

Isaac A. Simpson



Royal Rangers is a fantastic program that reveals what God has done in my life. There was a time when I didn't think I would receive my Gold Medal of Achievement because I thought I wasn't good enough. Royal Rangers aided in the increase of my church activity, broke my intimidation, and nurtured my spirit.

As a child I was very active, but not in Rangers. My commanders in Rangers always encouraged me. When I was in Pioneers, the work got harder. My perspective about Rangers changed when Cmdr. Mike Barnes said to me, "Isaac" I know you'll do great things for God. Just trust in the Lord and you'll triumph every time." Those words keep me from giving into despair.

There was a Marine, named Evan Parker, who was the trainer for the Physical Fitness Merit. He made us do sit-ups, push-ups, run tracks, stand in formation, and anything that came to his mind. After what seemed like an eternity, I finally earned that merit. As I got older, I became extremely involved in Rangers and I strived earnestly for my G.M.A; in my freshman year of high school I also became Outpost 50's first and only Expedition Ranger. It was nice and all, but after awhile it got lonely. However, Cmdr. Tom Kaye became my instructor at that time, so I was comforted. The things he taught me were amazing, and the spirit challenges were daily lessons for me. Cmdr. Tom became my inspiration.

There was one person, in Rangers, who graciously helped me overcome my intimidation. And it wasn't who I expected it to be...she was my spiritual mother in Rangers, Sis. Kim Laracco. When I did something good, she rewarded me. Because of her acts of kindness, I am sensitive to the needs of others. As I progressed, I was still shy with the boys; however my mother had a plan to help break my timidity. She made tins of chocolate chip cookies over a period of time for me to give to the Pioneer's and commanders. I hated that idea! But, I had to obey her. While passing out cookies, Andrew Speight caught my attention. He had an eagerness to strive for knowledge and soon enough we were friends. Then... my social life drastically changed when I met David Kaye. I felt free around him. He always seemed to find me and say, "Hello." His "Hello's" was more of one of saying, "How are you? 'How are things at home?' 'Are you having fun?'" The whole time I thought to myself, "What does this kid want with me?" The Bible says, "One must be friendly in order to make friends," and to think all of that happened because of a bunch of cookies.

My father was a tremendous help for me in Rangers! He helped me to interact with the boys and made me feel like I belonged. Learning how to reach out and not be timid was easier at Pow Wow's.

It was easy because the Royal Ranger activities required teamwork: setting up tents, cooking breakfast, serving the food, playing games, doing

the projects, cleaning up, and my personal favorite is eating the food! From acts of kindness, learning to be a friend, and the team activities, Royal Rangers helped break my intimidation. When I was a Pioneer, Cmdr. Mike Barnes always gave devotions before he started our classes on Wednesday's. His devotion's were uplifting! I always thought, "If I'd call on God's name He'd answer." And, oh-boy does it work!

My first time at Advancement Academy is memorable. For that week in Junior Training Camp, I gained so much from God... and the council fires are awesome! For several hours the entire camp would dwell in the presence of God. After one of the council fires, I was returning to my tent when the Holy Spirit told me to sleep outside...so I did. I felt the Holy Spirit fall on me; I began to worship Him and sang myself to sleep.

There was also a time at a District Pow Wow when Jesus ministered to me like never before. That Saturday night at the council fire, I felt such a heavy weight on me... that I thought it would crush me. I felt wounded; I felt anger and hatred towards some of my family, friends, and even people in the church. My bitterness and un-forgiveness were polluting and taking control of my life. I felt no love towards many people, not even for myself. Then the Holy Spirit said to me, "You can't hold it in forever. Let me lighten your load and relieve your pain and misery. Let Me make your soul anew." After that Word I haven't felt hatred, anger, bitterness, and un-forgiveness towards anyone ever since.

My life has had its share of trials. Yet when God intervenes miracles will happen and because of Him I have matured in Christ! My vision has changed; I have become a witness to the world because of who Royal Ranger represents.