

## “What Being Tall Means to Me”

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We have all heard that old saying, “you should not judge a book by it’s cover.” When I think about being 6’4”, it is more of a fact about me than a defining feature. People notice it immediately and constantly ask if I play basketball or say things like, “how is the weather up there?”, but I rarely think about it unless someone else brings it up. Being tall is not a personality trait or an achievement to me. It is just part of the way I move through the world. I have learned that something others see as extraordinary on the outside can feel completely ordinary from the inside. Feeling neutral about my height has taught me further that physical appearance should have no impact on our judgement of others.

Despite me not really putting much thought into the fact that I am tall, it does have some minor advantages now that I think of it. Some advantages would be being able to reach things on high shelves, being able to be seen in crowds, seeing over the crowds, and I get to playfully tease my girlfriend for being short. I have always been one that likes to help people so when my mom asks me to reach something high, I never realized I was helping her the way that I do.

One major disadvantage is trying to find pants that fit my long lanky legs. Not too many stores sell pants with a 36” inseam so online ordering it is. Another one is that I am constantly hitting my head on various things. I have to duck walking down the stairs every day in my house, and I never know when an unsuspecting beam is going to hit me across the head. Because of this, I always keep my head down while walking in buildings with low ceilings. It has just become an instinct to protect myself from another bump or thud.

Over time, I have come to realize that being tall affects the way people approach me before they even get to know me. Sometimes people think that I am a lot older than I actually am, have more self-confidence than the average, or have an exceptional athletic ability. My height creates expectation, and I have learned that while I cannot control people's assumptions, I can control how I respond to them.

Being so tall has also made me more aware of how quickly we label others based on what we can see on the outside. I always try to look past someone's physical appearance and focus more on things like their character, personality, and moral values. In that way, my tall stature has shaped how I indeed treat others. This reminds me that everyone carries something visible that others may completely misunderstand so it is important to not quickly judge or make those brisk presumptions.

After pondering what being tall really means to me, I have determined that it truly does not mean a lot to me but it actually is a big part of who I am. The fact that others see me in a particular way, it does alter how I am approached and treated. To other people, I am the big friendly giant but to myself, I am just Brody no matter how tall I am. And I am okay with that because I know God made me exactly the way I am supposed to be.