

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE - SEPT. 18, 2011

Reflections

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

'I WANT MY DADDY!'

BY REV. JEAN WADE

During July, my son, his youngest son and I went to Indiana for my brother-in-law's wedding. This trip turned into a mini-family reunion, with much of my husband's family coming together. We took four-year-old London because none of the family had ever met him. What a great time we all had reminiscing and enjoying each other's company, but it was also very tiring! Poor London was the only little child there, except for a fifteen-year-old female cousin. He was great throughout it all, but every evening he would fall in bed exhausted. That's when he would cry and say, "I want my daddy!" His daddy, of course, had left him with Grandma and gone off to spend time with cousins his age.

As I reflected back on that trip, I was reminded of how often we, too, want our daddy. Now I know that we no longer refer to God as "Father," but that role of parent giving unconditional love is one we find particularly appealing. When we are alone or in unfamiliar settings, tired of dealing with new things and people, and overwhelmed with trying to do good, we just want to be accepted into those loving arms. We yearn with child-like faith that God will make everything better, or at least more "normal."

Did London really want his dad to hold him in his arms? Yes, probably. But, that is not what we are really asking for from God. We are asking for comfort, for elimination of fear, for acceptance even when we had done wrong, or the kindness of others. God grants us that kind of unconditional love and caring, but we don't always readily see it. It comes through those around us demonstrating how God's Spirit works through each of us. Unfortunately we frequently aren't aware of the needs of others. We get so caught up in our own "reminiscing with the relatives and cousins" that we don't see what life is doing to others. Maybe our prayer should be for God to open our eyes and give us the "sixth sense" to feel others pain and lift up others in how we encounter each other. We have been given the task of living in God's image and holding each other when we cry for "daddy."

We frequently talk of the big needs in the world and try to fulfill the mission on a grand scale, but I pray we see and feel the everyday anguish of God's family close at hand. May our first mission be to encounter each other as God encounters us.



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