

Greetings!

How did things go for you last week? I hope you had one of your best weeks ever. But, if you didn't, maybe you'll want to hear what God was saying to me after a really cruddy week. It was a very good word!

Written on His Hand

I've always been a great reader, though not a very good spellur but, I will never forget the word "*with*"! I can spell it forwards, backwards and just about any other way you'd like me to spell it. I can even imagine it upside down and reversed in a mirror. "W-I-T-H", see there – *with*!

Certain memories from our childhood mark all of us; for me it was first grade and a teacher named, Mrs. Acorn. I can still see her face as we sat around the reading circle. I was in the "A Team" reading group, which made my mama proud. That is – until that fateful day.

Now, just how do you go about explaining to your mama why you have the word "*with*" written in large black letters across your hand? I worked on the solution to the problem all day but, in the end, there wasn't much I could come up *with*. The ribbing I received from the second and third graders at recess was bad enough, but now I had to face – *Mama*!

Explaining to her it wasn't just me that had "*with*" written across their hand, but everyone in my reading group, made it at least a little more bearable. Besides, I was only in the first grade, what could they expect of me? So I launched into my story (Knowing me as you now do, can you picture me at age six telling a good story to my mama?).

Sitting around the circle, we each took turns reading the story aloud from our books. One by one, we were doing just fine until, "*with*". Stuck we were! One by one, we fell to the noble word "*with*". Mrs. Acorn's face read of total disappointment in her "A Team" but, try as we might, we succumbed to the mighty word – "*with*"!

I have discovered that good teachers have a *gift* when it comes to getting their point across. Taking her *BIG* black magic marker out of her desk, she proceeded to line us up. One by one, we filed past her (in front of the entire class no less) and held out our hand. With bold block letters she wrote, "**WITH**" across them. To this day, I still have nightmares of the "*with monster*" coming out from under the bed at night. I will never forget "*with*"!

Last weekend was a lousy weekend. Come to think of it, I've had a few "*lousy*" weekends over the years. Have you? Then, I heard a song coming over the radio, like a fresh word just for me.

“When you think your dream is dying
He has not forgotten you

When your body aches from tryin'
He has not forgotten you

When you worry for tomorrow
Even though the sky is blue
See the sun is shining
He has not forgotten you

When July feels like December
He has not forgotten you
When it's painful to remember
He has not forgotten you

When it seems you can not win
And there is not much left to lose
He has got a plan
And He has not forgotten you

And hope will spring eternal
In the home of those who know
That loving eyes will follow
Every where we go

And even in the darkness
His promises are true
Keep this in your heart
He has not forgotten you.

He is faithful
He is present
He is listening
He is love

He is faithful
He is with you
He is listening
He is love

If your tired flesh has squandered
What your spirit would have saved
And your aimless feet have wandered
Far from all you truly crave

Turn and run toward your Father
Do not wait another day
See His arms are open

And He is calling out your name

And hope will spring eternal
In the home of those who know
That loving eyes will follow
Everywhere we go

And even in the darkness
His promises are true
Keep this in your heart
He has not forgotten you

He is in your heart
And He has not... forgotten..... you.”

Thank you Twila, for singing it just for me.

We were born to connect, but sometimes our connector feels broken. We stand in the darkness wondering where He has gone, not realizing that He is still there. I know you understand what I'm saying; you've been there. Israel also felt it when their enemies overtook their lands and raided their encampments, but He was still with them as well.

Listen to their complaint and His response:

But Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me, And my Lord has *forgotten* me.” “Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you. *See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; . . .*” Isaiah 49:14-16 (NKJV)

Did you spot it? “***See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands.***” I believe this was not only true for Israel, but that it stands true for all *His children*. He will *never forget* you. How can He? You are His child!

I will forever remember the word “*with*”. Until my dying day I will be able to close my eyes and see it written across my little six year old hand.

“And even in the darkness
His promises are true
Keep this in your heart
He has not forgotten you”

And that's just a thought . . .

My Final Word

This past weekend thieves stole my wife's van, and then wrecked it in a police pursuit. At the accident scene, my daughter and I spent an hour picking up items from Sharon's music collection and tile she had just purchased that week for our home bathroom project. Around five AM, we were able to go to bed and sleep for a few hours. For days now, we have walked in what feels like a mental slumber while dealing with two different insurance claims and police reports, as well as the loss of our second mode of transportation. Someone said, "Life Happens!"

The prayers of our friends and family have strengthened us during this time, as well as our own sense of God's presence at our side. Life may "happen", but God *HAPPENS* even more!

We often use the word "grace" in clichés, without stopping to consider just how beautiful His grace is during our times of distress. Like a parent running to their child's cry, He comes to us. Bending over our frail bodies, He listens to our complaint and, with that reassuring voice, He lets us know that everything will be okay as He holds us in His comforting arms.

I don't know what you're facing this week, but I wanted you to know that your Father has not forgotten you. Even as He goes about His daily routine of taking care of the rest of the world, you are on His mind, and in His heart.

You can listen to Twila Paris sing Not Forgotten here: [*Not Forgotten.*](#)

Facing the darkness with Father's light in my heart,

Chris

