

FIVE MINUTES WITH TOM MOOTY

(Column Number 2228)

"HE'S A MAN'S MAN"

From time to time, I have abused your time in five minute blocks by regaling you with personal stuff 'n things.

I have told you about my childhood here in these "hills and stills" of East Tennessee; about Fred Marvin and Josephine Celeste and "The Big Ugly" and "The Music Man" and all the perils that littered my path of childhood.

I have told you about my neighborhood and how fun it was growing up around here.

I have even kept you informed on the progress we made teaching Little Steevie Spurrier how to play the game of football!

So, you won't mind, I betcha, if I waste another block of five minutes.

I reckon all of you have heard that expression that I have adopted as my title for this column: "He's a Man's Man". I suppose that is a good thing - to be called a "man's man".

I felt that way about my dad: Fred Marvin Mooty, Sr.

To me, he was truly a "man's man".

But, dad was far, far more than that to me! He was a "man's man" to be sure; but he was also "God's Man".

And he lived up to that descriptive phrase over and over, 24/7/365 $\frac{1}{4}$!

When we moved to Newport in 1948, I was 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ years old; and in the 2nd second grade. The move took several trips back and forth because Freddy ("The Big Ugly") had some rather selfish ideas about staying put until he graduated from Elementary School's 8th Grade.

I dunno; something about graduating with his friends or something like that. Anyway, Fred Marvin and Josephine Celeste thought he had made a pretty good case; and so we trekked the yellow brick two-lane several times over that couple of months.

We were coming back through one of the numerous small towns on the route and Dad wanted to use a "pay phone" (remember those?) for a call; so he put in a dime (remember when a call was a dime) and made his call and then hung up - and the dime came back through.

I heard it - we all heard it over in the black, 1948 Studebaker Commander four-door. It made that familiar "ding" as the big ole dime came through to the coin return slot.

My dad took the dime out of the coin return and called the operator to tell her the money came back and asked her if he could just put it back into phone.

She was probably shocked beyond words; but agreed; and my dad put the money back.

You could have heard a pin drop - no a dime drop! It wasn't all that spectacular; because that behavior was just normal for him. He wouldn't steal a dime from the very rich telephone company (who wouldn't have missed it; and probably would rather not have fooled with the paper work that went with a dime return anyhow).

But that was my dad! He was my "man's man"; and just look how warped I turned out by having a dad like that!

I hope you had one like that; or have one like that now!

One thing for certain, you can have a Heavenly Father that loves you and wants to give you Eternal Life in Heaven!

If you don't know how to have that; I do; and I will be happy to share!

Tom Mooty serves as Pastor to The West End Baptist Church of Newport; and writes this column for the Wednesday and Weekend Editions of The Newport Plain Talk. Please contact Mooty at tommooty15@gmail.com or P.O. Box 851 in Newport with your comments; and (psssssst) a good word to the Editor would be appreciated to let the paper know if this column is wasted space or not!

