

*No theme...just random thoughts for 10 weeks!*

*Week 8 – Not too proud to be*

Scripture is long this week...so please read 2 Kings 5:1-16 to learn how pride can take away God's gifts of healing and in this TALK, gifts of love.

Monday mornings are special for me because I meet for breakfast with a small group of amazingly intriguing men. From the diner, I drive to the church for a weekly staff meeting with church peers. In the weeks he has assumed the interim Senior Pastor position, Dr. Youngblood asks questions to help him get to know the staff better. This past Monday's question was twofold, "What is your favorite worship song, and what is your favorite secular song." I knew my answers immediately and could hardly wait to say: "My favorite songs are *Peaceful Easy Feeling* by the Eagles, and (from my formative years at Kingsmill Community Church), *Mansion Over the Hilltop* by Ira Stanphil."

Soon after I proudly shared my favorites, a Dolly Parton song was mentioned. I wanted to wash my mouth out with soap, because if I were to get a do-over, I would have said my favorite song for both is *Coat of Many Colors*, by Dolly Parton. She wrote and sang:

*My coat of many colors  
That my momma made for me  
Made only from rags  
But I wore it so proudly  
Although we had no money  
I was rich as I could be  
In my coat of many colors  
My momma made for me*

Those words take me back to childhood and the Mother (I'll refer to her as Bertie from this point forward) who refused to allow her four "boys" to dress any better or any less than the other boys in the Pampa school system. Because my brothers were older and even experienced some Depression and WW-II years, their school clothes were meticulously sewn on an early 1900s Singer foot pedal sewing machine. Most, but not all of my clothes were purchased at J C Penney and Levine's when I was in school. Either way, each of us *wore [them] so proudly* our first day back in school

According to Bertie's stories, she bought material throughout the year. She bought denim for jeans, and cotton cloth for shirts, and flannel for jackets. She also kept flour sacks printed with floral designs that could recycle the material as clothing. Socks and underwear were purchased through the school year. Bertie said "they were affordable and would be outgrown anyway." Every year on the first day of school, she drove to the school doors her boys would be entering to get a visual picture of how the other families dressed their boys.

Bertie returned home and stayed up as long as it took for each of her sons to have new cloths "no better, no worse" than the other kids.

If you are wondering if I ever got that kind of special service from Bertie, the answer is “yes.” For the homecoming dance (she didn’t approve of dances, but I was “the baby boy”) she sewed my entire formal “outfit.” I graduated in 1967. Some of you may remember that brocade Dinner Jackets were the hot item for formal wear. So what do you think she did?

Yes!!! You are exactly right! Bertie bought white brocade material and black satin for the jacket, white cotton for the shirt which included hand making all the holes for studs and cuff-links, and a nice pair of wool dress pants (think about what is missing here). After Bertie talked to my date’s mother to know the color of Audrey’s dress, she bought Aqua colored satin material to sew the cummerbund and bow tie. I was stylin’ at the prom!

Oh, that question above? You are correct! Bertie bought black satin ribbon to sew on the seams of my fancy pants. I was Tuxedoed shoulder to toe!

How does today’s scripture fit into this tale? Allow me to say “Thank you” to Gerald Robinson for teaching me to read Old Testament Scripture for its literary value. I learned to enjoy the absolutely wonderful stories that are recorded for our enjoyment as much as for our spiritual enrichment. I selected 16 verses from 2 Kings, Chapter 5 and encourage you to read the story. I am proud to say that our family has always welcomed friends and doctors who could help us heal. Lisa and Kevin are no exception. They and we have been diligent in getting to this point of anticipated healing.

This week is a very important week for our family. By the time you read this, our daughter-in-law, Lisa, will have received a much needed kidney. After months of dialysis and its accompanying pain and discomfort, a kidney will be removed from our son, Kevin, and transplanted to Lisa. We want to say “Thank You” to the many Martin Prayer Warriors who have supported this healing event through your words of supplication to God.

May God’s Peace, Comfort, and Healing be with Lisa and Kevin, and Deanna, and the LeClaire family, and please add names you are praying for \_\_\_\_\_ .  
May God make His healing presence known in these lives.

Peace always,  
Ted