with a mischievous grin.

“Well think on the Creator’s goodness as you clean, could you do that? I need that room tidied up today or it will never get cleaned.”

Brighton sighed before nodding. “All right,” he mumbled as he went back to cleaning the room.

“I suppose I still have many lessons to learn.” Brighton said with a laugh. “And I suppose I always will, even when I am an old, wise beaver.”

What do you think?

In this story we saw that God is the healer; He knows what is best for us, not only in life, but physically too! He knows how to piece us back together when we are broken. Isn’t that amazing?

Day 17

Read: Acts 3:1-11

In the story of Peter, he and John are simply walking along when they come across a man who can’t walk! He asked them for food and money but they gave him something better. God preformed a miracle through them and the man began walking and running and singing praises to God. But even better, they gave him Jesus. And with Jesus comes hope for life.

Day 18

It's theater time! Choose your favourite part of the story and act it out for your family.

Day 19

In this story Peter and John were obedient in doing what God wanted them to do. Spend some time listening in prayer about what God wants you to do to help the people around you. God does appreciate *all* of our good deeds, small or large. He loves and treasures every one of them.

Day 20

Work on memorizing **Matthew 14:27 (NLT)** *But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here."*