

Bro. Bo Sanchez

To Love Him More

Jonnie Aristorenas Anzures

*Bo Sanchez is the author of nine best-selling books and publisher of seven magazines. Bo also has a weekly television show on ABC 5, a daily radio program on Radio Veritas and a daily Internet vodcast called Preacher in Blue Jeans. He founded many organizations, such as **Anawim**, a special home for the abandoned elderly and the poorest of the poor and **Shepherd's Voice**, a media group that publishes the widest read inspirational literature in the country. He also founded the **Light of Jesus Community** and the **Light of Jesus Counseling Center**. A firm believer in working with others, he has partnered with **Gawad Kalinga** and other groups that work for the poor. For his efforts, he was recognized as one of The Outstanding Young Men for 2006. Bo is also an international speaker, traveling extensively around the world. So far, he has spoken in 14 countries, including thirty eight cities in North America.*

It is close to midnight and Bo gently brushes his hand on his father's gray hair. In this hospital's private room, he looks affectionately at his Dad's tired face, his wrinkled hands and the tubes attached to his arm.

He reminisces on the time those once strong arms carried him high above his father's shoulders and above the many obstacles and problems he encountered when he was just a child. He remembers the day when his father's hands gently took him aside and said, "Bo, you have a gift of proclaiming God's Word. I don't have that gift. I wish I had it. If I had it, I would preach every day. Bo, you have that gift. Use it every day."

After his father's accident, Bo embraced his father every time they met – something he didn't do before his accident. For eleven years, he always embraced him and said, "I love you, Dad." For eleven years, he was in charge of cutting his fingernails and toenails – something he loved to do. But he realizes that he will soon miss their warm hugs together.

Despite the tears, Bo's heart is filled with an immense feeling of joy and gratitude to the Lord. For through his accident, Bo learned to love his father even more.

To Follow a Child

When Bo was twelve years old, his parents invited him to join their prayer meeting. That was when he had his conversion experience. And ever since Bo started preaching at age thirteen, his father humbly sat with the audience and listened to him speak. And when he founded *Light of Jesus Community* when he was fourteen his father agreed that his teenage son would be its Presiding Elder.

Looking back, Bo thought it was pretty comical. Why would a bunch of grown-ups follow a kid in a crummy tee shirt, jogging pants, and sandals? Especially a kid who watched *Voltes V* and even memorized its theme song? But the community did, and his father and mother led the way, sitting down on wooden chairs and listening intently to their son share God's Word.

They supported Bo all the way, until that group eventually grew to what it is now – the **Kerygma** Family, a borderless, international, non-physical community where thousands of people meet and spiritually support each other.

To Pause and To Care

But the best thing Bo remembers about his father was that he brought him out for pizza.

“My Dad spent enormous time with me. Each day, when I was a young boy, we'd jog together. He wasn't a great jogger mind you. All he did was jog around his car a few times. After the jog, he'd sit down and I'd sit on his lap and we would read the paper together. Not the front page, or the business section, or the sports page but the comic page. He'd read it for me and explain why it was funny – every single day.”

“And every Saturday afternoon, he'd say, 'Bo, let's go out.' We'd go for a hotdog-on-a-stick, a bag of peanuts, and an ice cream cone. We'd also go to a toy store, play with the toys together without buying a single thing. I didn't mind. My hands may have been empty but my heart was filled with Dad's love. He knew I loved pizza, so when Shakey's opened for the first time in the Philippines, he said he'd bring me there. The problem was that it opened in faraway Angeles, Pampanga. But to him, that was no problem at all. He drove me there just so that I could eat pizza.”

Through his father's example, Bo grew to value people who are in need. “I've learned to emulate the actions of the Good Samaritan and be willing to stop my calendar and go out of my way and invest my time and resources to bless and care for people.”

And that is why Bo and his community serve the poor today. “In *Anawim*, we've already served a million individual meals since we began. We have to understand that the Jesus we worship in our prayer meetings is the same Jesus that lives in the poorest of the poor. Any prayer meeting that does not make us see that reality is essentially lacking.”

To Let Go and Let God

It's been an hour since he hugged his father for the last time. Bo knew he wanted to go home to the Lord. As he prayed a blessing for his father, Bo finally let go of his beloved mentor and friend. An hour later, his Dad died quietly in his sleep.

Bo realized that the Lord had given him and his father a second chance – a chance to love each other even more as father and son.

“It's true what Luke 12:15 says – our true life is not made up of the things we own, no matter how rich we may be. At the end of one's life, you're not remembered by your great achievements. The house you

built. The job you had. The money you earned. At the end of your life, you'll be remembered by how you loved in small ways like whether you brought your son for pizza or not.”

Bo's father did, and his example taught him to love like his Heavenly Father.