

Laying a Foundation for Generations to Come

I was buckling my six year olds seat belt last Sunday morning when I noticed a far off look in his eyes. “What you thinking Josh,” I inquired.

“Thinking about playing,” He stated simply. Then nodding, as if considering it further he added, “I’m like the KING of playing.” I’ll give it to him. The boy does have one of the most active imaginations I’ve ever seen. You toss him an old gum wrapper and thirty seconds later he’s slaying a dragon with it- and not without a full array of accompanying sound effects. He’ll take one of my old Matchbox cars and entertain himself for hours. I don’t know where he gets it.

I ventured another question on the drive to Church. “So why you been getting up so early to go with daddy?” (I usually get there two hours early for Praise team practice.)

“I like a little peace and quiet,” he quipped, “Momma and Sissy are toooooo loud.” That didn’t require further explanation, so we both nodded and rode on.

Once at the Church we each settled in to our routines; him playing with cars, and me with guitars. Later when I went to the men’s room I was startled by a voice from the stall, “Hey daddy.”

I looked around, thinking I was hearing things. “That you Josh?”

“Yeah,” he giggled, “I seen your big ole’ feet.”

After a flush he busted out of the stall stating, “You’re a Bigfoot daddy. If you walked like Frankenstein you’d kick yourself in the face. Hee hee hee...”

While I stood there trying to decide if that was funny or not, he rushed out and got big laughs with the guys on the praise team. What a wise guy! I don’t know where he gets it.

After Church my Christian rock band SoulFood had a date booked at the local nursing home. When Joshua heard, he begged to go.

“Aren’t you tired yet?” I implored, “You’ve already put in quite a day.”

He looked up at me as if I’d busted the stitches on my frontal lobotomy, or at least wiggled my neck bolt loose. He completely ignored my silly question and rushed me with a litany of his own, concerning what band equipment we’d be bringing. Not that he cared how we sounded. He just wanted to know how much gear he’d get to tote to prove his muscles. What a show off. I don’t know where he gets it.

Joshua ran circles around us old timers at the load in, and after everything was set up, he hit me up about the snack machine. I extolled him briefly about the virtues of capitalism and flipped him a dollar for his hard work. He came back with a bag of Funyans.

Soon the crowd rolled in (literally). Joshua grabbed a table up front and whipped out a candy bar of mysterious origins. There was no time to ask, so I just shook my head and began the show. Somewhere along the set I lost track of him. It wasn’t until we eased into a soothing worship song from which to launch an altar call that I heard from him again. It was in the form of a terribly off key clanging from across the hall. He was banging on an old piano! I tried to flag him down, but he was jamming way too hard to be distracted. Finally, I screamed in the microphone, “Josh!” He pounded one last note and spun around with all the swagger of Jerry Lee Lewis hawking a new ego enhancing drug. There was a moment of silence, followed thankfully, by a room full of chuckles. With the new lighter mood, three patients went on to give their hearts to Jesus. Praise the Lord, the boys anointed!

Joshua sauntered back to his seat where he opened three packages of peanut butter crackers. I watched disgustedly as he maneuvering them around the dirty table like checker pieces until I couldn’t help myself.

“Josh!” I lamented, “Where’d you get those?”

He parted his lips to smile and spewed out enough crumbs to choke a stump grinder. Again chuckles filled the room. One lady waved me off, “Honey, you leave that boy to us. We’re taking good care of him.”

After the service Joshua tagged along while I shook hands and prayed for folks. What a delight it was to watch him hit his knees and bow reverently beside those wheelchairs; a humbling moment that really puts a dad’s heart in his throat. Joshua’s so sweet. I don’t know where he... Oh yeah I do. He gets that from his momma.

But anyway- Overall it was just another typical Sunday with my boy. He and his sister have a unique way of helping me keep life in perspective. I reckon there’s no task I’ve been asked to do that could rival the responsibility I have to raise them both to know and follow the Lord. Abraham was chosen to be the father of

our faith because of that. God said, (*For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.* **Genesis 18:19** KJV)

Hopefully, when it's Josh's turn to be dad he'll have a firm foundation of God's ways under his Franken feet, and he'll pass it on down.

-Guy Sheffield 5-08-07