


M. Basilea Schlink

CHRISTMAS—



*Someone
cares for you*

FOR A CHILD IS BORN TO US, A SON IS GIVEN TO US ... HE WILL BE CALLED: WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE. ISAIAH 9:6



Christmas shows us that there is someone who cares, someone who loves us and feels for us in all our troubles. There is someone who is there to comfort and help us in our pain, someone who gives us hope. There is light at the end of the tunnel. When we respond to suffering by trusting God and saying, 'Yes Father, I accept Your will for me', heaven opens and inexpressible glory is ours.

Who cares so much about us? God, our Father. And the proof of His love is that He was willing to sacrifice His dearest and best for us, His only Son, Jesus. For our sakes Jesus was born as a baby, lived among us and was given up into the hands of those who hated and killed Him. That's how much we are worth to God, our Father. And that's why at Christmas we joyfully sing, 'Unto us a child is born' – Jesus Christ, our Lord.

This child has been given various titles, including 'Wonderful Counsellor', 'Mighty God' and 'Prince of Peace'. But this Christmas let us focus on the name 'Everlasting Father'. It means that the baby Jesus is a perfect reflection of His Father, sharing His characteristics. As Son of the Father, Jesus wants to make the Father more real to us, so that we can relate to Him as His children. Because Jesus has such a loving relationship with the Father Himself, He wants the same for us.

It's as if Jesus were saying to us: 'I want to bring you something that will be a comfort to you when you feel closed in by darkness. Do you know what brought Me comfort and help during My life here on earth? It was My trust in the Father.' Jesus became human, just like us. In the Bible it says, 'It was necessary for him to be made in every respect like us, his brothers and sisters, so that he could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God ... Since he himself has gone through suffering and testing, he is able to help us when we are being tested.' (Hebrews 2:17-18) He understands us in our suffering, and can help us overcome it – by trusting God.

Where did Jesus find the strength to endure trials and temptations? His relationship with His Father was the key. At the end of the day He would come aside to speak with Him in prayer. Total trust in the Father is what brought Him through. His whole attitude was, 'Yes, Father, Your will be done.' That's what gave Him the strength to endure the ordeal of Gethsemane.

And so when we feel surrounded by darkness, we can come to the child in the manger. There we find a beacon of hope and comfort sent from the heavenly Father: He knows us, He knows all about our problems and our hurts. As soon as we turn to Him and cry out to Him, comfort fills our heart. We can be sure that God, our Father, hears us every time we call to Him. His fatherly heart beats with love for each of us. He cares about all that troubles us, and is always seeking ways of helping us.



Jesus,

You came to this earth as a little child. Help us to trust the Father as You do. Help us to face the sufferings of this present time as His true children. This Christmas we want to thank You for all You have done for us. You reconciled us with God through Your sacrifice at Calvary, so that all who believe in You may become His children.

Thank You for the assurance that we are His children and that His love surrounds us in these dark and uncertain times.

Teach us what it means to truly trust the Father, and help us to love Him more, seeing how greatly He loves us. Help us to thank Him and say with implicit trust, 'My Father, Your heart is full of love and all Your ways are good. You have our very best in mind.' Amen.

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