

In trying to retrieve my previous blogs after having to restart my website, I realized I must have written about my son, Benjamin, directly onto the site page. I had various stories that I must have shared, including this one below. I decided to share this one in particular, because it gives a sweet picture of how Ben was when he was little, but also very much so as an adult. Ben can be melancholy often, but he has a huge heart. He is a dreamer, and like me, he sometimes thinks he was born in the wrong time period. I get him. I hope you enjoy this true story about my 'baby' boy.

**Ben**

Little Ben's eyes were blurry from tears as he cried all the way back home from the neighbor's house. His big brother sent him home because he wasn't playing their game the right way. He was four years younger than the other boys, so this was understandable. Sam understood but was still very frustrated when Ben acted like this around him and his friends. Sam didn't mind playing with Ben at home. They usually had a lot of fun, but Little Ben never seemed to fit in around other kids. He always had different ideas about who he would want to pretend to be, or what type of rules should be made.

"Maamaaa!" Little Ben sobbed as he came in the back door. His mother was there waiting for him, as she had heard his wailing when he was halfway across the field toward home. "What is it, Little Ben?" his mother asked as if she didn't already know. "Sam won't let me play with them!" he continued to sob. "Well, why don't you stay here with me and play with your toys for a while?" she suggested as she tussled his hair and pulled him close to her. Little Ben looked up at his mother through his big and brown tear-filled eyes and quietly said, "Okay, mama."

This was a common scenario for Little Ben, not only around his brother's friends, but around other children his own age too. When he started kindergarten, the very first day, Little Ben's mother was walking him into the entrance of the building when the school principal intercepted them and told her, "I'll walk him in the rest of the way. Come on with me little buddy!" Little Ben's mother understood why the principal wanted to do this, since they dealt with new kindergartners all the time, but she also knew her little guy. Instantly, the tears came, and Little

Ben turned toward his mother, screaming, "Mama, Mama!" Instinctively, Little Ben's mother reached for him, but the principal kept a hold on Little Ben and said, "It is best if you just let him go, Mama! He'll be fine!" Little Ben's mother managed to squeak, "I love you, baby," as she turned to walk out the double doors. Tears started to flow from her eyes now. "Lord, please take care of him," she pleaded quietly.

They survived that first day of school, but the vision of her little boy kicking and screaming as he reached for her, was forever etched in her mind. As days and weeks followed, Little Ben would usually find one little playmate and they seemed to get along fairly well. One thing his mother noticed was that Little Ben's friends usually seemed to be the child that stood alone or was the shyest among the class. It didn't matter if it was a boy or a girl. He just seemed to 'click' with the child that was like a fish out of water. If she had to be honest, his mother knew that Little Ben might just be a fish out of water himself. It took a long time for her to realize that may not be such a bad thing.

As he grew older, even when making friends at church, Ben seemed to draw, or be drawn to the kids that most of the other children didn't really want to be around. Ironically, he was happiest when he was with these friends. His mother worried about Ben and his 'not fitting in' with the other kids, but one day she realized what a blessing this young man had become. Not only did he manage to communicate and learn with the 'regular' kids, but he befriended the kids who were different, even to some, strange. It occurred to Ben's mother that he didn't see their oddity, and cared about who they were, as they were.

The very thing Ben's mother feared would be his doom, turned out to be his gift. Ben is growing up to be a fine young man. No, he doesn't run with the crowd, and he never has. He is his own person. Sometimes he finds himself feeling lonely because of it, but just like when he was little, he finds a game or hobby he enjoys and entertains himself, minus the sobbing and wailing. Occasionally, his mother can still see her Little Ben seeking comfort, only now her tall son looks down at her, with his big brown eyes.

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