

## THE REAL THING

Oh, how my four year old loves trains, especially those from the Thomas the Tank Engine collection. He watches the videos, reads the books, and plays at his train table for hours. He knows every engine and coach by name.

One morning, he approached me very concerned and said that we needed to buy Henrietta so that Toby would have his coach. I knew, from perusing numerous catalogs with him, basically what Henrietta looked like, so I informed him that he could just use Catherine instead because she looked a lot like Henrietta. You should have seen his face. “No, mom. Henrietta has two lines out from her boiler. And she has a lot of windows with a door just on the front. She doesn’t look anything like Catherine.” He turned to his train table, grabbed Catherine, and thrust her into my hands. “See, mom, this is Catherine. Toby’s coach is Henrietta. They’re different.”

He was passionate. He was arguing his case for the need for the authentic Henrietta with tremendous zeal. No substitute would work, and how dare I suggest so! He had to have the real thing.

My son knows the Thomas collection so well for one reason: He spends time with it – time reading books, time studying catalogs, time watching videos, and time playing with the trains.

This has increased my commitment all the more to teach him God’s word. My prayer is that he fall head over heels in love with Jesus and develop a passion for the Word of God as a result of spending time with Him – time in prayer with his mommy as a guide, time reading bible stories, time talking about Him as a family, time going to bible study, time noticing the beauty of His creation, and time spent in church. May he come to know the authenticity of his Savior so well that a substitute, fraud, or lie is recognized immediately; and may he not stand for it! May he stand incredulous at any path that deviates from what he knows is right. May he stand on the solid rock with his shield of faith, armed with truth, full of passion, and obedient to God. And may he never, ever, settle for anything less than the real thing.

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“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”

Proverbs 22:6

“Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.”

Psalms 86:11

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