

Walking Humbly with Your God

I didn't know a mufferless station wagon could pass an eighteen wheeler on one of those interstate loops, but at fourteen, I reckon I didn't know a lot of things. I did know if I wanted to see fifteen I'd better get "Drunken Yee-Haw man" to let me out of this hot-rod. I noticed my best friend Ray had his finger nails dug into his arm rest too. He shot me a "you really know how to pick em'" look. Then he shouted over the scream of the engine, "Hey man, you can just let us out here."

That Yee-Haw fellow, who seemed to be using his thumbs to navigate, dangerously took one of them off the wheel to scratch his greasy mane before slurring, "I thought you little dudes said you lived in south Memphis?"

Before you know it, we're standing in a strange neighborhood watching Yee-Haw screech off into oncoming traffic. I wanted to kiss the ground. However, clearly there was a long walk ahead of us, so we lumbered off. We made it home around midnight to find both of our moms waiting out on the stoop, hands wringing and feet tapping; ready to spit nails and chew our tails.

Once inside I tried to convince my mom it was Ray who'd talked me into sneaking off downtown to that rock concert. He'd talked me into staying when our ride threatened to leave. He'd showed me how to swipe beer from unwatched coolers. He even made me drink them!

"That Ray," I exclaimed, "I might've ended up a good kid if it weren't for him!" I went to bed that night with a fitting finale for the day; grounded for life, and pretty confident Ray had been down the street giving an identical sob story to his mom about me.

I always hated when I got grounded for life. Sometimes it could last for days. Thankfully, the next morning Ray's mom didn't feel like going out, so she promised to un-ground Ray if he walked to the store and got her a coke. When my momma heard, she feared I'd expound on the injustice of it all. Her motherly instincts had never been more in tune. I did so for hours.

She was resisting pretty good until I resorted to plan B. "Mom," I said reluctantly, "If you'll de-ground me I'll potentially consider the possibility of hypothetically cleaning my room." She just couldn't help herself. "Deal," she blurted out. I ran to tell my little brother Heath the good news, and of course, to strong arm him into doing the cleaning. "Only if it comes down to it," I promised. To make a long story short, by nightfall Ray and I were out running the streets again.

But anyway- It's a miracle I survived those rebellious years of my life. Some people may say I was just sowing my 'wild oats', but that whole concept is a lame diversion from the truth. I only need three little letters to describe what I was doing, 'SIN'. If I had some kind of wild hormone thing going I should have found some different avenues for them, like school activities or sports. Maybe I could've used all that extra energy to do something good for God's kingdom?

My poor mom did her best, but I was just out of control, and not a day goes by I don't feel the sting of those wasted years. I'm so thankful God finally humbled me and taught me to stop plotting my course with my thumbs. Yee-Haw's thrill ride won't get you home. It'll land you somewhere you don't want to go; grounded for eternity. Blaming Ray won't work with God either.

A journey towards a life worth living must begin with one small step; howbeit an important one; to call on Jesus out of a humble heart. Let Him take you by the hand and teach you to walk in the right direction. (*He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?* **Micah 6:8 KJV**)

Take it from someone who's been down a lot of roads, walking with the Lord is much better than riding with the devil.

-Guy Sheffield 10-26-06