

What we Give

I was speaking to a friend this week and we talked about our children. She had 5 and I had 2. We spoke about the things we worried about when they were small and the things we worry about now. The love of a parent is always being challenged. When they were little, we worried about injuries and illness, then when they were teenagers, we worried about what temptations were they being faced with and what they were worrying about, then they married and left home and the worries continued. She spoke of her daughter's problems with love and a stable marriage and her hope for her, I spoke of my worry that they weren't taking care of themselves (this came from a Mother who had watched their sugar intake, no sugar coated cereal in our house, made sure they ate well and healthy, took them to the doctor and dentist for well visits and made sure they went outside for fresh air, made sure they had swimming lessons, made sure they had padded headboards because no child of mine was going to the ER at 11 pm because they were jumping on the bed and hit the wooden headboard). I admit to being overbearing. We have never stopped being the Mother. We decided we had signed up for a lifetime commitment. Now she has one child facing disease and one that died several years ago, the one she still weeps for at night when the house is still and quiet. Through it all God has been with us in all things, the good and the bad. One thing is true that when you have a child, a tiny being that you hold in your arms at birth but in your heart forever, you are truly bound by that love you feel. I remember a Mother whose child was arrested and sent to prison for vehicular homicide. He had drugs in his system. Her anguish was horrible, her heartbreak was palpable, her worry profound and she defended him. I felt her pain, this was her son, a part of her. His mistakes in life had led him to a bad place. But God still loved him and still felt sorrow for both he and his mother and this was not the plan God had for his life. Would he not hear the pleas of the child of a mother whose heart was breaking? Jesus in his final witness while hanging on a cross forgave and gave mercy to a thief who was beside him and gave his mother another son to care for her. I still pray as I have for over 60 years for the safety of my children, Grandchildren and Great grandchildren, they are the heart of my heart. Now imagine how much our loving God loves each one of us. He loved us before we were born, while still in our Mother's womb, before we knew him, he loved us. That is God's grace. We cannot decide on our own if we are loved because God has loved us from our beginning and had plans for us. We do not always live up to his plans, but he still loves us. We cannot run from it or escape it; we are loved by a forgiving God and a God filled with hope for us. We just must seek him. He sees within us as a Mother sees that tiny being and knows this child will be loved forever. Babies grow close to our hearts, and they never leave. And then God sends us Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren and we see in them their parents and a God that loves them. God blesses us daily with love and the gift of those small beings that hold such promise, grab unto our hearts, and never leave. Sometimes we make a life by the love we give to those we have been given. Praise God

Isaiah 66:12-13 For this is what the Lord says: "I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream; you will nurse and be carried on her arm and dandled on her knees. As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; and you will be comforted over Jerusalem.

Holy Lord, we thank you for the day and for the promise you see in each of us. Be with us, guide us and may we prove to be worthy of the love you have given. Be with our families and our church families. Be with our church, may we be the church you seek us to be. A church where all are welcomed. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry and his family. We thank you for his leadership and for his faith that leads us closer to you. Be with our church leaders, guide them and protect them. Lord, our country is divided, may we see what we have in common rather than those things that separate us. Watch over the children in school. Protect them and keep them safe. Be with the people in Ukraine, give them protection from a war. Be with the people in our midst who are ill and those who grieve. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

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