

BUGGIN' OUT!

Newsletter

Applying Biblical Truth and Humor to the Struggle.

I Wouldn't Change a Thing

I found an old photograph of me as I was helping my aunt clean out her attic. I appeared to be about nine years old. It showed me playing with my Hotwheels cars on the carpet. My mother was in the background smoking a cigarette, while drinking coffee with a neighbor. The photo was dry and cracked.

As I stared at and analyzed nine year old me, I was overcome by a conviction to go back in time and give myself a “heads up” about what was coming my way. I drifted into thought:

Robbie, if only you could know what I know. In a few years, you will be sent away to a military boarding school where you will be sexually abused by a group of older students.

During this time, you will get word that your father has died of congestive heart failure. The sexual abuse will continue uninterrupted for several years and your sheltered childhood will become merely a memory. You will develop homosexually, longing for the strength and love of a man to protect you, as your dad would have done.

In desperation, you will cry out to a Savior named Jesus Christ, whom you know very little about, except that “Jesus loves the little children of the world”.

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By age 14, you no longer want to play with Hotwheels, but instead entertain elaborate schemes of revenge to punish your abusers. Your dreams will become infused with extreme homoeroticism.

In your later years, you will learn to adapt to adult responsibilities like meeting deadlines, paying bills, and supervising others in the workplace. But inside, you will feel like a little boy playing grown-up games.

In your late 20's, loneliness will drive you to reason with suicide.

In your 30's, you still have not figured out how to embrace manhood for yourself, nor the self-image, confidence, or warrior yelp that are privileges of it—qualities you readily notice and pine for in other men. Consequently, you will seek out manhood artificially through anonymous sexual encounters with more than 3,000 men.

Your childhood battles with anger, horrification, and confusion will not have healed but will be joined by new adult battles against hopelessness, anxiety over AIDS, and the fear of having lived a wasted life.

There will also lurk in your heart a suspicion that Jesus indeed abandoned you. That He, along with the “righteous” will someday rejoice at your death when you go to your reward of eternal damnation with all the other

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“unredeemables” who chose to live carnal and unholy lives, rather than obey God.

But, little Robbie, you will ultimately learn an exciting truth on your journey, so put down your Hotwheels and listen up.

Robbie, when you cried out to Jesus Christ in your turmoil, He dropped everything and He ran to you. He has been with us ever since.

Tough times are coming your way, and I am telling you this good news so that you might begin hoping for something now, at age nine, that we were afraid to hope for until very late in life: HEALING.

Healing is a gift of individualized grace, divinely handed to us when we confess our inability to heal ourselves. It garners momentum every time we defy the charge of hypocrisy and cry out to Jesus for forgiveness after each backslide into sin, even if that means 10 times a day.

When Satan wages war on a man, he isn't after the man's temporal flesh. No. Satan craves the eternal trophy of a man's heart. And Satan works to gain control of a man's heart through assaults on his flesh. When a man's

heart is robbed of hope, Satan moves in and claims dominion over it.

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But, when a man deliberately and relentlessly kneels before the Cross and acknowledges his sin and brokenness, his heart is boldly proclaiming its absolute refusal to call Satan “master”, even though his flesh may have already succumbed. Robbie, as long as there is hope in your heart, Satan cannot claim it.

My aunt’s doorbell rang and distracted me.

I gently put down the photograph and realized that nine year old Robbie the innocent, 13 year old Robbie the victim, 14 year old Rob the avenger, 20 year old Robert the loner, and 30 year old Robert the gay sex addict were now strangers to me. I no longer shared their identities or their passions.

I was reminded of a Kathy Troccoli song called *How Would I Know*:

*How would I know You could deliver??
How would I know You could set free
If there had never been a battle how would I know the
victory?*

I gazed down again at nine year old me and smiled with resignation. Why was I rambling on? Nine year old me was about to embark on a guided voyage into Truth and didn’t need the wisdom and hindsight of 40 year old me. Nine year old me already had the friendship and promise of the eternal One, Jesus Christ, who proclaimed,

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“I will never leave you nor forsake you...I make all things new”.

I could not have been in better hands.

Nope. I wouldn't change a thing.

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