

Max

Ivete rescued Max from a dog shelter. She fell in love with him on first sight. He is part Corgi and part Shepherd. From the very first day Max seemed to know that he was “saved.” He was among the “elect.” Some people might say that because he had a new life, he was born again (but he was not). He seemed to appreciate his new room, his new bed, his own food dish and the water bowl that gets refilled like clockwork morning and evening everyday- like manna from heaven.

When I call Max, he comes, most of the time. There are times when I need to hold up a bag of dog biscuits to sweeten the deal. When he sees the bag of biscuits he comes running. One night he would not come for love nor money. I called, and I called again. Then I got the bag of his favorite dog biscuits and shook it and shook it, but he would not come. He was barking out in the woods and would not listen. I went out with a flashlight to find him and he was barking up a tree. I pointed the light into the darkness and there sitting on a limb of an oak tree was a possum looking down at us with his bright beady eyes. Max loves biscuits, but not as much as he loves possums. He would have stayed there all night if I did not physically pull him away.



I have to remember something. Max is a dog. He often behaves like a Christian. He does not smoke, or drink alcohol, does not go to the movies and does not enjoy watching Dancing with the Stars, like many fine Christians I know. Max, however, has a dog nature with a dog's heart. He loves possums. He will usually obey, like a Christian will usually obey God, but if he picks up the scent of a possum, all bets are off. He forgets all about being man's best friend or my best friend. He is focused on only one thing, there sitting up in a tree.

Jesus gave out dog biscuits during his ministry; Well, not exactly dog biscuits, He gave out bread and the people came. They came in droves until one day he announced he was going to die on a cross and there would be no more free dog biscuits given out. The multitudes went away. He turned to the remaining twelve and asked “*will you go away also?*” “*Where would we go,*” said Peter, “*you have the words of eternal life.*” Faith hungers for the Words of life more than carnal dog biscuits. Faith focuses on the Master who says “come,” or “go,” or “stay.” But then on occasion our old nature (buried and hidden somewhere deep beneath the new) catches the scent of a possum (or something). It is then that we discover if the dog nature is stronger than the God nature in us. If we don't seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and are seeking “*all these other things,*” like worldly possums, I'm afraid we are barking up the wrong tree.