



Touchstones of the Heart

Ship In A Bottle

On the day I was born it was reported that my father did cartwheels in the hospital corridor. Cartwheels! I don't know about you, but that makes me feel special. In the 60's when I was born, birth was still a bit of a mystery, because high definition ultrasounds had not been invented parents had to wait until delivery to find out what the sex of the baby was. They told my dad he had a boy, and that was all it took to set him off down the hall. Don't get me wrong, there was equal excitement when my sisters were born, I have a daughter and the sun rises around her for me. However, having a son, one who will carry on your name is something very special. Every boy longs to be prized by his father and you can see it if you spend time with a boy. In the same way every man that never received that kind of validation from his father hungers for it. You can detect it if you spend some time with men and can get them talking about their fathers. You will hear statements like, "I wish my dad would have..." or "My dad never...". From those who received it from their fathers you will here stories like the one this forty-five year old will tell today. It's about a seven year old boy on Christmas morning and the gift he received, a special gift

[Continued on Page 2](#)

Ministry Updates

Our journey here in North Carolina continues with God bringing people into our lives to encourage and help us along the way. One such encounter came during the opening day of a revival at our church. We had showed up early to church that morning not even meaning to and found ourselves there for Sunday School. A couple had come from down the mountain in Marion because they knew the evangelist who was speaking and wanted to be there with him. It wasn't long after we sat down at the table that it became apparent that God had arranged a "divine

[Continued on Page 2](#)

Tidbits for Living: The Battle Field For Your Heart



Battle Field For The Heart
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We recently went for a hike to see a waterfall not far from where we live. Since the Blue Ridge Parkway runs near our house, we took it to Lineville Falls for our hike. The Parkway is a winding road that starts in the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia and ends in the Great Smokey Mountain National Park in North Carolina. The pace on the Parkway is much slower than the highways. The thing that struck me as I drove the 22 miles to our destination is, this is the way life is supposed to be. I have trouble slowing down. If things don't go the way I think they should I get very irritable and hard to live with. Last week God had a divine appointment for Theresa and I. I received a call on Thursday from a friend who wanted us to join him and his wife on a visit to a local retreat center on Friday. I'm working a job and would have to leave it early to make it to our meeting place by the time we decided on. That morning things did not go well on the job and I didn't accomplish as much as I wanted to. However, we left out on our

[Continued on Page 2](#)

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"The Plunge"
Digital Image
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Newsletter Spotlight

As men we often shrug off bad things that happened to us as just a part of life. Many of those things happened to us as boys (and women when they were girls for that matter) and we just try to push the pain down inside. However, God wants to visit the painful places in your life and bring healing.



Touchstones of the Heart

Ship In A Bottle (Continued)

from his dad. We were in Florida for Christmas that year and had driven from California in a Volkswagen Beetle. Five of us in that little car drove 4,000 miles to spend Christmas at my granddaddy's house in Florida. My sisters and I would take turns riding in the small compartment behind the back seat where we would usually curl up and fall asleep. My memory of that trip is sketchy, but one thing that stands out is a ship in a bottle. Christmas morning I awoke to the usual excitement and race to the tree to see the gifts that magically appeared during the night. When all had been unwrapped that morning one gift held a special place in my heart, it was a small ship in a bottle. To a seven year old a ship constructed inside a bottle was magic, But that was not the reason it held such a special place. The reason was, it was a special gift from my dad. As men we often shrug off bad things that happened to us as just a part of life. Many of those things happened to us as boys (and women when they were girls for that matter) and we just try to push the pain down inside. However, God wants to visit the painful places in your life and bring healing. Just like anyone else I have good and bad memories from growing up, but it is what I choose to do with them that really matters. As God took me to the memory of the ship in a bottle, it reminded me that we have a heavenly Father who wants to give good gifts to His children. You may recall the scripture where Jesus said, "If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!" (Matthew 7:11 NIV) I knew I was prized by my father and that has helped me know that I am prized by my heavenly Father. Perhaps you did not feel prized by your earthly father? I would encourage you today to allow God to take you by the hand and lead you down memory lane and walk with you into your wounds, remember, He knows how to give good gifts!

Ministry Updates (Continued)

Appointment" as they spoke into our lives words that God wanted them to share. A few days later, sitting in a small café we were encouraged as God used them to tell us things that He wants to do through us here in North Carolina. Not once did we doubt when God spoke to us about moving Rescued Heart to North Carolina, but it has been very encouraging to our faith the way God has set up "divine appointments" for us with people He is using to help us along on this journey. (See 'Tidbits for Living' article for another "divine appointment" we had recently). Sometimes it's hard to see what God is doing until you look back at the path you just traveled and that is the way it is for us right now. We are still waiting to find the land and the funding that God has for us and the ministry, but in the meantime we will continue to walk where He leads us and minister to hurting people along the way while enjoying each "divine appointment" He sets up for us.

Tidbits for Living: The Battle Field For Your Heart (Continued)

journey to the meeting place. Living in Charleston we were accustomed to traffic, but not up here in the mountains, yet on this day we ran into not one, but two traffic snarls due to accidents. Despite being late and aggravated we pressed on to our rendezvous point. As soon as we drove onto Quiet Reflections Retreat and met Günter, a man God led here from Florida in 1989 with no job or money; only a vision to acquire 250 acres to build a place for people to come and spend quiet time with God, we felt God's peace. Günter and his wife's story is one for the faith history books and sitting in the chapel listening to him tell his story, I was reminded that I need to slow down and hear from God and only do those things He tells me to do, letting the rest worry about itself. Walking with God is not easy, not because He makes it hard, but because we often get in the way. If I can learn to slow down, I know God will do amazing things in our lives and use us to touch many, just like He is using Günter and his wife at Quiet Reflections Retreat. (More of this story next month).

May I give one more small piece of advice? Don't do these things because you "ought to", but do them because you understand without them you will die on the battle field for your heart!