

2022 Story of the Year goes to Kirk Cameron

Actor's public reading at the Indianapolis Public Library drew 2,500

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New Year's weekend is a time of both anticipation and reflection. As we all rightfully look ahead and pray for better days, none of us can help but look over our shoulders and see headlines of the year past — stories that caught our attention and served as the poster child for the calendar that is ending.

Nominees for 2022's top news might include the economy, runaway inflation, or rumors of the Great Reset. Maybe at the top of your list is the "red wave" that never happened, the destruction of American energy production, or the crisis on our nation's southern border? Or perhaps the first thing you see in your rearview mirror as you drive out of this year and into the next is Elon Musk, the "Twitter Files," or a blizzard in Buffalo brought to you by global "warming"?

I've paid as much attention to these headlines as anyone, but none of this makes it to the top of my list for 2022. Weighed on the scales of cultural impact, all of these stories pale in comparison with one coming out of our heartland this past week. My nominee for this year's "story of the year" goes to Kirk Cameron and his new children's book, "As You Grow."

In the midst of a cultural war where

sexually confused men are now given free rein to groom little children in America's public spaces, Mr. Cameron made headlines over the Christmas season by simply saying, if you're going to have drag queen story hours for kids in your local libraries, I'd like equal time. Would you let me come to your community and read to children about virtues such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control?

As you know, when Mr. Cameron first made this request, the response from over 50 different libraries across the land was not favorable. They just said no. But the Christian actor and former "Growing Pains" star would not accept that as the final answer. Instead, he gently responded and asked these librarians to reconsider while making it clear that he would exercise his First Amendment rights if they didn't. As a result, the Indianapolis Public Library reversed course and let a public reading of "As You Grow" take place.

And what happened? Well, over 2,500 people showed up. Thousands of moms and dads came with their kids to listen to Mr. Cameron read about what Paul called the fruits of the Spirit.

Hundreds upon hundreds flocked to the Indianapolis library to hear that “love does not envy or boast. It is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful,” and while “hatred stirs up strife, love covers all sins.”

Dozens listened intently as they learned joy is a choice everyone can make in responding to life’s difficulties and that “all things do work together for the good for those who love God.”

There were countless smiles as little ones soaked up the message that peace comes from knowing the Creator of the universe who walks by our side every step of every day. Young and old alike pondered that patience means being steadfast under challenging circumstances, that a kind person thinks of others first, and that aiding others is much more important than affirming yourself. Granddads and grandmas agreed that goodness is the behavior flowing from an upright heart, gentleness is the opposite of harshness, and, as Jesus himself said, it is the meek who will inherit the earth.

Everyone understood that to be faithful is to be loyal and give your allegiance to no other.

And the day’s takeaway may have been the message of self-control — the lesson that love is not synonymous with sexual desire and that all human beings can be defined by God and not their libido. Or as Peter said: “Make every effort to add self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of the Lord.”

So, in a year where drag queen story hours were all the rage, Mr. Cameron stepped into the fray and proved essentially what John Wesley said some 250 years earlier. If you’re willing to “set yourself afire” with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control, “people will come from miles around just to watch you burn.”

Congratulations to Mr. Cameron for being the “2022 story of the year”! This story has saved the world in the past and will save it again. We just need to have the courage to tell it.

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