

Nano Web Laboratory

[first read: Hungry Thumbs, and Red Flag Moments]

Pray for no puddles! That's always good advice any time your going to ride in Ol' Zeb's pickup. Every time Ross rode in that junky pickup, he felt he was taking his life in his hands. With every bump you wanted to look behind you to see what fender or part had fallen in the road behind you. Ross can still remember the day he got his pant leg wet as Zeb hit a puddle and the muddy water splashed up through the rusted out floor board on Ross's side.

When Ross asked his best friend about the muddy ride, Zeb smiled proudly and asked Ross why he'd change a perfectly good pickup that'd certainly outlast anything they make today. Ross just slid the small piece of plywood over the hole and decided he'd change into dry pants when he got home.

Zeb asked, "Whatcha gonna do with that big sheet of white paneling we're haulin' back there?" Zeb was about the best Christian buddy Ross had. Other than their common love for the Lord Jesus, the two silver-haired old timers were about as different as soap and shoe polish. But they had watched out for each other as far back as elementary school when inkwells were still part of school desks.

Ross began telling his dear old friend about a neighborhood teenager named Monte, that God had set his heart toward. Ross didn't know exactly how it was all going to pan out, but he knew God was in it. He continued, "I'm gonna mount this panel we're haulin' on the wall inside my garage. Since the panel surface is smooth, we can use dry erase markers to draw things out, just like the big-shot scientists and college professors do. We're gonna call it, 'Nano Web Laboratory', since we'll be experimenting with different ideas."

Just then, Zeb hit another big chuckhole and broke Ross' train of thought. Oh well. They were just about to pull into Ross's driveway to unload the panel anyway.

It took the next two days for Ross and his wife Hope, to remove enough collectables and get the panel mounted and ready to use. An invitation was made for Monte to come over the following Saturday. It confused Monte when Ross told him to wear his thinking cap, but he showed up on time.

On Saturday, Ross and the teen sat in front of the big white panel, with Sparky laying in the corner showing his big red tongue, up-pointed ears, and tail wagging like he knew something exciting was about to start.

Other than the odd jobs Monte had been doing for 'Gramps' (that's Ross), the teen had only met with him once before. That was definitely a Red Flag Moment. Monte soon learned that Gramps always wanted to have the most fun possible, so he always began with a prayer, that God would lead them. But the words and warmth that Gramps spoke began to do something very comforting inside Monte. If you knew the chaos and turmoil that was almost constant at Monte's house, you'd know how much Ross' words meant to his young friend. Maybe it was like warm sunlight on a garden just itchin' to grow.

Gramps took the red dry erase marker and wrote across the top of the panel, "Nano Web Laboratory". The old gentleman made sure his student was paying close attention as he explained, "We'll call this 'Nano' cuz that means something like small. It's going to be a laboratory cuz we're going to experiment. I included the word 'Web' cuz you and I are going to design a website – sortof."

Ross continued, "Now Monte, since I don't know very much about computers and websites, you'll be my design partner and we'll use the most powerful 'how-to' manual I know." He held out a well used Bible and pointed to it as being that 'how-to' manual everyone ought to use. The old teacher wrote near the edge of the panel, "2nd Timothy 3:16, 17." He opened his manual to that reference and held it so Monte could read it out loud. Monte did pretty well.

The silver-haired teacher followed it with an explanation. "Son, I know about as much about websites as I do about making a cherry jubilee dessert, but let me emphasize something you just read. There's two powerful words we need to really latch onto. The words are 'all' and 'all'. Simple aren't they? A.L.L. Nothing left out. Covers the whole shootin' match, doesn't it?" On the panel under the

reference, Ross wrote, “all good works’. “Monte, the Bible promises us that it is great for all the things we do that are good. Well, that must include using computers, cell phones, and even game boxes too. God gave us computers and all the technology stuff 'cuz He loves us so much.”

The garage lesson taught Monte a whole lot about that “bone-deep lastin' love” the teen needed a truck-load of. To make the lesson really strike home, Ross had Monte write on the panel, “bone-deep lastin love for Monte.” The teacher decided that was enough till next Saturday. The two had a hardy handshake and the teen grabbed his bike and headed for home.

Teacher Learns a Lesson

Thursday, just before supper, Monte called Ross with a question. The question shook him more than a ride in Zeb's truck. “Mr. Tappin, I mean 'Gramps'. Saturday, can I bring one of my school buddies if he doesn't cause no trouble?” Ross wanted to scream an approval in the phone, but was careful to make a clear welcome to the teen and his friend.

Already Ross is seeing how joyfully scripture, students, and silver hair come together.

How about getting yourself a marker board and a burden?

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