

It's Best to Shoot Straight with God

The tale of how I acquired my new Browning rifle has become legendary around the office, at least to those married guys with direct deposit like me. They've made me tell it again and again. I don't even have to exaggerate to have them sit there and stare at me in awe. I can almost see their little wheels spinning.

Often one of them will pull me to the side, "Listen, I got my eye on this new big screen. You got any suggestions?" They refuse to even consider I may have acquired that rifle innocently, with hardly any conniving.

The rifle came about on this wise.

My little brother Heath had taken to spinning our childhood tales everyday at lunch in our work break room. Unfortunately, a lot of his recollection seemed to center on how I used to bully him. It's not that I didn't enjoy hearing about my glory days, but he was really rallying a lot of sympathy at my expense. So I figured I'd better quash his thunder a bit.

I thought and thought, but only one solution came to mind; and since Heath was more rightly classified as a younger brother now than a little one, I had a few reservations about trying bullying him again. I just couldn't figure out what to do. Then the thought hit me, you're a Christian now, "You could always pray!" So I did. I laid the whole twisted tale out there on the table before God.

Big mistake! Or at least I thought so at the time. The Lord seemed to side with dumb ole' Heath! He wrenched me out like a wet beach towel and hung me out under such conviction that I began to have a series of very strange thoughts, like I might need to make it up to Heath or something.

Then an idea hit me. Begrudgingly, I knew what I must do. I gathered my courage and took my plans to the boss.

My wife listened intently, and even seemed genuinely sympathetic when I told her how bad I felt for whomping that little wimp all those years. In fact, she was close to tears by the end of my speech, so I finished strong, "It would just mean the world to me if I could just get him that new Browning rifle he's been hankering for."

Maybe she'd heard some of Heath's sob stories before, because she simply sniffled and uttered the words every husband longs to hear. "I'll get the checkbook."

The next day we got that knucklehead a brand new Browning. I was sorely tempted to skip town and keep it for myself. Then the thought hit me, "The Lord is already in it, I better just stick with the plan." So I did.

I wrapped the gun up in some old Christmas paper and dropped it off by Heath's house that night while he was out. I left him a note explaining how I just wanted to be a good brother for once. I guess I even meant it, because it kind of felt good.

Heath called me later. I'd never heard him more excited. He chattered on and on about that rifle. Then he sprung it on me. He and his wife had been talking. Since he'd already saved up the money to buy a rifle for himself they wanted to use it to buy me one just like it.

Of course, I put up a good fight and all, but then the thought hit me, "Who was I to rob poor ole' Heath of all the joy this 'giving' stuff was bringing?"

It turns out shooting straight with God was a good idea after all. Once I enlisted His help He hit me with one good idea after another!

Maybe that's what King David meant when he said, (*Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah. Psalms 62:8 KJV*).

You don't have to read very much of the Psalms to realize King David wasn't afraid to share things with God; good, bad, or ugly. He just laid his feelings right out there, and God didn't strike him down or anything. In fact, I think the Lord actually honored him for it.

It may be a crazy thought, but what if God already knows about all our secret rubbish? What if He's glad when we finally get real enough with ourselves that we can get real with Him? It worked for King David. He just stayed right there on the potter's wheel, and God was able to shape quite a man out of him.

But anyway- Sometimes you can almost see my wife's wheels spinning when I pull out my new rifle. Yet she can't deny the whole situation has helped to bring Heath and me closer. In fact, Heath's turned out to be just about the best brother ever. Odd really, for someone who once accused me of giving him 'dain bramage'.

-Guy Sheffield 3-23-06