

Blog 6 - Little Red

School was in full swing, and the reality that this was it—that the real world was right in front of me—started to sink in quickly. I had no clue what that looked like for me. I felt like a little kid playing baseball, out in left field trying to catch butterflies with my glove. I was wearing the uniform and thought I was ready to play, but I was totally distracted and unprepared. Life is hard and confusing. I think this can be magnified when growing up fatherless. The leadership and guidance just aren't there like they should be. I want this to be a reminder for the men who are in their kids' lives: PLEASE actually be in their lives. Show up, be involved, ask questions, discipline them, love them, and help prepare them for life.

During my senior year of high school, like most students, I started driving. We didn't have a lot of money, and to be honest, I was shocked we ended up with a second vehicle. It wasn't fancy at all, but there it was, sitting in our driveway: a little red 2WD 1993 Nissan pickup. Yes, it had plenty of dents and scratches, and rust was starting to form on the rear fenders. It also had this bad habit of dying at the worst possible moments. I learned how to back a trailer, drift it sideways, drive in the snow, and, yes, get speeding tickets. I started my first side business mowing lawns and landscaping, putting many miles on it in the process. Man, if that truck could talk, I'd be in trouble.

I remember one day my truck had a starting problem. I wasn't sure what to do or even how to diagnose it. Luckily, someone recommended a guy who lived a street over to help look at it. He took the time to show me how to check a few things. He even went a step further and fixed my truck while showing me the ins and outs of everything involved. This was huge in my life, and I count it as one of my many "snapshot" moments. Men, you'll never know what it can do for someone if you just take the time to listen and teach something.

In Acts chapter 9, we looked at Saul becoming blind. There was another man named Ananias, who was told by God to go talk to Saul, who had become blind. Ananias had heard of Saul and what kind of person he was at the time. He really didn't want to, but God said, "Go." Could you imagine how uncomfortable this probably was for Ananias? He showed up to meet Saul, as God told him to, placed his hands on him, and told him exactly what God had told him to say. The next thing you know, Saul could see again. I want us to look at one thing here: sometimes, as men, we don't want to do something because it's uncomfortable. God calls each one of us to be more. I'm sure that neighbor of mine didn't have the time to help me, but he did. He made a choice. As men, we need to be a little more like Ananias here. Yes, it was uncomfortable, it took time out of his day, and in his case, risked his life to talk to Saul. But because he did, God used something so simple to do a major thing. Saul later changed his name to Paul, who went on to become the most influential person in the New Testament in starting churches. I'm not trying to say I'm like Saul/Paul. My story is still ongoing, and God isn't finished with me.

Between keeping my truck fixed, oil changes, buying tires, and such, I didn't realize I was showing my mom what she needed to see. Like many students when they graduate from high school, people buy gifts. Some are simple and small, while others are big, like a vehicle. My mother saw that I took care of what I had. So, when I graduated, she signed that little red truck

over to me. She reminded me that I was the one to pay the insurance, put fuel in it, fix it, and so on. I remember taking the keys that day, and you could have sworn she had given me a brand-new vehicle by the way I reacted. That little red truck, scratches, dents, and rust, was finally mine.

As we continue on in my life, we will be talking about my early college time, a little more about the little red truck, God's divine appointments, and so much more. I really wish it was all good stuff, but it's not. There are setbacks in my walk, more financial issues, loss, and so much more. This is just the beginning of my adulthood. Sometimes, knowing what I know now, I wish I could go back to this time in my life and talk myself out of some things. But that's all about finding yourself and who you're supposed to be.