

Caregiving 101

Scripture: Luke 1:26-38

Date: March 25, 2021

Message:

For nothing is impossible with God. Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant."

Luke 1:37-38

Sometimes being called to be the Lord's servant can be a daunting task, especially when what you are being asked to do, isn't in your plans. Just ask Mary.

Have you ever felt as if God has interrupted your plans? I'll confess that I have. There have been many times I've gone along gracefully but, sadly, other times I have not. As a flawed Christian, I am compelled to ask "why", or "why now, Lord." - knowing full well it's not my place to understand God's plan nor ask for an explanation as to what He is asking of me. I just simply need to trust Him. But sometimes that's easier said than done.

I felt this way after my Mom was diagnosed with dementia in 2017. Her illness just wasn't in my or my family's plans. This kind of thing never is. Because I live 3-hours away from my parents, I wasn't my mother's main caregiver, that responsibility fell onto the shoulders of my 86-year-old Dad. I visited frequently to help out with not only her care but to give my Dad a much-needed break. As her dementia progressed, so did my visits home. It got to the point I dreaded going. I was physically exhausted and mentally drained, and simply put – I was sad.

It was during this time that I would talk to God – I would cry, complain and vent my frustration about how unfair it was to be losing my kind, loving, beautiful, and smart Christian mother - little by little.

It was during these prayerful conversations with God, that He started to work through me. First, He showed me how to accept my Mom's diagnosis. Then He guided me, an untrained caregiver, how to handle her fragile state-of-mind with the love, grace and dignity she deserved. God gave me the words to diffuse my mom's sun-downing episodes and He gave me strength and courage the first time she didn't recognize me as her daughter.

As Mom's dementia worsened, God's love continued to guide me through so many unknown situations that I never thought I would get through. God was with my brother and me the day we moved Mom into a memory-care facility, and He was with us when she died 8 months later.

See, that's the beauty of God's love. He shows us His mercy and grace through His LOVE for us. The same unconditional love a mother has for her child or an adult child for an ailing parent or loved one.

Prayer: *Dear Heavenly Father, please help us to be still and to listen to your voice so that we may be guided through the difficult times in our lives. Amen.*

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