

A SINGLE PIECE OF STRING

I drive a 1999 Chevrolet Silverado pick-up. It currently has roughly 178,000 miles on it. My truck and I share some similarities that have developed over our years of service. Our bodies are not as straight as they used to be. We both have a few dents and scratches. We both are a little slow getting started in the morning. Neither of us run as fast and as smooth as we used to. Even though we are not as attractive or as capable as we might have been in the past, we still have our value.

If you are ever in my truck, you may notice that hanging from my mirror is a single piece of string. It is almost undetectable, only about a half an inch is visible below the mirror but I know it is there. It will stay there as long as I own the truck and I will look at it every time that I drive my truck. If the single piece of string gets hidden behind the mirror, I will straighten it so that I can see it. You may wonder, "Why so much attention to a single piece of string?" It is no ordinary piece of string to me. It reminds me of who I am and who loves me.

My daughter Megan was in the first grade when I bought my slightly used truck. Each year, just before Christmas, the Christian school that she attended, had a Gift Fair. The teachers would help the students pick out gifts for their parents and their siblings. That year, Megan picked out, for her daddy, the perfect gift for his new truck; a pair of black fuzzy dice held together by a single piece of string.

They were beautiful. I didn't realize until that time, that I needed fuzzy dice for my truck but I did. I proudly hung them from my mirror. On Sunday, at church, our youth minister asked me if that was fuzzy dice hanging from my mirror? I proudly said, "Yes, it is!" He responded, "I can't believe that you have fuzzy dice hanging from your mirror." I told him, "I do, and you will also if ever have a little girl and she buys them for you."

Over the years, the black dice faded to purplish/grey color. As the sun continued its punishment on them, they eventually disintegrated and fell off of the single piece of string. Since then, I have hung different items from the string. For the past four years, it has held my security badge from work. Clipping it on and off each day has taken its toll on the single piece of string and now all that remains is the short piece barely visible underneath the mirror. Each time that I look at it, I remember how proud Megan was when daddy opened her gift.

We need things in our lives to help us remember the blessings that we have. God has blessed us all and he wants us to remember these blessings. As the Israelites were crossing the Jordan river into the promised land, God told Joshua to set up a memorial so that the people of Israel would always remember this day. Joshua obeyed the Lord:

Joshua 4:4-7 *So Joshua called together the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one from each tribe, ⁵ and said to them, "Go over before the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, ⁶ to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' ⁷ tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever."*

God has blessed us all in so many ways; people that love us, our talent and ability, and a God that provides for us just to name a few. We need to have things that reminds us of these blessings. Whether it is twelve stones, pictures, stories, or letters we have many things that refreshes our memories and puts a smile on our faces. It might even be a single piece of piece of string.

Jeff