

We're back with a devotional and our latest news.



Not by bread alone...

One day an elementary school teacher asked her class what the definition of a friend is. And little boy raised his hand and said, "A friend is someone who knows me and still likes me."

Wow! I don't know about you, but I think that's a pretty great definition of a friend. Almost all of us can probably think of some people who know us and don't like us because they've seen or even experienced our shortcomings. But when we have people in our life who know our imperfections and still like us, that's really special. And we all need that because none of us are perfect. If perfect were the standard, no one would like us!

But let's flip the coin and ask ourselves if we meet that little boy's definition of a friend? What's your standard for friendship? How do you decide who to include and who to exclude in your circle of friends? One thing that always helps is to consider Jesus. For example, He was often accused of "being a friend of sinners" (Matthew 11:19). He knew their faults, but He still liked them! Better yet, He loved them.

Now in **Matthew 7** Jesus was teaching the people to be careful about judging others hypocritically. And He gives us all something important to think about when asks them in verse 3, "Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?"

It seems that Jesus might have asked this very important question with a little sense of humor mixed in, since no one can really have a log in their eye. Nonetheless, the point Jesus is making is that when you want to point fingers at someone else, first take a look in the mirror. Look at yourself before you look at them.

Imagine for a moment what your mirror might say if it could talk? Would it say that you're perfect? Of course not. Instead, our mirror would likely tell us all kinds of ways in which we could use some improvement.

Then Jesus continues by saying, "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."

The log is Jesus' way of saying that there are a lot more imperfections in our life than we think there are. After all, it's human nature to think more highly of ourselves than we ought, which is why the Bible so often speaks of the virtue of humility and encouraging us to seek it. The log would also be us thinking that we're better than someone else. "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves." **Philippians 2:3**

Now it's important to realize that Jesus isn't saying that we should ignore or condone someone's sin. Jesus didn't do that either. That wouldn't be the loving thing to do. But in the words of a dear missionary friend of mine who has now gone on to heaven, Labib Madanat, "You can disagree with someone 100% and still love them 100%." I think that is such a precious statement and ought to characterize the way we interact with everyone we meet; everyone we know.

Now all of our students at Reignite Hope have their imperfections, but so do we. Some of them come to us with values, behaviors and beliefs that we don't embrace. So, each day we first look in the mirror, ask God to forgive us and change us, then we do our best to teach them and love them 100%!

And if you'll permit me to add another definition, this, I think, is a really good one for love: "Love is an unconditional commitment I make to an imperfect person in which I surrender myself to bring that relationship to God's intended purpose."

Hopefully, as time goes by, you'll see God shaping you into the person He wants you to be; the friend He wants you to be.

In the meantime, take heart. God knows everything about you and still likes you! Better yet, He loves you. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever trusts in Him should not perish but have eternal life." **John 3:16**

Impact Lives! Click here to Donate.



We are blessed to have Mike Christensen join ReIGNITE Hope. Mike and Stacey and their family served as missionaries since 1996 in several countries in Central Asia particularly Turkey. In a missionary questionnaire one year, Mike said:

His goal "is to live exuberant lives of faith and repentance that glorify God by loving Him and others through prevailing prayer, active service and making disciples."

He's doing just that at ReIGNITE Hope. He attended the June class and recently became a certified welder so he can lead a team of instructors. Even after just a short time, the students are already trusting him to share their life stories and struggles.

One such example that Mike shared is "a young man who shared that his mom died at the age of 2 and his father threw him in a bag and fled from Korea to Canada. His first incarceration was at the age of 12. He has been clean off drugs for 2 months, homeless at times, working all night as security in downtown, but hoping for a different life."

This young man is now a certified welder and looking to start his career as a welder. But more importantly, the spiritual and life lessons he learned will stay with him for an eternity.

60 Graduates; 100 Certs

Four classes completed in June...one in Gardena, one in San Bernadino County and two in Orange County. 60 students graduated and 100 welding certifications were awarded. Another mobile class started in June and is still in session.



Helped Me Get Sober

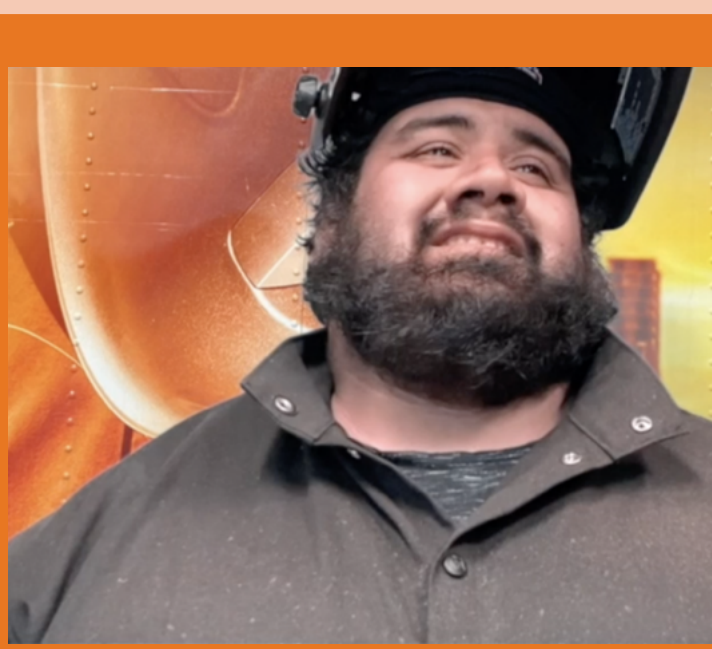
I've been a troubled youth since the age of 12, in and out of prison. Being around people who know the Lord helped me get sober for two months. Gives me more hope. I got certified in MIG and Stick and look forward to starting a career and changing my life.

Click [here](#) to watch video.

Mobile Training is a Blessing

I was homeless with my two little girls. I never wanted to go through that again...ever. Dan, Jan, Rick (the instructors) they've been with me all the way. I don't think I'd be where I am without that support system. That mobile training class...it's a big blessing!

Click [here](#) to watch video.



ReIGNITE Hope in the News

San Bernardino County invited the press out to see the Mobile Training class in action on certification day. Each major television network broadcasted it the very next day. If you'd like to view the short videos, click below.

ABC

CBS

NBC



Thank you for all your faithful prayers and support. Please pray our students experience the saving Grace of our Lord and Savior.

I'll keep you all updated and if you would like to contact me I can be reached by email at steve@reignitehope.com or by phone at (310) 847-0593. Please let me know if there is any way that I can be praying for you during these challenging days in which we are living.

Love you All,

ReIGNITE Hope

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