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Encouragement for Today

"Grandpa"

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Key Verse:

1 Peter 1:8, "Though you have not seen him, you love him; and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy." (NIV)

Devotion:

My dad's father died before I was born. Although I've never met him, I still adore him. How could that be you might ask? I've come to love, respect, and accept my grandpa's ways of life from the stories shared with me over the years by my own father, as well as other family members.

From these tales, I've learned how much family meant to my grandpa and how he was a "softy" when it came to his children. My dad and his brother and sisters could always take cover behind their dad when their mom was on the rampage. Grandpa was a fun person who loved to laugh, enjoyed good food, and had hobbies too.

In his day boxing was a huge sport. Grandpa loved to watch and participate. In fact, he became so good at boxing that he earned the nick name, "Rocky," which was passed on to my Dad as well.

While I've never seen my grandpa in person, I have come to know and love him through the traditions that have been passed down to me. I have seen him in our family customs, in our beliefs, and through the specialized fabric that makes up our unique family. One day I'll meet him face to face, but for now I know and love him by faith.

In a similar way, I've come to know and love God by faith. I've never seen the Lord with my eyes or touched His physical body with my hands. It's only by faith, as I've listen to the stories written by my brothers and sisters in Christ long ago, that I have come to understand who God is. I've seen His goodness, tasted His compassion, been held by His comfort, been surrounded by His love, and been sheltered by His grace. Because I've seen God by faith, I've chosen to take on His character, live by His laws, and love with His heart.

Why is it easy for some to believe in the unseen God while others find it difficult?

Thomas had a difficult time believing. Look at John 20:24-25.

"One of the disciples, Thomas, was not with the others when Jesus came. They told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he replied, "I won't believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side." (NLT)

The Lord is always willing to help our doubt. Verse 27 tells us that Jesus came to Thomas and said, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!"

Once Thomas saw, he believed. Then, Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who haven't seen me and believe anyway." (verse 29)

What about you? Do you believe in God even though you haven't seen Him? Dose the hearing of His attributes compel you to love Him? He loves you, and one day we will all see Him face to face. For now, we have the stories of faith that tell us of His greatness and compel us to believe.

My Prayer for Today:

Dear God, I am like Thomas. Most of the time, I need to see to believe. Help my doubt, Oh God. Open my eyes so that I may see Your glory displayed throughout Your creation. Open my mind so that I may believe Your truths, and open my heart so that I may receive Your life and love. In Jesus' Name, A-men.

Application Steps:

Plan a day to watch the sun rise or set, and ask God to show you His wonders. Or visit a zoo or an aquarium and witness God's handiwork. Ask yourself, "Do these brilliant things or animals exist by accident or are they the work of a magnificent God?"

Reflection Points:

Would you describe yourself as a "doubting Thomas" or a faith-filled person?

What keeps you from believing in the unseen God?

In what ways has God made His presence known to us?

How has He made Himself known to you personally?

Power Verses:

I Samuel 2:2, "No one is holy like the Lord, For there is none besides You, Nor is there any rock like our God." (NKJ)

Isaiah 46:11b, "Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned {it, surely} I will do it." (NAS)

Psalms 18:30, "As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him." (NKJ)

Romans 4:20, 21, "He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform." (NKJ)

Deuteronomy 33:26, "There is no one like the God of Jerusalem Who rides the heavens to help you, And in His excellency on the clouds." (NKJ)

Additional Resources

Message of the Month Club

<http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/resourceMessage.htm>

What Happens When Women Walk in Faith, by Lysa TerKeurst

http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources_whatHappens.htm

Do You Know Him?

<http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/knowHim.htm>