



“The LORD is my light and my salvation - whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life - of whom shall I be afraid?”

Psalm 27:1

Brother Andrew

(1928-)



What do you like most about going to church? Bible stories? Singing? Meeting friends?

Did you know there are some countries in the world where Jesus' friends aren't allowed to meet together, or read the Bible, or tell other people about Jesus? When Brother Andrew found out how hard it was for people in those places to be Jesus' friends he wanted to help. Jesus' friends needed Bibles to read - but how could he get Bibles into those countries? He knew it would be difficult and he knew it would be dangerous - but he knew that his friend Jesus would look after him.

Time after time Andrew took cars stuffed with Bibles into countries where Bibles were not allowed. There were soldiers and spies and secret police; it was difficult; it was dangerous. Time after time Andrew's friend Jesus looked after him - and the Bibles! Time after time soldiers and spies and secret police didn't notice all the Bibles stuffed into the cars. Time after time carloads of Bibles reached Jesus' friends.

In some of those countries it is now safe to be Jesus' friends - but there are still lots where it is not safe at all. It is still difficult and dangerous to help Jesus' friends in those countries, but Brother Andrew and his friends are still helping - and their friend Jesus is still looking after them!



“Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways;
according to your love remember me, for you, Lord, are good.”

Psalm25:7

Augustine

(354-430)



Do you ever get told off by your teacher or by your mum? Do you sometimes not do what you are told? Some children find it easy to be good - some don't!

Augustine didn't find it easy to be good. He enjoyed doing naughty things. His mother was Jesus' friend - but Augustine wasn't. He was having too much fun to bother with Jesus. He took things that weren't his. He didn't do what his mother told him. He thought this was funny. It made his mother sad. She asked Jesus to show Augustine that the things he did were wrong.

Augustine grew up. He still did naughty things. He still made his mother sad. She still asked Jesus to help. Sometimes Augustine felt bad - being naughty wasn't always fun - but he didn't want to stop just yet ...

Then, one day, he was in the garden. He heard a child say, 'Pick it up and read it!' But there was no one there. What could it mean? Then he saw his friend's Bible on the ground. He picked it up and read it! He read that Jesus could forgive him for all the bad things he had done. He read that Jesus could help him stop doing bad things. He became Jesus' friend. His mother was so happy.

Even though he had been a naughty boy, Augustine became one of the world's most famous Bible teachers! Jesus can change anybody.



“For the LORD takes delight in his people;
he crowns the humble with victory.”

Psalm 149:4

Gladys Aylward

(1902-1970)



Are you good at lots of things, or a few things, or do you feel just ordinary?

Gladys Aylward was just ordinary. She was not very clever - just ordinary. She was not very rich - just ordinary. Her job wasn't special - just ordinary. She worked as a maid in a rich home, tidying and cleaning. But Gladys had an extraordinary friend - Jesus - and she wanted to go to China to tell people there all about him. But no one wanted her to go to China with them - they thought she was too ordinary - so Gladys went on her own.

With the help of her extraordinary friend Jesus, ordinary Gladys did some extraordinary things. She ran a hotel in the middle of nowhere and told Bible stories to the travellers. She worked for the government inspecting feet! While she checked their feet she told the people all about her friend Jesus. She stopped prisoners fighting in a prison. She looked after more than a hundred children who had no one else to love them. When war came to China she kept her children safe from danger by walking with them for days and days and days across the mountains to escape the fighting. Gladys had some extraordinary adventures!

Some people thought Gladys was too ordinary - but Jesus didn't. Jesus can help his ordinary friends like you, me and Gladys to do extraordinary things for him.



“Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,
praise him with the harp and lyre ...”

Psalm 150:3

Johann Sebastian Bach

(1685-1750)

Can you play a musical instrument? Do you have lessons on the piano or recorder? Perhaps you just like making music for fun.

When Johann Sebastian Bach was growing up in Germany he loved playing music. He played the violin ... and the viola ... and the organ ... and the harpsichord ... and the clavichord (which was like an old-fashioned piano) ... and he was really good at singing! Johann Sebastian loved music, but he loved Jesus too. He wanted to use his music to show how much he loved his friend Jesus.

When he grew up Johann Sebastian's job was to play music and sing in church. He didn't just play and sing, he wrote new music too. He wrote music to go with the bits of the Bible that were read each Sunday. He wrote new music for old church songs. He wrote special happy music for Easter Sunday and Christmas. He wrote special sad music for Good Friday when Jesus died. He wrote all his music to show people how much his friend Jesus loved them too. Sometimes Johann Sebastian's music didn't have Bible words and wasn't played in church. He still wanted his music to show how much he loved Jesus. He knew that Jesus helped him write all his beautiful music.

Why not ask Jesus to help you make up a tune to show him how much you love him too?



Thomas Barnardo

(1845-1905)



What is your bedroom like? Do you have a room of your own or do you share it? Is your bed comfy? What else is in your room?

There are some children who don't have a bedroom at all. They don't have a bed to sleep on - or even a house to live in. In London, when Thomas Barnardo was alive, there were lots and lots of children with nowhere to live and no one to look after them.

Thomas wanted to go to China to help people there - until he saw how much the children in London needed his help. He knew that his friend Jesus loved children very much - so Thomas loved children too. Thomas knew that Jesus never turned anyone away - so Thomas never turned anyone away. He always found room if a child needed help. He always found room for children who had no home. He always found room for children who were poor, sad, sick or alone. In the end he set up more than a hundred homes for boys and girls who had nowhere to live. He even made a special village to care for fifteen hundred girls!

Thousands and thousands of children now had somewhere to live and someone to love them. Thousands and thousands of children were taught to read and write - and taught all about Thomas' friend Jesus.

“A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows,
is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families ...”

Psalm 68:5-6