

Walking with God in a snowstorm

By Elise L. Moore, C.S.

Schools closing and heavy snowfall remind me of an experience I had as a child. We lived 6 long blocks from the elementary school or about half a mile. It was usually a pleasant walk.

One day when I was nine we were sent home from school early. There was a tremendous blizzard. Moms came to pick up their children. It seemed like almost everyone had a ride, except me.

My mother was working and couldn't come. There was nothing to do but walk home. The snow was deep. At least it seemed deep for my little legs. Soon I was the only kid walking. No one in front of me. No one behind. The snow stopped, but it was bitter cold with an icy wind that cut through you.

I didn't think I could make it. I wasn't even half the way home and I was crying because of the cold. Salvation to me at that moment meant someone helping me. First I wanted Mom to be there. But that was wishful thinking and I soon realized that.

Then I began to think that one of the handful of cars sneaking their way up the prolonged uphill grade would see me struggling and offer me a ride. Surely that's how God would deliver me. But no one stopped.

Maybe someone would be home in one of the houses and would help me. But all of this was looking for a person to save me. I was looking in the wrong direction for salvation. Salvation is of God.

I thought I had been praying. Wasn't I asking God to help me? Wasn't I asking Him to send me someone to take me home? But right there in the biting cold, I realized what was wrong with my prayer. I had been telling God what I wanted. And so I was not open to His solutions. Nothing was happening because I was trying to direct God instead of listening to God's directions.

Now I started to pray correctly. I turned to God and affirmed that He was present with me, not distant. He knew the solution and would communicate it to me. I began thinking of God as Father-Mother and knowing this meant God was infinite Love. God was loving me right then and I was surrounded by the warmth of divine Love.

At that moment the thought came to me very clearly that I must walk faster. Now this seems like a simple idea. Any one could think that one up. But the fact of the matter was that this was God's angel message to me. I was praying to God for His solution, because I couldn't think of anything to do. The wonderful thing was that moments before I felt like I couldn't take another step. But I recognized the thought to walk faster as God's message to me. If God said it, I could do it. I started to walk faster.

At first it was difficult. It was difficult because of the deep snow and I felt frozen. But I knew I must be obedient to God's guidance. So I continued praising God silently, knowing that He was all-powerful and able to do all things. Since I was His image and likeness, I could do what I needed to do.

The hill got steeper but I moved progressively faster. I stopped dwelling on the problem. All my thoughts were about God, His presence, His power, His government, His love. I thought about God all the way home.

There were no repercussions from that walk. I never got a cold or felt ill. I was just full of gratitude that God had spoken to me and helped me when no one else was around.

I cherish this experience for two reasons. First, it reminds me never to outline solutions or tell God what I think should be done. That is wishful thinking and closes our thoughts and our eyes to God's guidance. Second, God's answers to prayer are immediate and specific. We must listen and then immediately obey. "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalms 27:1)

Published in: *Gallatin News Examiner* January 2, 1996
Nashville Metropolitan Times March 10, 1996