

Just Preaching, or Telling the Truth?

My daughter Kailey has always been picky about restaurants. When she was little she figured they should all either serve milk, have a jukebox, or at least sport some sort of live fish. Although the Chinese buffet had made strides in her estimation with the addition of their new shark tank, the Waffle House generally always topped her list. I recall one early morning visit there in particular when she was five.

I held her little hand tenderly as we parted the low cloud of cigarette smoke to our usual booth. The sizzle of bacon and the clanging of the spatula nearly drowned out the 'Waffle House Boogie' which was seeping from the crusty ceiling speakers. A long line of bedraggled customers eyeballed us suspiciously from the counter. Obviously we stood out; being the only ones who'd been home from the previous night.

We ordered and I, being a gung-ho new Christian, set out to teach Kailey about Jesus' command to spread the Gospel. Unfortunately, it seemed my lecture was going over no better than it does at most Churches. Besides, I could barely get a word in edgewise.

"Daddy, daddy, Can I have a quarter?" she kept interrupting.

I knew I was in for an uphill battle. Before I could even begin my dissertation from the Strong's Concordance I could see she wasn't paying attention. I was starting to feel a wave of self righteous anger well up. Don't kids even care about the souls of mankind! Suddenly she switched gears and gave me a start.

"Go tell em' bout Jesus daddy," She squeaked, pointing at a booth full of big rough looking bikers. After a quick study of the situation, I decided it was best to give Kailey that quarter after all.

"Here sweetheart," I smiled, "Why don't you run play the 'Waffle House Shuffle' again on the jukebox?"

She wiped her milk mustache on her sleeve and took off. I must admit, while she was gone I did a little Waffle House shuffle of my own.

"Lord, please let her forget about those bikers by the time she gets back!"

She didn't. In fact, she came back with the quarter. "Here daddy, give em' dis monies when you tell em' bout Jesus."

Five year olds! Do they never tire of ruining your good sermons with their simplistic views of reality? Don't they understand simple concepts like, "Do as I say, not as I do!"?

Of course, Jesus was somehow able to value such simple childlike faith. He made that clear in **Mark 10:15**. (*Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.* KJV)

But anyway- I was beginning to sweat by that point. Looking into my big ole' sack full of Christian excuses I whined, "I just don't feel led right now honey." Then, to my shame, I added, "You go. It's your idea."

She just looked at me with those big blue eyes. She'd forced me into a corner. So I did something I didn't know I had in me. I went. Oh... don't get me wrong, I went afraid. But I went. I don't exactly recall what I said to those big bikers; something about Jesus. But you know what? They didn't kill me or anything!

I may never know if my witness mattered to those bikers that day, that's between them and God; but I believe it mattered to Kailey. I know it mattered to the Lord.

-Guy Sheffield 6-13-06