

Ginger the Wunderdog . . .

One Sabbath Jesus showed up at His hometown synagogue in Nazareth and had the Scripture reading (Luke 4:14ff). It caused such a fuss that they tried to toss Him over the cliff at the end of the service.

In the midst of this most unfortunate reception, Jesus told His hearers in Luke 4:24 that "No prophet is accepted in his hometown." This is such a universal principle. The people who are closest to us usually do not garner much of our respect or praise. The grass is always greener, the person is always more talented on the other side of the fence.

Take our dog Ginger. Ginger is a mutt, a medium-sized-Benji-like dog with curly brown hair and the crookedness teeth in the world. We got her several years ago and she has grown up with the family. Right away she became attached to my wife and still follows her everywhere that Diana goes in the house.

Now I grew up with hunting dogs who stayed in pens in the backyard. They were not really pets but provided my father with eager dogs who would flush out the deer during the hunting season. They had names like Mike and Duke and would run all day out in the open air. I can tell you that none of them had a name like "Ginger" slept indoors and were apparently "spoiled."

When we moved over near the hills I got a mountain bike and began riding it. I often thought how my father would take his dogs to the hills and how they would delight to run their hearts out. But all I had was Ginger—Miss tenderfoot--who only got up to eat and chase the occasional cat.

To this day I don't know what got into me, but I decided to take Ginger for a little run in the hills. She always liked riding in the car, so I packed my bike and the dog and headed towards the mountains.

Now I was fully expecting for Ginger to whine by the side of the road, get lost, not keep up--act "Gingerly." When we hit the trail I was somewhat surprised that Ginger, like the hunting dogs, would keep right with me when going up the hill. I was even more shocked that she became a speed demon and endurance champ when going down the hill. She literally ran herself to exhaustion.

At the end of the ride I knew that I had found a new mountain companion. For several years afterwards, whenever Ginger would see me getting prepared to ride, she would get super-excited and I would often take her to the mountains.

As Jesus said, "No dog is accepted in their hometown." Do you have people, children, students, employees, employers around you today that have been cast into "they can't do much" category? Give them a chance. Take them to the hills. You might be surprised how well they can run.