

FUSION Devo: Wednesday, June 17th, 2009

Title: Hello. My Name is Carson

Text: 2 Peter 1:7-8 (NIV)

7and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. 8For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I know that I may be a bit biased but I really do believe I have the most amazing children in the world. They are funny and fun to be around. Sure they are sometimes a little rambunctious but they are kids. Honestly, I would be worried if they weren't a handful from time to time, but the bottom line is that they are awesome and usually end up teaching me a lot more than I give them credit for. Sometimes I just sit back and watch them and see how they handle themselves. Today, as we soaked up the sun on the beach I sat by and spied on one of my children. Carson is our 5-year old, middle child who is all boy. He is wide-open and is like a car with the accelerator slammed to the floor. He loves sports and is quite a competitive little guy. I guess the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

Well, today he was playing a new beach game we bought. It is called "Lasso Golf" and it is a fun little game that gives the kids something else to do on the beach. As he was playing by himself I noticed that he realized another little girl and boy, probably brother and sister, seated nearby peaking around their beach chairs watching him play his game. Now here is the part that made me proud. Instead of becoming self-conscious and ignoring the other kids, he turned and walked right over to them and said, "Hello. My name is Carson." Before I knew it Carson had invited the new children out from under the shade of their beach umbrella and into his game. They played for about an hour, all the while laughing and clapping and encouraging each other. They had a great time and thoroughly enjoyed their time under the hot summer sun. All this was possible due to the kindness of my little guy Carson.

Later in the afternoon the images of the 3 young children, who had never seen each other before and quite possibly will never see each other again, kept running through my head. I could see their smiling faces, hear their laughter and feel the sense of kindness and inclusion that filled the air. Then I had to ask myself how I would have responded in such a situation? Would I have taken the easy way out and turned away from them, or would I have extended the hand of kindness and friendship and invited them to be a part of something special? I know that is exactly what God would want all of us to do. Now I'm not just talking inviting people to be a part of some silly game we may play, but instead to embrace a spirit of kindness and take the initiative to invite and include those who are standing by and sneaking a peak at the lives we are living as Lovers of Christ. The same goes for our churches.

I think it is important for us to know that what we possess as Christians is the most powerful, amazing and life-changing thing in the universe. A relationship with Jesus will fill the void in an empty heart, heal a broken soul and take those who accept that relationship on an adventure greater than Walt Disney could have dreamt up. But if we don't allow a spirit of love, humility and kindness to attract the bystanders, we will never have the chance to invite them to join us. So, next time you are face to face with the opportunity to include others, remember the example of my son Carson and remember those very important words. "Hello. My name is Carson." Wait, you may want to plug your name in. Unless your name is Carson.

Something to Think About:

- Do you consider yourself a "Kind" person? Why?
- How willing are you to reach out and include others, even those you may not know, to be a part of something you're doing?
- How can a willingness to present a spirit of kindness impact your life as a servant of Christ?

- What can you do to be more kind? How can God use that?

A Few Minutes with God:

God, I thank you for those in my life who have been kind to me and been willing to invite me and include me in the amazing lives they were living. I pray that I will have that same spirit and that the life I live in you will be one that attracts others toward the same extraordinary life you can give them. Amen.