

January 2, 2019

Dear Wilson Rawls,

Your book, *Where The Red Fern Grows*, not only gave me hours of excitement but affected my life as a Christian. It helped me see the Lord in a new light. I now realize the value of prayer and faith. Praying works! God always has a plan and faith is knowing he is in control.

There were times in the book that support my thoughts. When Billy first got the ad about the coon hounds, his grandfather told him that in order to get the dogs he would need to meet God half way. To me, this meant that he would have to do the work and God would give him the heart and spirit to do so.

Billy found inspiration for his dogs names on a sycamore tree. I believe that it was no coincidence that he found the names when he did. God was putting everything into place piece by piece. The names Dan and Ann were perfect names for his hounds!

When Billy was trying to chop down a tree for his dogs, I think God helped bring it down. A wind blew his tree down, yet did not affect any other trees.

Another incident in the story that supports my thoughts is the Pritchard boy accident when Rubin died. Billy knew that he wasn't responsible, but felt a weight lifted when he went and payed his respects to his friend at the funeral.

There was also the coon hunt escapade. It taught me what it is really like to be a good sport. Billy faced sacrifice with open arms when he chose his Grandfather's life over winning the competition. Then when someone else won, Billy was the first to show good sportsmanship by clapping for him.

Finally there was the cyclone timber accident (also known as the mountain lion attack). Billy faced some harsh mental challenges when one of Billy's dogs died and the other dog followed due to grief. Billy's father explained to him why his dogs may have died. His family was planing to move to town and Billy would have stayed behind to be with his dogs because their bond was so strong. I believe the Lord orchestrated things so Billy would not be separated from his family.

As my letter has stated, your book was not only entertaining but inspirational as well. It showed me several examples of virtues and how a person might cope in the face of difficult circumstances large or small. It also showed me how strong a bond between a boy and his dog can be and the true meaning of "man's best friend".

Sincerely,

An Avid Reader-

Carson Norling