

Living Well in the Shadow of Life

BY REVEREND TONY MARCIANO

Oh, to be 10 years old again...

I saw this in a store window at the beach and thought it was great. It said, "I have decided I no longer want to be an adult. If anyone needs me, I will be in my blanket fort...coloring."

I roared with laughter when I read that. I took a photo of it and made it my home screen on my phone.

I loved being 10 years old. It was a time of innocence in my life. I rode my bike wherever I wanted which meant riding it all over town. I rode it so much, I broke the frame.

Swimming was my other great summer activity. We had a 3 foot by 20 foot above ground pool in our backyard. This was before the era of pool permits, fenced in back yards and GFCI protection for pool filters. My father was smart enough to unplug the pool filter before we went swimming in it.

Being 10 was a time in my life with limited responsibility. The most I had was to make sure there was air in my bike tires and the pool filter was unplugged before we went swimming.

Somewhere between then and now, I became adult. I became responsible. Back then, I washed my bike; now I have to pressure wash my deck, pay my bills, change the oil in the car and...I've lost the wonder I had for life at the age 10.

You're thinking, "You don't understand my life". I understand you have little kids and haven't slept in six weeks. I've been there. I understand you have aging parents that don't know you are their children. I am there. I understand come fall, your last one leaves the house and you're wondering will you and your spouse know who the other person is. One day I will be there.

We live our lives waiting for it all to be perfect. It never will be. It's crazy, out of control and always messy. It's in that messiness that God wants to stand with us, if we'll let Him. He doesn't say get it together and then call me and we'll talk. He says, "I love you just as you are, with your mess, your unpredictability, your insane life. Once we learn that He will never leave us or forsake us, then we can laugh at life. We can be 10 years old again. Not the 10-year-

old with no responsibilities, but the 10-year-old who looked at life with awe and wonder, believing that this was going to be a great day and knowing in our hearts that tomorrow is going to be an even better day. We can enjoy the gift of this moment to live, this moment to enjoy, this moment to celebrate. *

Rev. Tony Marciano is the Executive Director of the Charlotte Rescue Mission. The Charlotte Rescue Mission provides a free long term Christian recovery program for men and women who are addicted to drugs and alcohol. For more information, visit our website at www.charlotterescuemission.org.

