

## Standing Upright Before God (Part1)

The newspaper ad read 'Beautiful upright antique piano \$100'. I called the number. I'd been hankering to join that upper echelon who boasts a piano in their cramped living room. Some sleepy sounding fellow answered, which was odd, it being late afternoon. I asked him if I could come over and kick around under the hood. After a heavy sigh, then what I surmised to be a yawn, he finally managed, "Ohhhkay".

"Doesn't sound in tune," I said plunking down on the faded yellow keys. The sleepy seller's expression never changed. He just scratched himself, wiped his nose on his pajama sleeve, and shrugged. I didn't figure this fellow to be too bright, so I offered him seventy five bucks. Sleepy looked even more confused, if that was possible, maybe even a little dopey. "I'll have to ask my mom when she gets home," he muttered, "She said she was hoping to get sixty out of it."

Suddenly the piano looked a lot nicer to me. I slapped three twenties on him and asked if he'd help me load it up. You should've seen Sleepy's jaw drop at the mention of work. He began mumbling something about what time his momma got home. I just shook my head and walked out to back my truck up to the door.

I grunted and heaved and pulled most every muscle in my body scooting that four hundred pound chunk of junk out the door. It was enough to cause a fellow to have second thoughts, especially when I noticed how easily its finish peeled off on the door jam.

Once outside we took a break. Of course I say 'we' lightly. I was sweating like a New Orleans cab driver. Sleepy hadn't even bothered to set down his coffee cup. Mostly he'd just stood there sighing repeatedly. In fact, I had to threaten him to finally get him to help me lift one end up onto the tailgate.

As I was giving one last herniated push to slide it aboard I heard a metallic thud behind me. It was a deadbolt slapping into place. It seems Sleepy secretly slipped silently inside. (Say that three times real fast!)

Since I hadn't thought to bring any tie downs, I purposed to drive it down the steep yard at a snail's pace. Everything was going fine until my front wheels edged off the curb. Then the whole truck tilted violently and there was a huge 'BLAM'! My new 'upright' was now officially a 'down-wrong'.

I rushed out to survey the damage. It was substantial. The foot pedals had fallen off. Splintered wood lay all over the truck bed. I climbed in and tried to wrestle it back upright, but I hadn't the strength. Up at the house I noticed the curtains suspiciously wiggling shut. It was then I experienced one of those rare moments of clarity, "I should just dump this thing off right here on the curb and cut my losses." I gave it serious thought, but sadly, dismissed the idea and drove it on home. I guess mere fleeting moments of sanity were never enough to penetrate my thick skull back in those days.

The story doesn't stop there, but I reckon I will for now. Because before I go I'd like to ask you one question. Is your life making music? Or does everything just seem to be out of tune in your heart? Maybe you've got it all 'down-wrong'? You've got to be careful you know, sleepy satan's craftier than he looks. He'd love nothing better than to pawn off a heavy load on you with no intention of helping you carry it.

Listen, the best deal is getting 'upright' with God. The only way to do that is to give your life to Jesus. *(Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright. Psalms 20:7-8 KJV)*

But anyway- I'll tell you the rest of the story later. In the meantime, why don't you just save yourself a lot of grief and let this be one of those skull penetrating moments of clarity for you?

-Guy Sheffield 10-23-07