

June 2011

From the Pastor



Welcome to the Family

For the next two months I thought I would give you an insight on the Pavelski family. This month I thought I'd spend some time with Ryan. He is a great son. At the end of this month, he will be fifteen years old. He will be graduating from eighth grade and leaving the Vestal Middle School to enter the Vestal High School next fall. I'm bringing you in on a conversation between the two of us. My questions and comments are in italics.



"Hi Ryan."

"Hey."

"I wanted to get your perspective on Pierce Hill Christian Fellowship. So tell me what is it like being a pastor's son?"

"I don't know. Harder, because more is expected of you. But I know things everybody else doesn't know, because I can eavesdrop."

"Okay, what makes it harder being a pastor's son?"

"There's kinda more expected I guess, but not really, I don't know. It's just different. It's weird. I think it varies from person to person, and it also depends on the pastor."

"What about this pastor? What about your dad? Where is it hard?"

"I don't know. I just think it's weird. I think as a senior I might attend a different church, so that I can understand the bond between a member and a pastor better, because I can't when it's my dad."

"What do you like about being here in New York?"

"I like my school. I like the weather. I like being close to New York City."

"What do you like about our church?"

"I like the people."

"What is it about the people that you like?"

"They're fun. They're a little bit old, but other than that it's pretty good. And old's not a bad thing; it's just an observation. I think I like being with the younger people, because I can relate to them."

"What do you think about our youth group?"

"It's small; it could use more people."

"Do you have any plans to get more people?"

"No, we need some though."

"What are your favorite musical groups?"

"I don't know. Do you want me to list them?"

"Yeah, give me a list of some of your favorite musical groups."

"FM Static, Eleventyseven, Red, Skillet, Toby Mac, to name a few."

"Are there any old people you like?"

"Like old music?"

"Yeah."

"No."

"Not even the Beatles?"

"I like the Beatles I guess, but they're not old, not real old."

"What is it that you like to do?"

"I don't know, like, draw, sleep, chillax."

"What's most important to you in your life?"

"My edumication."

"You mean education?"

"No, my edumication."

"Your edumication."

"Don't say it. You make it sound lame."

"If you were to pick a favorite bible story or bible passage, what would it be?"

"That's a pastor's question."

"I know it's a 'pastor's question', but what would it be?"

"I like the ten plagues."

"Why is that?"

"It's just cool."

"What have you learned spiritually from the youth group?"

"I'm not really learning anything spiritually; I'm learning to grow as a person."

"Learning to grow as a person?"

"Yeah, like you learn all the spiritual stuff at church, but you learn how to apply it in youth group."

"What is one thing about our family that you like?"

"I like our house."

"What do you like about our family, about the three of us?"

"That you guys aren't divorced."

"That's cool. Do you think we have a good marriage?"

"I don't know. I'm not with you all the time."

"What do you like to do with your dad or with your mom?"

"I like to talk about stuff like school or whatever, but that's mostly with mom."

"What do you like to do with me?"

"I like riding in the car with you or just hanging out."

"Why is that?"

"Because we can listen to the radio together, and we can talk or whatever."

"What's it like being a Christian in a public school?"

"It's just like being another kid I guess. It doesn't feel different."

"Okay."

"There are discussions I have with other kids. And then it's different, because we are discussing it. But in general, it doesn't change my day to day life."

"So you're just being a Christian naturally ; that's a part of who you are?"

"No, that's a different question completely. I'm saying that I'm just like every other kid, because it doesn't change anything in my school."

"Okay."

"Because you can be a Christian; you can be a Muslim, or you can be a Buddhist, or you can be a Jew. You can be any religion, and it won't really matter at all."

"Why is Christianity important to you?"

"Because it gives me some answers and that just makes life a whole lot easier. But once you question them, then life gets harder again."

"Once you question what?"

"The answers that they give you. Because you don't know if you believe it or whatever because you're told that as a kid. But it's like you're not a kid anymore, so that doesn't mean that what you've been taught your entire life is right."

"You have to figure that out for yourself."

"Yeah."

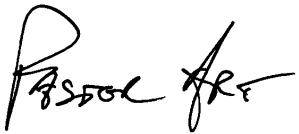
"Have you been working on that yet?"

"I've been thinking about things, but I haven't changed a religion per se."

"So you haven't changed religion because...?"

"When I'm under your roof, I have not any big chance to go anywhere. And for now, it's a lot easier, and for now I have a bunch of answers that I'm just going to go with."

In Him and for His glory,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pastor Arif". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "P" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.