

God's Animal Kingdom Classroom

Raccoon



The raccoon is a delightful animal to watch. The raccoon has very nimble fingers which it uses to handle food and explore its territory. The raccoon's fingers are so nimble that it easily works door knobs and most other doors in our homes such as refrigerators, food pantry doors and cabinet doors. This makes it an unwelcome visitor to our homes.

The raccoon can be seen to “wash” its food before eating. This behavior is not just for cleanliness but also to pick out inedible pieces of its food. The raccoon is at home in the forest or in the city, on land or in trees. It is a ferocious animal when threatened and will fight off larger animals than itself.

What can we learn from the raccoon?

The raccoon teaches us that no door remains closed to us if we keep trying to open it. This is true in our own prayer life as well as in the larger picture of spreading the gospel all over the world. Jesus tells us in Matthew 7:1, *“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.”* Just as the raccoon keeps working at a problem, such as how to open a door and eventually succeeds, so should we use the same approach to prayer and spreading the gospel.

The raccoon also teaches us about cleanliness. The raccoon does not eat anything without first cleaning it and checking for pieces that it cannot eat. This lesson applies to our faith as well. We should not just believe anything we hear but rather

we should compare ideas with the Bible to see if they are good ideas or bad ones. We should “wash” our beliefs in the wisdom of the Bible to make sure we believe what God wants us to believe. Just as the raccoon throws away anything it cannot safely eat, we should throw away anything that goes against the teachings of the Bible. The Bible tells us in 2nd Timothy 3:16, *“All Scripture (the Word of God, the Bible) is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

Just as the raccoon ferociously defends itself against its enemies, we should ferociously defend our faith in Jesus. We must defend our faith against Satan and all who would try to make us feel that we cannot trust Jesus to forgive our sins or make fun of us because our religion. Jesus tells us in John 15:18, *“If the world hates you keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.”* It is a great comfort to know that Jesus chose each one of us personally to be saved from our sins. Jesus cares so much for us that He gave His life to save us and then invites

each of us to believe in Him and, one day, live with Him in heaven.

Just as the raccoon is at home in the forest or the city, we also can be at home here on earth and one day, in heaven with Jesus. God created this wonderful world for us. It is our home. One day, we will live in heaven for all eternity and it will be far more beautiful than any place on earth.

