

Finding the Right Trajectory

I'd given upwards of \$30 dollars for my compound bow at the pawn shop, and that was quite a chunk of change for me back in those days. My teenage brother Heath was a mite jealous though. He'd never admit it, but it had to be eating at him his old hand me down bow wasn't spray painted camouflage like this baby. You should've seen his eyes when I whipped out my brand new arrows.

"Where in the world did you get those big javelins?" he ragged.

"Fellow down at the hunting shop said they were just what I needed for a bow like this." I answered. "He even cut me a deal... said these are what you call 'Dead-Stock'."

Heath just sighed and shook his head, "You big dummy, you should've got the ones for deer hunting, not for killing livestock. I ain't getting in no more trouble cause of you!"

Now any good hunter worth his salt knows you'd better fling a few towards a target before you go trying to stick a deer, so we stopped by an indoor bow shooting range. We Sheffield boys have never been what you might call, "lacking for confidence", so we busted in like we owned the place. The regulars took one look at our antique bows and started snickering. I flared my wings and was ready to turn on them, but Heath pulled me aside.

"It ain't but six or seven of them," he reasoned, "It wouldn't be fair for em' to have to fight both the Sheffield's."

Knowing he was right, I just grit my teeth while they went on bragging about their new fiber optic sights and highfalutin bows that would shoot 300' per second. I wanted to say something smart, but I couldn't think of anything. What could I say? My bow was largely untested, and I'd pretty much outrun one of Heath's arrows last time he'd shot at me.

Finally, I swaggered up to the line intending to show these hot shots its accuracy that really matters anyway. I was notching one of my 'Dead-Stocks' when the guy in the lane next to me pulled back with his fancy trigger release and let one zip. Thump! His little graphite dart buried itself deep into the edge of his bull's eye, along with several others he'd grouped. I only sniffed, flashed an overbite usually reserved for dancing, and yanked my string back the old fashioned way, with my fingers.

As they always say, "You could have heard a pin drop." Two skittish fellows dove for cover when I swung around, but other than that, all eyes were on me. I let her fly. That big Javelin barrel rolled down the lane like a wet North Korean bottle rocket. When it finally stuck I couldn't believe it- Right in the bull's eye!

I spun around confidently, hitched up my pants and waited for the applause. Dead silence- then the clanging of my arrow as it fell out onto the concrete floor. (Maybe that's the pin drop everyone's always listening for?) Then some guy two lanes down shouted, "Hey! That's my target." I felt my wing flaring again.

But anyway - This kind of behavior was not uncommon for me before I met Jesus. I'd always be puffed up and making a fool of myself while threatening anyone who would challenge my right to arrogance. It's only God's grace I didn't run into to the wrong person and end up as a stick of kudzu fertilizer. If only somebody would've come to me and warned me the Bible says in **Romans 12:3** not to think of yourself more highly than you ought! Naaw... I'd have probably just considered them fighting words.

Well if it's true you are what you eat, then I figure I must be a crow. For years it's all I seemed to eat, and it was spoiling my appetite for life. I was miserable. I thought I had to put up a big front all the time. All the while I was just too dumb to know that over compensating for my insecurities was not leading to the acceptance I was longing for. That could only be found in Jesus. Within God's great Love I didn't find such a need to exalt myself and belittle others. In Him I found everything I needed to be complete. Besides- (*"For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."* **Luke 14:11** KJV). Believe me. I've proved this one out.

If you're having trouble finding the right trajectory in your life, why don't you give your heart to Jesus? Let His Holy Spirit began to sight you in. It's worked for Heath and me. We're super humble these days. You can ask anybody, I'm personally like the king of humble! I'm probably the most humble... Well, okay, maybe I still got a little wobble in my flight pattern, but at least heading towards the right target now. I'm still working at it. I'll bet those hot shots down at the archery place are still working at getting Heath's arrows out of the ceiling. Hee hee hee...

-Guy Sheffield 8-31-06