

Following the Father

By: Denisha Kirby

Have you ever trudged through thick, heavy snow? Feeling the muscles in your legs strain against the weight of your winter boots raking through inches upon inches of heavy, wet snow? Have you ever been five years old and experienced this? This week, my lovely Bluegrass state was pounded by a winter storm that our region hasn't seen in many years. I'm talking state of emergency level snowfall. Living in the South, we don't experience 10+ inches of snow very often, so when my husband announced that he was going to head out to check on the cows and feed our dear pot-bellied pig Ruby who lived across the field, my five year old immediately jumped at the opportunity to help his Daddy. What son doesn't idealize his father in every way at five years old? The snow had lightened a little, but still falling. I was nervous about letting him go and fearing his little legs would give out before they made the round trip trek across the cow pasture, but relented anyway. After many layers of clothing had been tugged on, boots tightly laced, and walking sticks in hand, they set off across the field. I stayed indoors, thank you very much. Being the Southern girl I am I wasn't about to bundle up and tread through all that snow. So I raced upstairs to the playroom window that faces the field to witness them making their way safely through the field. With my iPhone in hand, ready to snap some pictures of the two of them, I hear the following conversation:

"Come on, son!"

"I can't stand up!"

"Walk in my footsteps, son! Stay in my path and you'll be fine."

"This is hard!"

"Look where you're going and stop playing around!"

"Daaaaad...it's too hard!"

The mama bear in me leaned out the window (I had to chip away the ice...and it's still snowing, mind you) and said, "Bring him back in here!"

My dear, sweet, loving, stubborn husband said, "No, he's come this far, he can come with me."

So. There ya have it.

Daddy-1, Mommy-0.

Then he turned to our son (who's FIVE, remember?) and said, "Come on, you can do it. We don't have all that far to go."

And then I thought to myself, there's a Bible lesson in this somewhere. It's as if the Holy Spirit reminded me of Psalm 5:8 that says, "Lead me, Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies-make your way straight before me," and John 14:3, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take

you to be with me that you also may be where I am,” and Proverbs 3:5-6, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” (NIV)

How many times have we been like my son, making our way through hard times, tired, feeling small, cold, and all alone? How many times have we looked up to our Heavenly Father and said, “It’s too hard!”

I’ll be the first to admit, I’ve had my share of those moments. On my knees, sorting through feelings of heartache, confusion, self-doubt, and then I hear him whisper, “Get up. Follow my path. I’ve already made it straight for you. Why are you making this harder on yourself?”

Sometimes we need these gentle reminders: God is with us. He’s always here. He’s never left us, and he’s already faced what we are facing. If only we trust in Him instead of only ourselves. Just as my husband said, “Walk in my footsteps, son! Follow my path and you’ll be fine.” We only need to listen.

Our Heavenly Father wants us to look to Him when things get hard. God, the Creator of all things, wants us--little old us--to look to Him for help. He adores you, did you know that? He loves us so much and wants to be in our company. He wants you to pray and communicate with Him daily, “continuously” or “without ceasing” (Read 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18). God is ultimately leading us to our reward. He believes in us. Just as my husband was guiding our son along their adventurous walk this afternoon, God the Father is guiding us in our Christian walk. No, our walk isn’t perfect. Far from it. Sometimes we struggle to stay upright, but it’s all worth it. Our reward and blessing is waiting for us. Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us.

Because He loves us so.

Oh, and my sweet son? He made it there and back because his Daddy believed in him. And this mama bear had hot chocolate waiting for him when he got home.