

PURE SIMPLICITY

A daddy was telling me a story the other day about his two daughters when they were young girls. It's a beautifully sweet story that I believe is worth passing on.

The dad had taken his two daughters to the golf course. He was a golfer himself, and also coached high school golf for a year or two. His older daughter, probably a freshman at the time, was competing on the golf team and the goal in going to the course that day was to help her improve her game. The younger sister, around 6 years old, wanted to go because dad was there. She had always been in her dad's hip pocket and this day was no different. (Now, I confess that I am not a golfer. I have never played a round of golf in my life so I hope I get my terminology correct.) The older daughter was having trouble getting the ball anywhere near the hole so Dad pointed out that she needed to use a different club. The daughter argued with her dad / coach and explained to him that her friend was a really good golfer and she didn't use a 7 iron like he was suggesting...she used a 9 iron. She chose to ignore her dad's suggestion and stuck with the 9 iron. The dad let her continue on knowing full well she was not using the club that would work well for her. Throughout the afternoon, he would make his suggestions only to hit a brick wall...a teenager that thought she knew more than her dad. A simple solution at hand yet she chose to go her own way.

All of this time, the younger one was following along just happy to be there with Daddy. She would stop and observe the interaction between her dad and her sister for a few minutes and then it was back to bopping around...ponytail flipping with every skip. After a while, she tugged on Dad's shorts leg and said, "Can I try now?" She had her own little set of inexpensive golf clubs although she had never had any formal lessons. Dad agreed to let her take a turn, as he needed a refreshing break from watching the older daughter's swings and misses.

"Yes, Honey, you may go now" the dad replied.

"What one (club) do I use?" the wee one asked.

"I believe this one will work just right for you" said Dad, pulling a small club out of the bag.

"Now what do I do?"

"Ok, hold your club like this" Dad demonstrated by wrapping his arms around her and placing his hands on hers. "Pull way back. Swing around, follow through and keep your eye on the ball. As you get right here, flip your wrist just like this."

"Ok!" said the young daughter taking it all in.

The young girl stepped up to the ball, did just like Dad said, swung and came within a foot or so from a hole in one. It was the same hole that the older sister had struggled with all afternoon; only big sister never got anywhere near that close. Daddy and little girl were so excited but, as one could guess, the older sister did not share in their celebration. Her response

was, "I've been trying that all day and I never get that close. She's 6 years old and she steps up the first time and almost nails it. THAT'S IT!!!! I QUIT!!!!"

The dad quickly explained to the older golfer that her little sister had success because she listened and did exactly what she was told to do. The little one realized she didn't have a clue how to play and had to trust her daddy. He pointed out to his beloved older daughter that she thought she knew more than he did and was comparing herself to another golfer. That combination never worked. The club that he had suggested she use was more suitable for her strength and ability. The golfers she was trying to be like had different strengths and characteristics and that's why they did something different. He also taught her that there was nothing to be ashamed of if you had to be different and that most times being different brought more success than being a cookie cutter golfer.

As I was being told this story, a grin came across my face. The man asked what I was smiling about and I told him he had no idea the lesson he just shared in that story. Holy Spirit was all over it and teaching me a lesson once more.

You see, so many times we are like the teenage daughter. We go to the course to learn how to *perform* better. We are struggling with issues in our lives, or just not having the success we desire. We are not seeing the promises of God come to pass for us so we ask the Father to teach us what we need to do. However, when He gives us instructions from Heaven custom fitted for our situation, we argue because so and so is not doing it that way or it doesn't make sense to us. So, like the golfer that knew better than her coach, we continue on in frustration 'swinging and missing' in our own strength. 'Our religion does it this way' or 'a friend suggested we try this method' so we ignore the teachings of the One who has the answers. Then, eventually, along comes a new believer. Their desire is just to hang out with Dad. They just want to be in His presence....in His hip pocket. They aren't the least bit worried about their performance. Out of that Presence, they begin to ask the questions, "Can I try now?" and "How do I do it?" They listen and then go out in that childlike faith. They get the results we've been striving for years to obtain. Oh, how that adds to our frustration. Again, like the older sister, our response many times is, "That's it! I quit!! This isn't working for me. Why do I try to get more of God? I work and work and work to no avail and this new one comes in and sees it all happen!"

The Father gently explains, "It's the childlike faith I'm after in you. You don't have all the answers...you weren't meant to. All you have to do is hang out with Me, ask, 'Can I try?' and then inquire of Me 'How do I do it?' It doesn't have to make sense to you and it doesn't have to look like someone else. I created you. I know your strengths. I know your weaknesses. I know the plans I have for you. I know how to personally equip you with all you need to just do what I say. Trust me. Be willing, ask, hear My voice and then move with Me. The results you're craving will follow."

Then the Father closed His teaching to me that day with the very words quoted by His Son in Matthew 18:

The Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven

¹ At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

² He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. ³ And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Pure simplicity. That’s what coming as a little child is all about. No laws, no pre-conceived ideas, no stress...just “Daddy, how do I do it?”