

To Be a Kid Again – October 2016

Michele and I recently spent a week with our grandsons, celebrating their fourth and fifth birthdays; they were born 360 days apart. It was a wonderful week and provided a fantastic excuse to get down on the floor and play with cool stuff. Each boy received a bike so we had the joy of watching that experience. And 'mote control cars are just too awesome for words!

For a week, I didn't think as much as usual about church or work or the "troubles of the world," as the old spiritual goes. I was with family and immersed in the world of little boys; which made me think of being a little boy (back in the Dark Ages, but I do still remember it); which made me think of my parents and how much I miss them. It's funny how life falls into a routine after losing someone, yet even years later a thought or an object or a memory will catch you up short and the pain is fresh again.

This week also made me realize that there is still a little boy inside of me. I would suspect there is a little boy or little girl inside each of us. My little boy gets overlooked quite a bit because of those previously mentioned "troubles of the world," but he's still there. He can still feel the sense of excitement at a new discovery, still feel the pride of having a little girl pay attention to him (even if she's a big girl now), and still feel the joy of just running and playing and waking up every morning to a new day.

But a man also feels uncertainty. No matter how old the man is, he feels the uncertainty that was foreign to the younger boy. He wonders if he's good enough, if he's done enough, if he has taken care of his family, if he will be remembered. He longs for the simplicity of childhood when the biggest problem was having to share a toy. He longs for reassurance from his dad, the love of his mom, and the joy of an uncomplicated life.

I realize not everyone had an idyllic childhood. Many are happy to leave theirs in the past. Also, I would never trade being a kid again for the joys of marriage and fatherhood and the other pleasures life has brought me. But sometimes I just want that little kid feeling again.

We can have that feeling. Believers are all children, children of God. He is a Father who loves, forgives, reassures, corrects, comforts and rejoices with us. And compared to Him, we're all little boys and girls. If you want to recapture your childhood, turn to the arms of God. In Matthew 18:3-4, Jesus says, *"Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."* And when children were brought to Him, He said in Matthew 19:14, *"Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."*

I love my grandsons. There is no subterfuge in their lives (or very little, anyway). They wear their hearts on their sleeves and their joy is overwhelming and contagious. Jesus says we need to have the humility of children, implying a simple, trusting faith. We don't need to overcomplicate our faith. My grandsons don't overcomplicate things. They play, they fight, they laugh, they cry and they keep moving. They trust their parents even though they don't always like the rules their parents enforce. But they go to bed each night knowing they are loved and they wake up each morning secure in the knowledge that they will be taken care of in the coming day. I could do with a bit more of that simple, trusting faith ... and a cool 'mote control car.