

Remembrances of Daniel Rabenhorst

By David Gentino

How do you even begin to capture a dear friend who was so full of life and energy? I have known Daniel for as long as I can remember and when I think of him a million memories come to mind. During the summers we would grab our pillow cases and go to Lake Artemesia to catch snakes. I think of endless pick-up games of football, basketball, and roller hockey; sleepovers in the Rabenhorst's basement, fishing trips to the tobacco farm, and squishing pennies on the train tracks. I think our first fist fight was at the Rocketship Park, after which we became blood brothers. We also had a number of business ventures together. One of these was going door to door in our neighborhood selling nunchucks we had made from bamboo.

Two things strike you about Daniel when you first meet him. First, is his easygoing friendliness. It was hard not to like him because he was so easy to get to know. When he moved down to SC my friends there immediately fell in love with him and wanted him around. He wore the broadest smile and had developed his own swagger.

The second thing that you will notice is his level of energy and adventuresome spirit. It seemed like he was always on the move getting into things. One time Dan, Coogan, and I were exploring the construction site around the College Park metro stop and found a small body of water and sheets of Styrofoam. Naturally we decided to sail across – Coogan and I on the larger piece and Dan on the smaller. Right away we noticed two things working against us: the pond was actually not muddy water but sewage sludge that reeked as we sailed along. On top of that our rafts were slowly getting smaller, leaving a white trail of Styrofoam behind us. Fortunately Coogan and I made it across safely but Dan was not so lucky. His raft had been reduced to the size of a skateboard and as he neared the bank he lost his balance and plunged chin deep into the muck.

Another time, Rabies, Coogan, and I attempted to build a zip line across this creek out here. We tied a rope as tight as we could to two trees and volunteered Coogan to test it. Well he slid about halfway across and just sagged in the middle. For whatever reason he refused to drop 10-15 feet into the shallow creek below and no amount of shaking the line would convince him. So Rabies took out his B B gun, pumped it a few times, and shot Coogan right in the butt sending him sailing.

I have learned a lot from Dan Rabenhorst especially in the area of friendship: What it means to be a good friend, to encourage, and love, and stick up for someone even in their darker times – both his and mine.

We live in a day in age where religious opinions abound. I guess in an effort to accommodate for this we have adopted an attitude of relativity: whatever you choose to believe is right for you. Some believe god is one and we say that is great; others believe in a host of deities or in a life force and we embrace that for them too.

Do not be deceived into accepting these mutually exclusive beliefs. God exists apart from us and is not influenced by our ideas about him. Just as his creation is absolute – two plus

two will always equal four, gravity will pull matter to the earth, the planets will orbit the sun – so also his character and attributes are absolute and not affected by disbelief. When Jesus said, “He who is not with me is against me and he who does not gather with me scatters,” he staked belief in himself over and against all other religious theories as the *only* way of salvation.

I say this as one who loved Daniel dearly: do not let these days of mourning pass without considering where you stand before God. Not in terms of what sounds best or what feels best but in regards to what is true.