

Do You Ignore or Acknowledge God's Protection?

I was going to a birthday party. Like any great *Pappy*, I stopped on the way to the party to get my grandson, Elijah, a present for his first birthday.

He was at the age where he mimicked sounds. If you asked him, "What does a doggie say?" His reply was "Arf." How did he get to be so cute?

As I walked into the little toy area of a drug store, I spotted the perfect toy. A drug store doesn't have a really big toy section I found out. But here it was: a cute, fuzzy, battery-operated puppy. A long cord was attached to the toy, with a small box on the other end. It had two buttons on it, to make the doggie bark and walk. Now this was a cool toy! It was well worth the \$ price tag.

A little while later, when Elijah opened it, he was so excited. Because he is a little genius, he learned how to push the correct buttons very quickly. He pushed one to make the puppy bark and one to make it walk. It was by far his favorite gift and he dragged it with him everywhere.

However, as I watched him play with the toy, I became concerned about the cord that attached the doggie to the little control box. Several times Elijah got tangled up in the cord. My immediate fear was that he could be harmed if the cord wrapped around his neck. I dug the box out of the trash and read the outside. It said, "Recommended for 3+ years of age." Now I had a dilemma.

How could I take the toy away from the birthday boy? Simple. I waited until he took a nap, and I confiscated the dangerous toy. Protecting my grandson took precedence over his happiness with the toy. And the amazing thing is, he doesn't even know I

protected him. He may *never* know. He, in fact, never missed the toy. But regardless of how he would react, his protection from harm and trouble was paramount in my mind.

In Psalm 32, David declares to the Lord: "You are my hiding place; You will preserve me from trouble; You will surround me with shouts of deliverance. Selah" (v.7). Then in Psalm 61:7 he writes, "May he sit enthroned before God forever; oh, prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him."

Dozens of times in the Psalms alone, David acknowledges God's protection. Make no mistake about it. The Lord God is our protector. He goes before us to make the crooked places straight. He is our rock, our fortress and our deliverer. His shield surrounds us. "The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a *refuge* in times of *trouble*." (Ps. 9:9, emphasis added).

Please do not miss this: It is His *love* and *faithfulness* that protect us. Our happiness is not as important as our protection. His hand of protection is over us, even when we don't realize it.

For instance, we may have had a flat tire, and that may have protected us from danger ahead. Or perhaps we missed an appointment, but that protected us from a bad situation. Even a broken relationship that we simply did not understand may have been a means of protecting us from what was to come. If we walk in the Light of His Word, our way is protected. We are covered in **perfect love** and **covenant faithfulness**.

This week as you walk the path of your Christ journey, acknowledge His protection. Thank Him for it, even if it is not readily visible. Trust that your times are in His hands. Continue steadfastly, praying and believing. If you sense trouble coming, run into His shadow. Find refuge in Him as your stronghold.

The storms will blow. That is inevitable. Trials and

temptations abound. Satan came to kill, steal and destroy. Remember this: Your *protection* is more important to your Heavenly Father than your happiness. Be strong and of good courage. The Lord your God is with you—*everywhere you go*. And you are protected; I promise.

Prayer Power for the Week of April 27

This week thank God every day that He is your hiding place and a refuge in times of trouble. Thank Him for His continual protection over you and your loved ones, and that He is with you everywhere you go. Remember the persecuted church around the world, and continue to pray for Israel's protection. Thank Him for His mercy on our nation and cry out for repentance and revival to spread across the land. Pray for unity among believers and for a release of concerted prayer for our national, state and local leaders, for a harvest of souls, and a return to honoring God as a nation and as individuals (Ps. 32:7; Ps. 9:9; 2 Chr. 7:14).