

Reflections ...

The past 2 articles we seem to have focused on the little princess wee bit too much. What about our boys? They are in some ways 'under' her shadow. Yet, they are unique and adorable in their own ways.

Josiah is a quiet, superbly organized (unlike his sister ☺) and gentle boy. Every subject has a file and notes categorized neatly – unusual for a boy perhaps but we gather this is from his mother. Funny why the other 2 did not get this gene! He participated in long distance running though in the highly competitive boys' environment, his results are nowhere to be seen. Yet, for 4 years, he persisted. Rain or shine, he went 3 times a week for training at MacRitchie. Seeing his persistence, as parents, we believe he deserves a faithful award from us! We believe the coaches were aware too. He was placed in different races though he is not as fast as many and even as a reserve for the team during school nationals. So he actually received team prizes for bronze, silver and even gold without the need to run!

Comforting or frustrating? We should think both. In some ways we know that he does feel proud of his team, being one of the fellow members. He was privilege to be able to participate in a good team! His faithfulness is something we pray will continue to be his strength in many of the things he is yet to do in life because we believe this is a trait that is an important one to develop.

What about Elliot? Well, he is the cheekiest. Jovial, no doubt. Always ready to put in a remark that makes many laugh. He likes to learn independently. We recalled that when he was learning to cycle, we tried to 'instruct' but of course ended up annoying him quite a bit as we were not as patient as he would like. So he gave up and so did we! One fine day during the school holidays a few years back, he decided he wanted to pick it up again but 'without us'. He gave specific instructions for us not to be with him. So off he went downstairs in the HDB blocks learning alone. The strange thing is that in 1 day, he picked up cycling on his own! This incident led us to recall another incident. When he was learning to walk, he did not crawl much. He basically slid on his bottom and before we

know it, he was walking. That is our uniquely independent Elliot. Of course, this independence when used in school work can become a challenge! Sometimes don't know whether to laugh or cry.

Another example. Elliot is a little on the heavy side and of course has a pretty round tummy. He told us the other day other people have 6-packs (referring to the stomach muscles) and he has 1 as unity is strength! Cute, isn't it? At the wrong time it can be frustrating too, ya? Yet we know this jovial nature can be a wonderful thing in life as it helps to keep hopes up and keeps one to look upward and forward. Worth maintaining and developing.

3 very different kids. Sometimes we feel the greatest challenge is on the parents, trying to adapt to so many different characteristics and temperaments. We do wonder how could all come from a single family. Yet if we observe closer, each of these traits is in one of us. Elliot's cheekiness probably came from daddy though the jovial nature is from mummy – now all culminate in one person.

During this season, we are learning to let go. Letting them go is not easy – especially when we do not think we have done enough to guide and they are not ready to be 'let go'. Yet, time is never on our side. We slowly realize that to steer them, influence them so that they persevere in life, become responsible adults and develop a sense of destiny is a life-long task and our destiny so long as we are alive! It does not end when they graduate or turn 21. As adults, we are always learning, sometimes even through mistakes. Grown children are the same, and perhaps need a close family member to journey with them. Of course, influencing older children is a greater challenge. More patience in fact is needed. Worse when we know their decisions are not as wise and we can only patiently wait for their realization after giving them whatever advice we can.

Perhaps parenting is the best way for us to learn as adults the grace of an almighty God!