

Want God to Use You? Just Show Up

I've been a bit preoccupied with the new headquarters but not preoccupied enough to recognize when God is blatantly putting someone in my path who is in need. Friday at 4am I was headed to my weekly adoration hour (for those who are new to my blog I have dedicated an hour to prayer every Friday morning at 4am for the past 8 years) and the roads were deserted.

With sleepy eyes I sat at the light at an intersection and smirked at how dedicated I am to rules. Not a soul in sight and I'm sitting at a red light dutifully waiting for it to turn green. It would be *my luck* to decide to run the red light and a phantom car materialize going fast enough to T-bone my stupidity.  So I waited.

The light turned green and I made the turn onto the street. The church was only a few miles down the road. The Christian radio station Air1 (103.7) played an upbeat contemporary song and I mindlessly focused on the beat, still trying to wake up.

Out of the corner of my eye shadows moved along the side of the road. A woman in a white t-shirt, jeans, a toddler on her hip in a princess nightgown, barefoot straddled her hip and movement of other little heads caught my eye as she shielded them behind her.

What? Immediately I switched lanes to make a U-turn. *Okay, God. What do you need?* I didn't give it a second thought.

When I came back around the woman walked more boldly to the corner of the street as I pulled over and put my flashers on (just in case the rest of the world decided to wake). I rolled down the window at the same time she ushered her two older kids to the car, the toddler still on her hip.

"Can we get in?" Her brown eyes were wide and wet with fear. She was beautiful. I didn't see any noticeable that rarely means anything.

"Yes, of course." I got out to raise my back seats so the two young ones could each have a seat with a seatbelt. A boy and a girl. Cartoon jammies and no shoes.

The little two year old was safely (as safe as we could be with no car seat) buckled in the seat behind her mom.

Once buckled in the mom broke into sobs. I went to my original destination. The church.

"What is your name?" I knew no where else to begin.

She told me a first name only.

"Do you need me to take you to a safe place? I know a place in Humble that we can go to."

"No," she muttered between sobs. "I need to call my parents. Can I use your phone?"

"Of course." We were in the parking lot of the church. I had explained to her why I headed there, that it was my original destination.

She got out of the car to make her call. The young boy in the back spoke up and told me his name.

"Nice to meet you. What are your sisters names?" He introduced everyone with pride and courage. "You guys are so brave. I know this must be scary." They nodded and the little one handed me her princess sippy cup.

"Thank you honey, but I'm good. You drink it."

She beamed.

These three were beautiful children. The young man, only 6

years old, politely held a conversation with me, his 4 year old sister butting in with her own responses when she could. He said 'yes ma'am' and 'no ma'am' clearly raised with manors.

What could the situation have been?

I saw the mother get off the phone so I got out of the car to speak to her. She came over to me and wrapped her arms around my waist, sobbing into my chest. I held her as if she were my own daughter and allowed her to cry. "You are safe."

When her sobs subsided she spoke up, "They have seen something very crazy tonight and I couldn't stay there. They don't even have shoes I got them out of bed and left. I couldn't stay there." She held on tighter. "I don't want them to see that again."

I didn't feel it my place to ask *what* it I should was a bit more information given that I can't divulge for fear if anyone reading this would then know the person or situation. But it isn't exactly what it , much more complicated. She told me enough.

"I'm proud of you for leaving. You did the right thing."

"Can you take us to my sister's house?"

I didn't hesitate. We got in the car and made the 30 minute drive to the town where her sister lived. On the way she was on the phone with her sister and she said, "I didn't know what else to do. I got the kids out of bed and left. They don't even have shoes on! We had just reached the road when this woman showed up in her car."

I couldn't allow the opportunity to pass. I told her what I did, about the ministry. She asked a few more questions about me. We couldn't speak too deeply about anything for many ears were listening. But I prayed for God to offer whatever she might need to hear to build her up.

Once at our destination a young woman, similar short stature and beauty, rushed up to the car. The kids piled out of the back seat and she held onto them drawing them into her. "Thank you so much. I can't believe you'd do this. Thank you."

The mother had a hold of me and hugged me again. "I can't believe you were there to help us. Thank you again."

I didn't get the chance to go to adoration that morning but I'd that hour and half was spent doing His will. I don't know what has happened with this family but they are in my prayers.

This woman's kids were clearly her first priority and she did what she needed to save them. God was clearly taking care of her and responding to her courage. I pray she continues to remain in Him and hold onto that courage.

May God bless you and your family today!

Shannon Dietz is the author of EXPOSED: Inexcusable Him and founder of Hopeful Hearts Ministry, an advocacy non-profit organization (501 c3) giving a VOICE to survivors of abuse. She is a featured columnist with Choose-Now "Shannon Deitz: On Hope", has been featured on , Lifestyle & Charity magazine and Catholic Women's magazine. She and her husband, Neal, live in Kingwood, Texas, where they are active in their local church and community. The couple has two sons, Ryan and Seth, who provide them with endless joy and reason to continually count their blessings.