

# The Father's Embrace: Finding Comfort in Presence

*"...for my soul trusteth in thee: yea in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast."*

*Psalms 57:1*

I'm getting a lot of hugs as of late. Don't worry, I'm keeping my social distance. Washing my hands, not touching my face or at least doing less of that... I think. The hugs I've been receiving are from my daughter. Kids can ask some pretty hard questions these days: "Dad, how long will this be? Dad, will people die? Dad, will we get sick?" I'm not so good with the logistical questions but I'm not so good with the theological ones either: "Dad, why doesn't God stop this? Dad, why does God allow this?" Waxing eloquent on the nature of sin, God's sovereignty and purposes seem to have a limited effect on her young heart. If I'm honest, they have a limited effect on my old heart also right now.

God has taught me a lot about faith and fear during these days. My daughter brings her fears to me. Somehow, she sees me as the one who should quiet her heart...and I'm not. This not-being the one to calm her bothers me. This failure on my part has made me quite introspective to the nature of fear and comfort. I have come to realize the solace she yearns for is circumstantial. If I could tell her "this will pass quickly and it won't be bad", her fear meter would move from fearful to fearless. I'm not surprised at her desire for circumstantial solace. Every time I check the news, I too, am looking for favorable information that will move my fear meter in the direction of fearless during these current circumstances.

If we define faith as assurance apart from our senses, then it's quite apparent that the fearlessness I seek does not spring from faith. After all, the fearlessness I long for is a happy report of facts and figures - tangible data I can see and touch. It is this longing that has opened my eyes to the comfort of God - the Father I'm supposed to replicate to my daughter.

Since I'm not smart enough to answer her questions and I'm not strong enough to calm her fears, we've decided to just embrace. Whenever she is scared, she can come get a hug. And when we do, I pray she can feel the one thing I want her to know - God's got her.

Very often in the Scriptures, we find men and women asking God for circumstantial answers to their worrisome questions. Very often in Scripture we find God not settling our hearts with logistical clarity but offering Himself as the answer to our worries. As loved ones are cooped up together during this time of uncertainty, may we demonstrate to each other this unfailing, personal love of God.

Ideas:

- Let your loved one be afraid without feeling guilty about it.
- Let your loved one ask hard questions without answers.
- Let your loved one vent their frustrations without passing judgment.
- Let your loved one feel God's reception through your embrace.
- Let your loved one feel God's love through your words, notes, and cards.
- Let your loved one feel God's control through your smile.
- Let your loved one feel God's physical provision through your tangible actions of help.

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I asked my daughter last night as we embraced, "Does our hugging help?" She replied, "kind of". I smiled because that's what I would expect. My arms, my voice and my presence will all have a limited effect. And it should. While I am, for her, a substitute for The Father - I am a poor one. She will find complete ease of heart and mind in our heavenly Father alone. May we each move toward our Father's embrace during these circumstances. May we pray many others will as well.

Below are several resources from our website that may prove especially helpful during a difficult time:

- [Hurt and Emotions](#): The uncertainty of the world can give rise to a range of emotions in our lives. This section of our website contains several articles, podcasts, and resources designed to help us and those we love navigate emotions such as fear, worry, stress, and unmet expectations.
- [God's Promises to the Believer](#): A series of promises from the Scriptures meant to bring encouragement and strength in difficult times.
- [Dealing with Caregiver Stress](#): In the midst of difficult times, we must never forget the special stress that those caring for others can feel. As a church, we have the opportunity to be aware, to be prayerful, and to be purposeful to encourage these caregivers in big and small ways. If we are a caregiver ourselves, we must be willing to reach out for help when needed and continually find our strength in the Lord.
- [Helping One Another after a Major Stressor](#): We have an opportunity as a Body to continue to think through how we can look out for and help each other during and after difficult times. This resource contains important thoughts to consider.