

Our Granddaughter, Addison

Some of you may find this surprising and even unsafe, but we have seen our granddaughter, Addison, twice now for extended periods of time. Despite the coronavirus pandemic, we saw her all afternoon on Memorial Day in Fargo, and now she and her parents were with us in Grand Forks on Saturday and Sunday, the first weekend of June. I must tell you that when I come into her cute little presence, I myself turn into a child. I sing silly songs, read silly books, make silly sounds, and beam silly smiles. Yes, whenever I see Addison, I am a 57-year-old happy, giddy child, because I love her so very much.

You want to know what's really interesting about this? I don't care how silly I look. Some time ago, I was making noises at Addison, just to make her laugh. She has the best laugh! While I admit the sounds that I was making were strange, they were working. She was laughing her head off. However, Margo must have thought I sounded a little too strange because she shushed me. Yes, still after almost 35 years of marriage, I find ways for my beloved to shush me! Of course, now that I've told you this, I could really be in trouble. But as I said, it won't bother me because I can endure anything for Addison.

I believe that God has a similar relationship with us. Even though we might embarrass the Lord at times because of our sin, He doesn't really care because He loves us so much. Someone I truly respect recently said that all people because of our sin are villains. But does this mean that God stays mad at us, or seeks to punish us, or is making plans to send us to the bad place? When I look at the suffering the Lord endured for us on the cross, how He went to such great length to be born into the world and do just about everything to save us, I just don't see how God is anything but giddy in our presence.

Before you are convinced that I have lost it, consider these words from Isaiah 49. In verses 14-16, the Lord speaks these affectionate words about us: "Zion has said, 'The LORD has forsaken me, my Lord has forgotten me.' Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands." In other words, even though God's children sometimes feel like the Lord has forgotten us, the truth is the Lord loves us so much that He not only has compassion on us, He never forgets us.

The Lord seems to suggest here that parents and grandparents might forget a child like Addison. Well, there is only one way I would forget her, and that is dementia. Otherwise, forgetting her is not an option. There simply is no way I would ever forget her or stop loving her, and this is precisely the point. In fact, the Lord claims here that it's even more impossible for Him to forget us or stop loving us. Forgetting us, falling out of love for us, is not an option for God. So, unless God is able to have dementia, and He's not, the Lord will love us to the end, despite our sinful, villainous behavior.

Yet, I have not even mentioned the best detail of what God said. The Lord said, "I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands." This has to be one of the best verses in the Bible! God loves you, me, and all His children so much that He has written our names on the palms of His hands. Does God write our names on the palms of His hands because He's afraid He will forget us? I don't think so. I think it is more like me sitting at home at the kitchen table, doodling the name "Addison Dawn Kruckenberg" and her initials "ADK", on a piece of paper. I write her name like that because I love her so much.

Well, God loves us so much that He writes our names all over the palms of His hands. To me this means that in some divine way, the Lord is happy, even giddy over us. I don't mean this to be disrespectful or irreverent toward God. I simply believe the Lord enjoys watching us live in this world He made for us, He loves to see us smile at the people He gave to us, and He really pleased to hear us laugh at something truly funny, like two silly squirrels chasing each other around a tree. So, when I think about how much I love Addison, I am humbled when I think that just maybe, God loves me the same way.

This past weekend I had Addison downstairs in Michael's room. She was taking delight in his Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, and Goofy bobbleheads. It was one smile, one giggle, and one laugh after another. As I watched her and my heart was bursting with love for her, a really incredible thought crossed my mind, the very thought which inspired this article. What if God is getting as much enjoyment watching me delight in Addison, as I am getting, watching her delight in Mickey Mouse? If indeed my name is really inscribed on the palms of His hands, if He really loves you and me so much, it must be true.

You are in my prayers,
Pastor Tom