



The Importance of Crowns and Things

By Kori Radloff, PMNJD, Bethel #28

For as long as I can remember Job's Daughters has been an important part of my life. My mom was a Jobie and she always told me these wonderful things that she did in Job's Daughters... big Installation dances and things...and showed me her scrapbooks full of things like dance cards and printed napkins. It seemed like a fantasy world with queens and princesses and Cinderella balls.

The summer when I turned eleven, we moved to Gothenburg. I didn't know anybody, and my family lived out in the country, so I went to a small rural school. There were only two other girls in my class. I didn't really feel like I fit in with any of the kids. When Mom found out that there was a Job's Daughters Bethel in town, she thought that it would be a good way for me to meet some friends. And I was excited to join...after all I'd heard all Mom's stories!

I joined with eight other girls and immediately had forty new friends. My family moved to town later and those girls really made the transition into town school and junior high a lot easier. I really loved Job's Daughters and I had a lot of friends there...it meant a lot to me to feel appreciated and needed.

It came time for the election where my class was to be voted into the line. (Back then, our Bethel was so large that only two girls from every class were elected into the line.) I was devastated when another girl won...I wanted to be an Honored Queen more than anything in the world. I felt I had done a lot for Job's...I was always the one who stayed late to clean up the Bethel, the one who worked the fundraisers and service projects, etc. I wanted to quit that very day.

But for some reason, I didn't. I stayed and I watched as that other girl became Honored Queen and I tried to be as supportive as possible. And through it all, I learned a lot about myself and other people. I learned the importance of doing something to improve the world and how it isn't always necessary to get credit for your good deeds. I learned that it's okay to not be number one. I learned that life doesn't always seem fair, but sometimes, God has something else planned. And I had patience and faith in myself and God, just as the organization had been teaching me for so many years.

When I was sixteen, I was selected as Miss Nebraska Job's Daughter. I thought at the time that was my reward for sticking it out through all the hard times. I got to go all around the state and to some international events promoting Job's Daughters. And I thought that title that was all there was...I'd made it. The pinnacle of my Job's Daughters experience.

What I know now is that it was just another path for me to follow in order for me to receive my real reward. See, when I had to give away my title at the end of the year, I still felt a strong obligation to Job's Daughters. After all, when you've been doing something nearly 24 hours a day, seven days a week for a year, it's a little hard to go cold turkey. So I kept on working with my Bethel, even though I was a Majority Member and in college. I became a member of the adult council and more importantly, I became a friend to some of the exciting young people I have ever met. And this is my reward. I get

to be a part of the future, to be a part of a never-ending spiral. The things that I do have an impact on their lives in some small miniscule way and is something those girls will carry with them forever, hopefully passing it on to some other person they meet along the way. To me, that seems like the most awesome and terrifying responsibility in the world.

I get to feel like a part of some larger scheme of things...like I have a purpose in some small way to make this world a better place. But what is even better, is that in doing this, I get so much back! It seems almost selfish! You see, I love every single one of those girls...each of them gives me something special. When I feel like the world is against me and I don't even want to get out of bed in the morning, I think about "my girls" and how much they all mean to me. Then, the sun comes out from behind the clouds and I know I can make it...I have to be an example for "my girls." I walk into the Bethel and immediately get 15 hugs. If I'm sad or upset or worried, one of them will come and cheer me up and remind me that life is funny. In our complex adult world, it's easy to forget that.

The girls don't know what they are giving to me. They are good to thank me for whatever it is they think I am doing...but every single day, I am grateful that they are there for me, to remind me of what is important and to remind me to smile. (Believe me, a good rough slumber party game of Capture the Flag is enough to make everything else seem trivial.)

This is my reward. Of everything in life, all that really matters is what we pass on to our future, our children. It won't matter to people 100 years from now if we make the deadlines we set for ourselves. It doesn't matter if we were late to a meeting or if we presented a perfect image on any given day. It does matter that we take time for others, take the time to listen to what they have to say. It matters that we

encourage our young people to dream and even more importantly, to reach for those dreams. It matters that we realize that the future is here in our children and that we provide them with the moral tools that will make our world a better place. It matters a lot.

I've noticed that when I think I'm too busy for Job's, things that should seem trivial seem to loom up like giant, insurmountable problems. And it doesn't have to be Job's... it's not a miracle organization that makes the future seem clear...it's anything that reminds you that life is going to go on whether you make the deadlines or not, whether your work place explodes tomorrow or if everything you have is wiped away. For me, it's Job's Daughters. For you, it may be church, or school or sports or even your very own kids. It's just important to have something. I think that too many people go through life not realizing that the future is right here in our own backyards.

When I think back to that election I realize that I almost missed the point. I almost missed out on this fantastic experience because I didn't trust God completely, didn't trust Him to guide me along the right path. He had to slap me in the face in order to get my attention. It would have been easy to have been elected Honored Queen and to have gone on with my life without looking back. But the struggle made me value everything so much more.

So that's what Job's Daughters is to me. Perspective. Passing on information and knowledge, and hoping to help.

And in the process somewhere, little girls get to be queens, even if they don't get chosen to wear a crown.



*When one door of happiness closes, another opens;
But often we look so long at the closed door
That we do not see the one which has been opened for us.*

- Helen Keller