

When God Delays His Arrival

When I was single, and even when I was married with no children, going shopping and having it be a treat meant that I'd get to buy some nonessentials and go places I didn't have to go.

After we began having children, a shopping treat meant getting to go to absolutely essential places all by myself.

Now that our first four children are older but we have a baby, a "treat" is getting to go to essential places with only the older four, who can at least get into and out of the van by themselves and fasten their own seatbelts.

One particular day, I was enjoying the treat of doing errands with only our three girls. (Kenny was in school, and Timmy was at home with Phil.) As we were leaving our last errand to return home, I received a text from my husband that said simply this: "Timmy wants you."

I knew what that meant. You see, I still nurse Timmy a few times a day, and apparently Timmy had woken up from a nap and decided that right then should be one of those times he nursed. One of the girls asked if we could stop somewhere on the way home, and I told her that we couldn't because Timmy needed me.

As we neared home, I could imagine poor Timmy getting more and more upset, not understanding why Mama wasn't coming.

"Mama's comin', Timmy," I said out loud, wishing I could make Timmy hear my words and know how close at hand his rescue was.

Wow, I thought. I wonder if that's how Jesus feels toward us?

There are times when we cry out for rescue and it doesn't immediately come. So we continue to cry out, and part of our desperation comes from not understanding why God isn't helping

us right then and not knowing how long we'll have to wait.

But how much different would our waiting be if we realized Daddy's comin'? Because He is. Oh, He is.

The disciples would have understood how we feel in those times. Once, they were crossing the Sea of Galilee in their boat, and a great storm came up. In fact, this storm was so violent that they were in danger of sinking. Then Matthew 14:25 says, "At about four o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them walking on the water" (MSG).

Did you catch that? Four o'clock in the morning. Not "right when the storm started" or even "a few minutes after the storm started," but hours later.

I'm sure the disciples wondered where Jesus was. I'm sure they thought about how they really could have used an extra set of hands to bail water. But He didn't show up until they'd been terrified for hours.

Likewise, Mary and Martha would have identified with us too. Their brother Lazarus was sick, so they sent for Jesus, knowing He could perform healing miracles. But Jesus didn't come, and Lazarus died.

Then Jesus showed up a few days later. Both of the women tell Him separately, "If you had been here, Lazarus wouldn't have died." Or, to paraphrase, "You could have come, and You didn't. Why didn't You? This is Your fault."

There are several more instances in the Bible where Jesus seems to show up late, but I won't list them all. The point is this: Even when it seems like He's late, even when we wonder why He hasn't showed up yet, we need to remember that He's coming and that He has a plan.

And because Jesus is the exact representation of the Father, we know this is true of God the Father too.

For us, as His children, it's not a matter of *if* Daddy's coming, but *when*. We can be absolutely confident that He's going to show up and make all things right at the point He knows is perfectly best.

Many times, He waits well past the point we think is best. Usually we consider it best if He shows up *right now*. Sometimes He does that. But we never have to wonder, as Timmy might have wondered, if someone's going to come meet our needs. We know Someone's coming.

True, some things might not be made right until heaven. God doesn't promise that we'll never suffer on this earth. But He does promise that we will never wait endlessly, only to have Him never show up at all.

He's coming. In His timing, but He's coming.

What are you facing right now, precious mom? Your Rescuer is on the way. You may not know how far off He is, but You know He's on the way.

Rest assured that Daddy's comin'.

"God's enemies will be blasted out of the sky, crashed in a heap and burned. God will set things right all over the earth, he'll give strength to his king, he'll set his anointed on top of the world!" (1 Sam. 2:10).

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