

Delightful New Book for Fathers and Sons Plays Off and Celebrates 'No-Shave November'

Not many men may be aware of this, but did you know that this month has been designated as "No-Shave November"? It's a month-long journey during which participants forgo shaving and grooming in order to evoke conversation and raise cancer awareness. It's a chance to do something fun for a very good cause.

In conjunction with that, I'd like to introduce you to a delightful new little book by a man whom you probably already know, Harold Cronk. He is the director of the "God's Not Dead" movie series and he has written an illustrated children's book called *The Beard Ballad*, whom he credits the inspiration to his now seven-year-old son.

Cronk had been looking for some bedtime stories to read to his son that were fun and affirming, but couldn't find very many options. That's why he decided to write one himself and hopes that it will help dads of young boys out there to spend more quality time together.

Cronk says it all started when he picked up his son from school one November morning.

"I gave him a hug and he rubbed my cheek and he said, 'Daddy, your face is all pokey and rough,'" Cronk said. "And I said, 'Those are my ferocious facial follicles.' That got me to thinking. I do my daily writing and devotional at a local coffee shop, and the next day I just walked into the coffee shop like I usually do and sat down.

"I thought to myself, 'You know, there just aren't a lot of books out there—storybooks—for fathers to read to their sons at night. It's such an important thing for fathers to read to their sons and spend time with them.' And then I thought, 'There was something magical to that moment with Harry that morning.' I tell you, the story just poured out of me and I wrote for five hours, and the book was done.

"I spent the next five months refining the book and refining the rhymes and made sure it had the right message that I wanted about the importance of fathers spending time with their sons. It had to be fun and exciting but manly and burly at the same time. I put it in a drawer to get a fresh perspective and I came back to it about six months later. I thought it was good. So, I sent it to some friends and they came back to me and said, 'Man, you need to publish this thing.' It's important not only just as a piece of literature, but as a statement about how important it is for boys to be proud of being a man and to enjoying manly things and having role models."

The book is brilliant. The artwork—illustrations by CS Fritz—is great. And the poetry is great.

I remember as a little kid that, in our family, we called that "magical moment" between Cronk and his son a "whisker rub." We didn't like it because it hurt a little bit sometimes. But I guess you could call it something like a rite of passage, and that "magical moment" led to this fun, little book.

It's about this little boy around six or seven years old. His dad quit shaving, and they go out and chop wood. The little boy chops wood and apparently chopping wood makes beards grow. All of a sudden, this little kid has a long, blonde beard. It's kind of funny to see that on a seven-year-old boy, but it's all fantasy. And the dad's beard is long, long, long.

Here is the first couple of lines from the book:

"My mom said 'Jack, did you forget to shave?' confused by the look that she gave. He said, 'No dear, it is the first of November, a month without shaving. Don't you remember?'"

For Cronk, the point of the book was to help make sure that his son discovered the values that his father taught him as a child. That's very important, considering many children are growing up without a father these days due to divorce or other tragic circumstances.

Sons especially need to be raised in a loving, nurturing atmosphere, in a home that will teach them how to be strong men for Christ and to live godly lives. You don't see much of that anymore in a culture that has gone just absolutely crazy and worldly.

"My dad was a great role model for me," Cronk said. "I just wanted to make sure that I'm trying to be that for my son. We all mess up. We all stumble and nobody's perfect, as cancel culture is teaching everyone these days. But we just have to keep marching forward and try to do the best we can in being men of God and men knowing that there's grace for us.

"We need to show our young men that as they are growing up, they're going to make mistakes. If we show them that it's impossible to make a mistake in this world without being canceled, then we're doomed. We need to operate in grace and love, and not hate and fear."

That's some great advice. So, if you have a young son or perhaps even a grandson, make sure to go out and get this book. It's a great way to bond with your child or grandchild, and you'll be teaching him some wonderful family and cultural values along the way.

To get a copy of *The Beard Ballad*, visit .

For more of my compelling conversation with Harold Cronk and his new book, listen to the entire episode of the Strang

Report at this link and subscribe to the Strang Report on Apple Podcasts or your favorite podcast platform.

To learn how you can fight back against cancel culture, make sure to get a copy of what I believe is my most important book yet. *God and Cancel Culture*, released Sept. 7, is now available wherever fine books are sold. Order a signed copy (by me) Old at . {eo}

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.