



Royal Ambassadors: The Building Blocks Needed For the Adult Foundation

By SFC Todd D. Archer
United States Army, Camp Taji, Iraq

As a child, I was fortunate enough to have Christian morals and values instilled in me by two Christian parents that demonstrated the full extent of God's love. Growing up I learned that, despite the daily struggles each one of us was facing, at the end of the day, the one thing that unified our family was Christ. At an early age I was taught the building blocks of life that would become the foundation of my adulthood.

When I received the message from my mother that the UBA was looking for testimonies on the Royal Ambassadors Program, it brought memories to life from deep inside me that I thought I had long forgotten.

I am a soldier in the United States Army serving my third tour in Iraq. I have seen the 2003 battles of Fallujah with the 82nd Airborne Division. I have run the roads of Baghdad in 2005 with the 10th Mountain Division. Currently, I am part of an eleven man transition team put together to aid in the reestablishment of the Iraqi Army. If I only had one word to describe what I have learned from years of combat, it would be "teamwork." Growing up in a small town in Southeast Texas, I began to understand the fundamentals of working together as a collective whole from the Royal Ambassadors Program at First Baptist Church Deer Park. The core values of love, loyalty, and integrity have followed me throughout my military career.



At 8 years old, the plan was laid out before me in a small classroom located within the gymnasium at my church. Royal Ambassadors was a place where I could come and involve myself in not only Christ-centered teaching but activities as well. Some of my fondest memories were the RA Competitions at Trinity Pines. Learning how to tie knots, using a compass navigating from one point to another, and spending time out in the "woods" learning to adapt to my surroundings have definitely helped in the profession I have chosen. Yet it is the memories of the nights by the campfire with my Christian brothers that I lean on the most. My father and two of his friends, Mr. Mark Rains, and Mr. Larry Davis provided mentorship that helped me understand what God's plan was for my life. They taught me what kind of man I needed to be. They taught me the definition of unconditional love.



From camping out in the woods to building race cars out of a block of wood, my childhood was enriched with Godly men demonstrating the road to what I wanted to become. Now that I am a father of two, I have been provided with an upbringing that allows me to carry on where they left off. The military defines leadership as, "the ability to influence others to accomplish a mission by providing purpose, direction, and motivation." Understanding that, my father, Mr. Mark Rains, and Mr. Larry Davis are the epitome of the word "leader." The

Royal Ambassadors was the program they used to provide me with the building blocks needed as a child to develop a solid foundation as an adult.

If you have great memories of being an RA or LAD in your church, send your story to Dian Kidd (Associate Director of UBA) at 713.957.2000 or e-mail diankidd@ubahouston.org.