

Trust In The Lord

After God had told Moses that he was to leave Egypt and go into the Promised Land, He assures Moses in Exodus 33:14 that His Presence will go with him. A few verses later Moses asks God to show him His glory. God explains that He will make all His goodness pass before him, but "You cannot see My face, for no man shall see Me, and live. And the Lord said 'Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.'" (Ex. 33:20-23)

I'm sure each of us, like Moses, desires God's Presence to be with us and would yearn to see His glory. But also like Moses, God responds to us and says "You cannot see my face, but because I love you, I will put you here in this safe place right beside Me and I will cover you with My hand while I pass by and afterward you will see My back." When God allows trials or hurts in our lives and we can't understand where God is or what He is doing, I believe He is very near--right beside us. He has promised to never leave or forsake us. (Deut. 31:6-8) Lovingly He covers us with His hand, helping us to see our need for Him, and then in retrospect reveals the fact that His Presence was surely with us. Perhaps when He seems the farthest away He is actually covering you with His loving hands.

Recently, desiring God to show me His reality and asking for His Presence to be with me, I was faced with a frightening experience involving my daughter. I had a choice to make of either giving into my fear and imagining all kinds of terrible things that could happen or trusting God no matter what the circumstances looked like. During the evening I kept quoting verses like, "Perfect love casts out fear" and "What time I am afraid I will trust in God". Gradually I was able to drift off to sleep. Sometime in the night I awoke with a start and fear gripped my heart. As I prayed, bringing my thoughts and desires before the Lord, the thought came to me: "I, too, am a Father and loved my Son as you love your precious daughter. I, as a Father, felt all the same emotions you have felt as a mother...and yet, I was willing to give Him up; I was willing to allow Him to be sacrificed for your sin and for the sin of the whole world. Can you trust Me with her life?" At that moment I knew that God was asking me to do something He had asked me to do many times before...would I be willing to make an altar in my mind and spirit,(as Abraham actually did), and place her emotionally on that altar, (as Abraham did to Isaac), and give her back to God...trusting and affirming in my heart that He loves her far more than I ever could and He wants only the best for her. At that moment I couldn't "see God's face" but I knew He was very near, covering me with His hand, helping me to yield to His will, helping me to obey. Remembering Who God is, His Holiness, the fact that He reigns, and rules comforted me as I drifted back to sleep.

Now, looking back on that experience I can see "God's back". In retrospect I understand that God was testing me, drawing me into a place where my trust and faith in Him would be tried. I can thank Him and praise Him for taking me through that trial. Perhaps you've encountered some testing, hurtful circumstances, or trials and it seems that God is

distant...you can't "see His face". However, He has said He will not forsake or leave you and He never breaks His promises. Is there someone or something He is asking you to yield to Him? Someone or something He wants you to "die to"? Would you be willing to picture yourself before an altar and place that person, event, or trial on that altar and give it up to your loving heavenly Father whom you can totally trust? Perhaps what you place on that altar will be yourself, your hopes, dreams, or desires. As you yield yourself to Him, you will someday "see His back"--understand His working in your life, knowing He was right beside you and leading you to a deeper relationship with Him. As Proverbs 3:4,5 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths."