



Fall 2018 Reflection: You Are the Light of the World

Brian sat at the dinner table, head down with his fork slowly pushing his favorite macaroni and cheese from one side of the plate to the other. Tomorrow would be his first day at pre-school, and this was definitely not something he was looking forward to. I was staying with Brian and Maggie the yellow lab for a few days while his parents, good college friends, were out of town for business. I had been one of Brian's godparents at his Baptism, and to him, I was his "Uncle Mike." We were good buddies. We talked about how it was OK to be a little nervous – we all get a little nervous when we're faced with new things or new situations. He said he didn't want to leave Maggie by herself – she would miss him, and I said that we would only be gone for a few hours and that we could pick up a toy for Maggie on the way home. He gave a little smile at that and petted Maggie who sat next to him, hoping to share some of his macaroni and cheese.

The next morning, following breakfast and many long Maggie hugs, we headed to his pre-school. We walked slowly up the steps, and the closer we got to the entrance, the tighter his little hand held mine and the closer he walked to me. I followed the signs, directing us to Brian's classroom. At the door was a young woman, Cindy his preschool teacher. "You must be Brian!" She said. "I'm so glad you're here. Dad, you can wait down the hall in the lounge with the other parents." "This is my uncle Mike," Brian said. I explained the situation and said I would be available if needed. The lounge was filled with parents who seemed as nervous as Brian had been. As we talked, I discovered that they all had similar experiences with their little ones in preparation for this first day. The time passed quickly, sharing stories and pictures and coffee. Soon another young woman came in, letting us know that "your little rock stars are ready to go!"

As I came to the door of the classroom, I heard "This Little Light of Mine" playing with a lot of little voices joining in. I saw Brian, singing and laughing and playing with the other rock stars. When he saw me, he ran to the door and gave me a big hug. His smile filled the entire hallway. "Uncle Mike, that's Tommy. He's my best friend. That's Susie and Lisa. They're sisters and they're really cool and they have a yellow lab just like Maggie. Can I have a sleepover at Tommy's house?" It was then that I noticed a large construction paper star hanging around Tommy's neck. On one side, in big, bright letters, was "My name is Brian." On the other side, in big, bright letters, was "I'm Gonna Shine!" Brian continued sharing all the way to the car and to the pet store and to the front door where Maggie greeted us both with kisses. Brian wouldn't begin pre-school until the following week, but he couldn't wait and couldn't stop talking about his new friends and about how cool Ms. Cindy was!

When I saw our Scripture Theme for this school year, this story from years ago came to mind, and I knew I had to share it: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father." Matthew 5:14,16

As I often tell the kids here at BSM, it's not the big things that make the biggest difference; oftentimes it's the little things we do each and every day that make the biggest difference. We are all called to do those little things . . . things that can truly touch the lives of others. We are called to let our lights shine . . . to use the gifts that have God as their Source . . . not to bring glory to ourselves, but humbly to bring glory to God. Ms. Cindy inspired those little rock stars to let their lights shine . . . Brian's light has continued to shine brightly over the years, and his Uncle Mike is very proud of him.

As we begin this new year, I pray that it will hold countless blessings for all of you. We may not know what the days ahead will bring, but we do know that we go through them together, as family, with the guidance and protection of our God. May God continue to work in and through all of us in truly making a difference, letting our lights shine.

Love and Prayers,
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