

A Man Called Peter

We were recently watching the movie called "A Man Called Peter" about Peter Marshall who was a Scottish immigrant and eventually became pastor of the New York Avenue Church in Washington, D.C..

Marshall was also Chaplain to the U. S. Senate for two different terms in the 1940's. He ministered to the most influential leaders of our land and yet his heart was always with the regular working men and women and especially with the youth in his church, with whom he was very popular. His Scotsman's wit and sense of humor were always in evidence.

Peter Marshall had a first and eventually a second heart attack. He was always On the occasion of his second heart attack, when the doctor informed him that he needed to go to the hospital Peter said, "What a revolting development this is". A few hours later Peter Marshall was gone and we had lost one of the great men of faith in our nation's history.

In one scene in the movie Marshall was speaking to a group of Military Cadets, prior to the bombing at Pearl Harbor. Unknown to all was the fact that many of these young men would soon be called into action in WWII. As often happened, he felt God wanted for him to give a different message than the one he had originally planned and changed the message at the last minute. He told the story of the young mother who had to face the bad news from the doctor that her young child was dying of a terminal illness. Her son would ask her all those questions about what it was going to be like to die and what Heaven would be like. The young mother was overcome with tears and had to leave for another room to hide her tears. She prayed and asked God to give her some way to explain death and heaven to her son.

And then, in an instant, God revealed to her the right answer. She asked her son if he could remember what happened the last time he had grown sleepy and fallen asleep on his parents' bed. He said he did. She asked if he remembered how he had woken up the next day in his own bed. While he was asleep, the strong arms of his father had picked him up and taken him to his proper place of rest. "In the same way", she explained, "when it was time for him to die, the strong arms of the Lord Jesus would come and pick him up to take him where he belonged." The young boy seemed satisfied and was infused with new courage for what lay ahead and a short time later he was gone to be with Jesus.

What a beautiful simple picture of the Savior's love and that his strong arms are there for you and me. Those loving arms are there for us in death but also in life. As we come to this time of communion let us remember the psalmist words.

PS 136:12 with a mighty hand and outstretched arm; His love endures forever.

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