

"Talking Your Three Year Old Off the Ledge"
This Week At Judson Sunday School
(5/21/10)

Dear Ma & Pa Judson,

By now you all should have received your Kids' Day practice cd, which features the two songs we will be singing during this year's Kids' Day service on June 13th, "We've Been Down This Road Before" by Dan Zanes and "Let The Mystery Be" by Iris DeMent. I do hope your children have been practicing, and yet I am somewhat concerned as to the effect the lyrics of the chorus of "Let The Mystery Be" might be having upon your children:

**"Everybody is wonderin' what and where they all came from.
Everybody is worryin' 'bout where they're gonna go when the whole thing's
done.
But no one knows for certain and so it's all the same to me.
I think I'll just let the mystery be."**

It was never our intention at Judson Sunday School to cause any kind of existential crisis in the minds of your three-year-olds. (And our lawyers have assured me that we are not liable for said angst anymore than we would be considered responsible for your children suddenly demanding that when you address them, you add the prefix "Lady" to their name, and that when they grow up, they intend to become paparazzi.) Still, we at Judson Sunday School feel a moral responsibility where your children are concerned and so offer the following assistance.

How To Tell If Your Three-Year-Old Is Having An Existential Crisis

Are there any signs of twitching, despondency, or curling into a fetal position?
Are they refusing to eat their "Happy Meals" and not just because they taste "yucky."
Could they care less where Dora the Explorer is going?
Are they refusing to wear their light-up shoes?
Are they refusing to wear their capes, saying "Why save anyone? They're going to die eventually anyway."
Are they standing on the top of their playhouse and threatening to jump?

If so, then your three-year-old needs help and fast. Here are some steps you can take to talk him or her down off the ledge.

* Take them to the new Shrek movie opening in theaters today. He's still green, it's still fun, and it will help them take their minds off the fact that we are all spinning on a planet with no apparent purpose. But whatever you do, do not let them see SpongeBob. With the BP oil crisis in the Gulf of Mexico, it's only a matter of time before SpongeBob, Gary and Patrick are tar balls bobbing up in some Louisiana marshland.

* Remind your children how lucky they are to be living in New York City and not in Kentucky. In New York City when we want to have a tea party, we actually serve tea. In Kentucky, they serve tea as well, but once Rand Paul wins election as their next Senator, they may reserve the right not to serve tea to you, based on the color of your skin.

* Or you can take them to any one of these great events happening tomorrow for children: Imagination Playground at the High Line; Touch-A-Truck Street Fair (64th St. between Central Park West and Broadway); and Mamapalooza Singer-Songwriter Showcase (Arlene's Grocery). Here are the details:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/21/arts/21kids.html>

Of course, you must promise them that if they will come down off the ledge, you will do whatever it takes to see that we retire the suffix "palooza" from public use.

I hope this helps, and I promise that once this year's Kids' Day service is over, it will be nothing but Bobby McFerrin's "Don't Worry, Be Happy" from here on out.

Don't forget to hide your Kierkegaard!

See you Sunday!

Andy
Grand Poobah