

Why Righteous Ray-Ray?

As I went through my teacher training in college, and with my service at Bethel-Imani CDF Freedom School, I began to notice how disconnected young children were from reading. I began to think about how different my life would be if I had not developed a love for reading at an early age. I don't remember exactly when I learned how to read, but I do remember that I was reading before I went to kindergarten. Reading made me want to understand, it gave me a thirst for life.

One way or another, this thirst for knowledge and understanding must be injected into our children. Every day I see children crumbling under pressure, reacting without thinking, disrespecting each other, themselves and adults, and not doing simple things like saying please and thank you. This generation of youth is probably the most rebellious generation the world has seen so far. Furthermore, rebellious things seem to most get their attention. Righteous Ray-Ray is that rebellious children's book. It goes away from the children's fantasy land of wizards and animals and brings them home to reality, with characters that look like them, talk like them, and act like them. There are not enough of these books in publication.

Righteous Ray-Ray is an example of a child that is secure with himself, has a positive mindset, is respectful at all times, and has goals and dreams. Righteous Ray-Ray thinks through, and tries to respond to situations the right way. This is a child that many children do not get the opportunity to meet and I want them to have this opportunity, so that maybe they'll begin to think and act righteously.

Maybe they'll hold the door for their elders as they walk into a store, maybe they'll recognize times when they can use the words "please" and "thank you", maybe they'll think twice before making a decision they know may get them into trouble. We all have this ability, thus the slogan "I Am Righteous Ray-Ray!" which calls attention to the fact that all of us can do righteous things and make righteous decisions. Just imagine the great things that could happen in our communities if these ideas are reinforced by parents, teachers, and all adults that come into contact with our children.

Even if you do not buy or read a book from the Righteous Ray-Ray Series, read something, have your children read something. Reading will activate their thinking and take it to a higher level. I try to read every day, even if it's just for five minutes. My comfort zone had become novels that I could read with my students,

but I'm trying to get away from that and get back to reading for enjoyment and my own empowerment. What book are you currently reading? I'm almost done with "The Laws of Thinking" by Bishop E. Bernard Jordan. Any suggestions for what I should read next?

Peace,

Raymond Smith