



Even If It's Dark!

He was a strong man facing an enemy beyond his strength. His young wife had become gravely ill, then suddenly passed away, leaving the big man alone with a wide-eyed boy, not quite five years old.

The service in the village church was simple, and heavy with grief. After the burial at the small cemetery, the man's neighbours gathered around him. "Please, bring your little boy and stay with us for several days," someone said. "You shouldn't go back home just yet."

Brokenhearted though he was, the man answered, "Thank you, friends, for the kind offer, but we need to go back home-where she was. My son and I must face this."

So they returned, the big man and his little boy, to what now seemed an empty house. The man brought his son's little bed into his room, so they could face the first dark night together.

As the minutes slipped by that night, the young boy was having a dreadful time trying to sleep... and so was his father. What could pierce a man's heart deeper than a child sobbing for a mother who would never come back?

Long into the night the little one continued to weep. The big man reached down into his bed and tried to comfort him as best he could. After a while, the little boy managed to stop crying, but only out of sorrow for his father. Thinking his son was asleep, the father looked up and said brokenly, "I trust You, Father, but...it's as dark as midnight!"

Hearing his dad's prayer, the little boy began to cry again.

"I thought you were asleep" he said.

"Papa, I did try. I was sorry for you. I did try. But-I couldn't go to sleep. Papa, did you ever know it could be so dark?" Then, through his tears, the little boy whispered, "But you love me even if it's dark-don't you, Papa? You love me even if I don't see you, don't you, Papa?"

For an answer, the big man reached across with his massive hands, lifted his little boy out of his bed, brought him over onto his chest, and held him, until at last he fell asleep.

When his son was finally quiet, he began to pray. He took his little son's cry to him, and passed it up to God.

"Father, it's dark as midnight. I can't see you at all. But you love me, even when it's dark and I can't see, don't You?"

In that blackest of hours, the Lord touched him.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" Romans 8:16

DON'T LET YOURSELF...

WORRY when you're doing your best.
HURRY when success depends on accuracy.
THINK evil of anyone until you have the facts.
BELIEVE ... a thing is impossible without trying it.
WASTE time on trivial matters.
IMAGINE ... that good intentions are a satisfying excuse.
HARBORbitterness toward God or man.

Love reaching out is affection.
 Love reaching up is adoration.

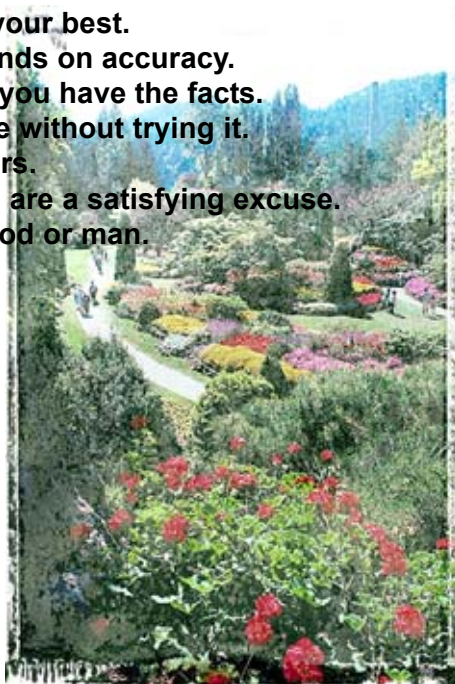
Love reaching down is grace.

Justice: Getting what you deserve.

Mercy: Not getting what you deserve.

Grace: Getting what you don't deserve.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:8



Just Wondering...

I went to the funeral parlour awhile ago and paid respect to the earthly remains of an old acquaintance. Some thoughtful person had placed in her hands a well-worn Bible. It looked fitting and symbolic. I could see how her face used to shine as she would stand up with her Bible and say, "Bless the Lord!" Yes, it was most appropriate!

Later I was thinking: What if someone put the thing that seemed most appropriate in our hands after we died? Would it be a cigarette or a bottle or a fishing pole or a set of car keys or a deck of cards or a TV remote control or a worn Bible or a Bible not worn at all? I just wonder...!