

# GAME WARDEN CHAPLAIN'S CHAT



## "WORDS OF LIFE"

A New Jersey dad's heartbreaking appeal to parents of his autistic son's classmates has gone viral after a back-to-school project revealed the boy has no one to call a friend. The 1st century Greek word for this month is "compassion."

Bob Cornelius, of Rockaway, N.J., posted the letter Monday on Facebook after taking a photo of a worksheet that his son filled out at school. The worksheet asked students to list the members of their family, as well as their favorite food, sport, TV show, sport, song, and more. The sheet also asked students to list some of their friends— a section that 11-year-old Christopher answered with "No one." It wasn't until Cornelius returned home and looked at the picture he'd taken hurriedly that he realized what his son had wrote.

"Christopher's brothers have had many, many sleepovers over the years, obviously in front of him, and it has not gone unnoticed," Cornelius wrote in the post. "'Can I have sleepover?' Christopher has asked. 'Sure, buddy....with whom?' As a response, he would flap his arms and stim instead of [answering]. He didn't have an answer because he didn't have a name. Because he didn't have a friend. He's never had a friend. Ever. He just turned 11. And because he's had no friends....there was no one to invite."

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"I [am] not so naive that I think this post is going to change the world," he continues. "But, if, by sharing this, I can make you think about having a conversation with your children about empathy, about going out of their way to include those that are different from everybody else, especially if it goes against the group mentality, especially if it's not socially popular (I'm not so old that I don't remember that this takes bravery...bravery to break from the confines of what your friends think is cool in the middle and high school worlds), then I will feel like Christopher's voice has been heard."

We must learn to be the people those who hurt can depend on in life. Yep, in the field a Game Warden comes across many people who hurt physically by accident or by circumstances, but what about those who hurt because of a stupid choice they made. Should we be compassionate to them, too? Of course. God has been compassionate to us even when we've "blown up" everything we've ever touched. The Book of Matthew states that "when he went ashore he saw a large crowd and had compassion on them, and healed their sick." Many in society today are sick; sick by accident, or by circumstances or by their own stupid choice. The issue is, are we ready to help heal circumstances with compassion? Often, my first choice is to get angry. But when I remember how God uses compassion on me, it makes it easier to use compassion on others. What about you?

# “Watching Ourselves”

We have a great Life Group to which we belong at our church. It's a group of folks who love to argue, but do it with fun, grace and open hearts. Our teacher's name is "Mo." I thought I would share with you some of his favorite sayings:

- Patience—in time grass becomes milk!
- When you're through changing, you're through.
- Discussion is an exchange of knowledge, argument is an exchange of ignorance.
- The greatest of faults is to be conscious of none.
- Wise people are not always silent, but they know when to be.



- Who gossips to you will gossip of you.
- Some people give and forgive, others get and forget.
  - Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday.
  - I talk to myself because sometimes I need an expert.
  - Even duct tape can't fix stupid, but it can muffle the sound.
  - If God wanted me to touch my toes, He would have put them on my knees!
  - When the kids text me, "plz," which is short for "please," I text back "no," which

is short for, "yes."

Do any of these hit home for you? Feel free to use any and all of these. He has given his blessing.

# “Family Foundations”

## The Farbarfer and Barfarber Family Dilemmas:

### Farbarfer Family

As we walk up the road to the house, we notice how wretched the place looks. There are broken windows, toys scattered everywhere, neighborhood kids fighting on the lawn. There are two kids sitting on trashcans with ice-cream cones sticking out of their mouths, teeth falling out of their faces, and they seem to growl at us as we approach.

“What do you want?” they bark, as we get nearer to them. “We would like to speak with your parents. Where are they?” “Don’t know, don’t care. We run this place!” they say. And by the look of the house, you’d say they were right.

From the house we hear, “Freddy, Freda, dear, your lunch is ready.” Obviously a loving mother trying to provide for her kids. They kid’s reply? “We’re not hungry. We’ll eat later. We’re eating ice cream right now and besides, who asked you to make lunch for me? We’ll eat when we’re ready!” and they roll their eyes.

There’s no such thing as “equality” in the home. Moms and dads have been given a job to do by God, (and He’s a higher authority than you are) to raise kids in a Godly home. Kids are free not to like all their parents say or ask them to do, but according to God, they are not free to disobey and ignore them.

### Barfarber Family

The house is spotless, the lawn is well manicured and even the squirrels have on well-pressed suits. The kids sit playing checkers on the front porch. As we approach, they immediately stand to attention and call out, “Mother, Father, we have company.” After the parents come to the door, the children are sent scurrying for tea and crumpets with rather stern, commanding language.”

It doesn’t take long for us to see that these poor kids are scared to death of their parents. Father Barfarber is the commander-in-chief of this little regiment. Mother is cold, fearless and the obvious first-sergeant of the local army. Its quite clear that the children are the ones who are the little privates and are kept hopping at all times lest they forget.

How very sad it is when the parents become the General Staff of the children. The authority of the parents is for the child’s good, not for the parent’s satisfaction of being “in charge” or for living their own lives through the children vicariously.

It scares me when I see a family run too rigidly or with a code and rule for everything. When I was in college I saw first-hand how children who have been in a rigidly run home can often, when in the freedom of a university setting, throw off all restraints and become wild. We don’t want that for our kids.

Parents, there’s no such thing as “equality” in the home. Our children deserve more devotion and attention, freedom and grace than we sometimes give them. We are to help them grow in God, not stifle under our authority.

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## Behind the Person: Lt. Jason K Bussey

**What Does Your Faith Mean to You?** My faith in Jesus Christ is the foundation of who I am. I attempt to base all of my decisions in life on my faith, obviously since I am a sinner I fall short of basing all of my decisions on His will. Through prayer and studying His word I ask and seek for God's guidance and understanding. I ultimately know that through Him I truly live. Without my faith in Christ I am just lost in this broken world.

**When Did You Come to This Faith?** I came to my faith early in life and I have always considered myself a Christian. I grew up in the church and studying his word. However, with that said I haven't always been faithful to Him. There were times in my life that I didn't consult him or even act as though I should. During those times I would ask for repentance but still turn toward my sinful ways. It is through repentance and ultimately His grace that I have been saved. As I matured and as a father my faith became my foundation.



**How Does a Difficult Situation at Home or in the Field Help or Hinder Your Faith?** Whenever I face trials in this life, I have found that I can always find comfort knowing that God is ultimately in control. God has and will always be here for me. It is not in my own understanding that I place my faith but in His plan for me. I find peace through these verses.

Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you," plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

James 1:2-4 "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds because you know that testing of your faith produces perseverance."

I have learned and continue to grow closer to God in my faith when I realize He has carried me through many difficult circumstances. It gives me great strength knowing that God has my six (law enforcement term for back). I know that things are done in God's time not mine, which allows

me to see my circumstances and situations differently in the future.

I often wonder what it is to have a story. We all have one. My wife, sometimes, is bothered by the fact that she doesn't have an amazing story to tell. I try to help her know how blessed she is to have a story of love, grace, joy and faithfulness from her upbringing. Some of us, maybe most of us, don't have a story we can tell about how our growing-up years were full of love, grace and joy. But, that doesn't mean our stories are better or worse than someone else's.

Stories can bring our lives to light. Each of us has one. What we need to consider is what impact can our story have on the lives of others? You just never know. You and I just never know. But our lives are the paragraphs in the full stories of others—interesting, exciting and encouraging. Don't keep your story silent. Tell your story so others can know their story is not unusual, even if it is unique.

Please remember that nothing happens that cannot become a part of a redemption story. Your life is not for hiding. There are others who can benefit from knowing your story. Tell the story and let others benefit for eternal reasons.

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