



Leaning Into the Heart of the Holy

2016 Lenten Devotions

Saturday

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Leaning In . . .

By Deborah Wright

Jody and I don't get to hold our granddaughter very often, but Robert and Lenka have made sure Savannah knows her "Ganpa" and "Ganma." We visit together several times each week via FaceTime or Skype, sharing such "first" milestones as smiles, rollovers, teeth, steps, and pigtaails. Before their visit last October, we would often end our phone conversations with Savannah blowing kisses to Jody and me.

When Robert, Lenka, and Savannah were home, by far our favorite moments were when we held Savannah in our arms and kissed her little head . . . and when she hugged and kissed us back. After our children returned to Slovakia, we resumed our Facetime calls. Now, however, when it came time to say good-bye and blow kisses, Savannah didn't put her hand to her lips to blow us kisses as she usually did. Instead, she leaned into the phone to give us a kiss, and we leaned right back.

Maybe I am being overly optimistic, but I truly believe Savannah remembered us holding and kissing her. She knew us more intimately and, therefore, didn't want to settle for blowing kisses but wanted to be close enough to touch. When we talk to Savannah, she calls us by name. She is eager to show us all she has learned to do . . . spinning until she makes herself dizzy, performing the motions to "I'm a Little Teapot," making Play-doh pizza, and trying to do a split without falling over from laughter.

I love our Lenten theme this year and the image it invokes of leaning in close to God. I know the happiness it brings Jody and me to see Savannah's forehead leaning into the phone as she gives us a kiss, so I can only imagine the joy it must bring God to see his children leaning closer toward his loving heart. He wants us to know him intimately, know his name and call on him in prayer, understand his ways and demonstrate our understanding in the lives we lead and the choices we make. And he wants us to recognize and use the many gifts we have been given with a joyful spirit.

When we lean into the heart of the Holy, we open ourselves up to God's love and all that entails. We see more clearly where we fall short of being who God created us to be, but we can lean on God for clarity and purpose. We are not guaranteed a life free of problems and pain, but we are promised loving arms to lean on and support us throughout our journey. We are truly known and are wonderfully loved by God our Father. Hopefully we can offer him the gift of wanting to know him more fully and loving him more completely with our lives.

Prayer:

What a fellowship, what a joy divine, leaning on the everlasting arms;
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine, leaning on the everlasting arms.

O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way, leaning on the everlasting arms;
O how bright the path grows from day to day, leaning on the everlasting arms.

What have I to dread, what have I to fear, leaning on the everlasting arms;
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near, leaning on the everlasting arms.

Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms;
Leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.

–Elisha A. Hoffman

Proverbs 3:1-6

My child, do not forget my teaching,
but let your heart keep my commandments;
for length of days and years of life,
and peace they will add to you.
Do not let kindness and truth leave you;
bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.
So you will find favor and good repute
in the sight of God and of people.
Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.