

## **Subject: Sermon Ideas – Rascal Soup**

### **Rascal Soup**

By Shelley Mickle

In 1958 when I was in the fifth grade, everybody in my little cotton town in Arkansas thought that my cousin Ted was going to die of heartache. He had been engaged to a girl for two years and right before the wedding she gave back the engagement ring and called the whole thing off.

Ted wouldn't get out of bed. He wouldn't eat. He put his '56 Chevy up on blocks in his front yard and took off the wheels. But worse was the engagement ring which sat in the front window of the jewelry store on Main Street with a sign that said, "Resale on Commission." Nobody wanted that ring. It had become a symbol of love gone bad.

My family thought there was only one chance for Ted. We sent word to my Aunt Lucille to make her famous Rascal Soup. Aunt Lucille swore that no matter what your problem was, her soup was guaranteed to reawake the rascal in you. She would bring a jar of her soup to anybody's house for whatever reason . . . flu, bad grades, bankruptcy, a tax audit.

When I had been down and out with the measles in the second grade, she brought me a bottle of her soup. It had vegetables floating in chicken broth surrounded by noodles shaped into the letters of my first name. Maybe, the magic of her soup came from how long you spent fishing those noodles out that spelled your name and then the long while you took carefully moving those letters on your spoon into your mouth. **Because by the time you finished that soup you had plenty of time to slowly reassess who you really were.**

Anyhow that soup did make you feel stronger and usually the next day you were going about the world with a renewed rascally spunk.

So on Valentine's Day in 1958, my Aunt Lucille delivered her soup to my cousin Ted. After a whole day of eating T-E-D and Aunt Lucille's delicious soup, Cousin Ted got up and went down to the jewelry store, took that ring out of the window and started wearing it himself. He put the wheels back on his car and drove over to the next town where he finally lost that ring in a poker game. And then on his way home he stopped at a road side cafe and met his current wife.

I am not saying that soup performed miracles, but my cousin Ted and his wife Betty Ann have been married for 40 years.