

The Lost Kite

By Jeb Egbert

I had my first love affair when I was just six years old. It's true...but it's probably not what you're thinking.

When I was six, I had a marvellous kite that was the love of my life. That kite meant everything to me. Frequently when my father arrived home from work, he would take the love of my life and me out to the front yard. Adorned with a huge ball of string and my kite, he would get it started. And as the kite soared into the Southern California sky, I watched with amazement as it bobbed and weaved in the breeze. How could life get any better? A small boy with his magical kite.

One day as I was flying the kite in our front yard, my mother knocked on the kitchen window to get my attention. As I glanced her way, she beckoned me inside. It was time for dinner. Disappointed that I would have to put my kite away for the evening, I began to reel the huge ball of string in.

But then something happened. The line went limp and the kite was no longer coming towards me. As a six-year-old, I'm sure it took me a while to figure out what was happening, but the truth was, the love of my life wasn't coming home! When I finally put all the pieces together, I did what most six-year-old boys would do... burst into tears.

My mother saw all this playing out from the window and quickly

summoned my father. I can still see Dad in my mind's eye rushing out of the house. 'Son, I can't promise anything. But I'm going to go after that kite', he said. With window rolled down and his left arm swung over the driver's side door, I saw him poke his head out of the car to try to assess the direction the kite was heading. And he was off.

Twenty minutes later, he returned. He shared some of the saddest news I had heard in my young life. He was unable to retrieve the kite.

Simultaneously, and unbeknownst to me, my mom was experiencing a new love affair of her own. And because of this love affair she suggested something that we had never done ever before. 'Jeb', she said, 'why don't we pray about it?' So before bed that evening, I knelt down next to my mother, hands folded in front of my bed. I don't really recall what she said, but I know she was praying that somehow, some way, the love her life, her God, would restore the kite to me.

The next morning I heard a knock on our front door. I was still in a foul mood, but I was the closest to the door, so I answered it. A neighbour I had never met was standing in front of me. 'Son', he said, 'I saw everything that happened last evening, and I felt so badly for you that I decided that I would get you a replacement kite'.

A couple of hours later, our next-door neighbour, whom I did know, knocked. He hadn't witnessed the tragedy that played out the prior

evening but announced, 'Jeb, I was cleaning out my garage and found a kite. I thought you might like it'.

Finally, my dad came home from work with, you guessed it, another kite. Of course, this sudden wealth of kites left me feeling euphoric. But I also remember clearly, in my six-year-old way, thinking that this new love affair of my mom's—the one she prayed to—was awesome.

That initial intervention has stuck with me for the better part of 50 years. It has had an indelible impact on my life. I thank my mother to this day that she didn't just pray for me in the confines of privacy, but openly invited me to eavesdrop.

Years later, my dad used to invite me to come along on his 'prayer walks'. It was often fascinating to hear not only what he talked to God about,

but also how he talked with God. While there was reverence, it was conversational. While there was respect, it was shared as though with a close friend.

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That's why I like to encourage parents and grandparents to intentionally spend time with their children and grandchildren in prayer.

It made a difference for me. It taught me at a tender young age that I could have a personal relationship with God, and that he cared about me. I believe it can make a difference for your children or grandchildren, too!

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