

Hitching Up to a Divine Plan

When I was nineteen, my grandpa broke down and bought one of those fancy new fiberglass bass boats. I don't know why. Papa was "Old School", and after the first trip he'd already labeled the whole rig a 'new fangled waste of money'. He also lambasting its new foot controlled trolling motor with some mighty fancy Italian cuss words.

It wasn't until after Papa declared he was going back to fishing in his Jon boat that my little brother Heath and I recognized how we could profit from the deal. We immediately began peppering him with a volley of begging, the likes the world has never known. Of course under such intense mental torment, Papa eventually broke and agreed to let us use the new boat, on the condition we'd leave right away.

Papa walked over to the little four-cylinder Datsun B-210 I was driving at the time and quipped, "You ain't got no trailer hitch der boy!" Then he turned on me as if I should be ashamed. I shrugged coyly as he dug angrily into his pocket and threw me the keys to his pickup. I can still recall the furrow in his bushy eyebrows as he watched us drive off.

We'd backed the boat in the lake twice before realizing what a difference a little boat plug can make. After bailing for half an hour we finally tore out from the dock like we owned the place. We motored up and down the lake most of the morning throwing our wake on just about every unsuspecting fisherman around. When that grew tiring I suggested we head out to the river to find a little peace and quiet.

"Yeah," Heath agreed, "There's too many folks screaming at us around here."

Once on the mighty Mississippi Heath started fishing a big rock retaining wall that lined the little inlet. I was fiddling with the new fangled trolling motor when I heard him gasp. I looked up to see his eyes bugging like two big grapefruits on a stick.

"What?" I asked.

He just pointed.

Apparently a huge barge had just passed and we were about to engage the wrath of its four foot wakes. Some on the lake that day might've said a well deserved pay back was on the way.

I reached for the ignition, but my mind went blank with fear. I kept turning the choke switch instead. That didn't help!

The first of those monster swells nearly toppled us. That delicate little fiberglass boat was thrown up against those rocks with a crash. I stuck out a paddle, Heath gamely threw out a leg, but nothing would hold us off. The waves were just too big. I began to hope maybe we'd drown so we wouldn't have to face Papa.

It was a somber boat ride back to the landing. We put her on the trailer and checked the bottom. It was pretty banged up. We could only hope Papa was too old to stoop down and see the damage.

Heath was quick to shake it all off and began begging me to let him drive. "Why not," I huffed, "The day couldn't get much worse." Besides, he'd be old enough to get his license in a couple of years and he'd need some practice pulling a boat.

For some reason though, Papa's truck didn't seem to have a lot of get up and go with Heath at the wheel. It even began to overheat. I did think Heath showed wisdom beyond his years by pulling over every time the steam rose up and blocked his vision. We agreed he could just make up for the delays by driving faster between boil overs.

On the last little stretch of gravel before making it home I noticed a mighty cloud of dust coming up on us fast. "Heath," I warned, "Don't you ever drive as fast as that idiot on a gravel road!"

As the cloud blazed past Heath declared, "That looked like a B-210 hauling a Jon boat!" "Yeah," I said with a sinking feeling, "A green one, just like mine."

I'm sure you've heard it said, "What comes around goes around." Well that's just old school for what the Bible says in **Galatians 6:7**. (*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* KJV)

It's a great Scripture, except for when you're the one whose been making the waves! Then even flipping the choke switch won't help. You can expect to have your bottom side tore up when those waves gather strength and turn back around.

Sin always comes with a big price tag. It will hitch you up to some trailers that you're not equipped to haul.

Maybe your load is too heavy right now, and you feel like your engine is about to boil. Pull over! Unhitch that sin and hook up to the old plow of repentance until the Lord can give you your vision back. It sure beats pretending you're getting away with something when you're not.

But anyway- I ended up getting a free trailer hitch out of the deal. It looked great welded to my Datsun B-210, which was already quite the chick magnet. Papa's truck eventually cooled off, but he said it would've driven a lot better IF WE'D HAVE TAKEN THE EMERGENCY BRAKE OFF!!! I can still recall the furrow in his bushy eyebrows when he said it.

-Guy Sheffield 3-30-06