

May 3, 2011

To Whom It May Concern,

I met Ryan in a chance encounter on a flight from Orlando to Newark, and found myself honored to be at his wedding a year a half later. I think that really says a lot about how instantly Ryan and I bonded, but his impact on my life goes beyond our friendship alone.

I had never really been to church in my life, although I did grow up in a Christian household by label. I met Ryan at a time when I was experiencing difficulty in my family life, and I immediately found myself able to open up to him. I shared my struggle with Ryan over that two hour plane ride, and he invited me to start attending church with him. I had to admit, I was a bit scared when I showed up at the church about two months later, but Ryan was very welcoming.

After my first experience, I returned to church each following week. Over time, my friends and family started to see a true change in me, and I was feeling a change inside myself. My faith and spirituality started to grow, and it has been a wonderful experience. My outlook on life has changed a great deal, and I do not know exactly where I would be had I not met Ryan on the plane.

Ryan continued attending this church after he graduated, and I noticed that people gravitated to his personality and leadership. This was a clear indication of Ryan's positive impact. I could see people connecting to the church through Ryan each Sunday. He has a dynamic personality and kindness about him to which people are naturally drawn.

In December of 2010, I had the opportunity to go on a mission trip to El Salvador. I was thrilled to find out that Ryan would be accompanying me on the trip. On my way down, I had to come separately from the group due to a wedding. My flight was delayed, and I missed my connection. I was truly panicked. After I landed in Houston, I received a call from Ryan. I discovered that the next flight to El Salvador wasn't for twelve hours, but Ryan stayed behind to wait with me. We didn't know exactly what would happen when we landed or if anyone would be there to pick us up, but I was so grateful not to be alone. I think it really showed true character to make the decision to wait with me in the airport for twelve hours. It showed Ryan's dedication to serving others before himself.

In El Salvador, I got to see Ryan's leadership style in action. He led the morning devotional each day, and led the group through our adventures. Ryan's leadership style was subtle but healthy and effective when action needed to be taken. His style is different from my own, but I learned from watching him. He was not overbearing and allowed the people in the group to take responsibility at different times in order to fully experience the trip.

Ryan's deep faith inspires me, and I see that it inspires others all around him. I feel that Ryan would be an excellent addition to any organization. His abilities both personally and professionally stand out from the crowd. If he could lead a stubborn know-it-all Cornell engineer to find God, he must really have talent!

Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Rob Lawrence

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