

Isaiah 35:5-8; 2 Timothy 4:5-11



Pastor Brock: Max, how are you doing tonight?

Max: I'm...ah...I'm....

Pastor Brock: You're sounding a little down there fella. What's wrong.

Max: Well, you know, we got the news about Uncle Hugo.

Pastor Brock: My goodness, what's up with Uncle Hugo?

Max: Well, you know Uncle Hugo.

Pastor Brock: Yes, I know. You've introduced me to Uncle Hugo before. He's your mom's older brother. He's from an earlier litter than your mom. I know that.

Max: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Uncle Hugo, he's pretty old, you know. He's almost twenty. You know, yeah. That's old for a wolf.

Pastor Brock: Yes, you're right. Twenty is very old for a wolf. So what's wrong? What's up with Uncle Hugo?

Max: Well, you know, he hasn't been feeling well.

Pastor Brock: No, I didn't know that. Is everything okay?

Max: No.

Pastor Brock: Oh. What's wrong?

Max: Well, mom says that he has...uhm...uh...it has something to with a can.

Pastor Brock: You mean cancer?

Max: Yeah, that's it. Yeah.

Pastor Brock: Gosh, Max. I'm very sorry to hear that. Is Uncle Hugo getting any kind of treatment?

Max: Well, Aunt Ginny's being real nice to him.

Pastor Brock: Well, okay, that's good, but that's not exactly what I meant by treatment. I mean is he getting any special medicines to help him with his cancer?

Max: Well, you know...uh...he's a wolf. And...uh...we wolves don't get a lot of medical attention.

Pastor Brock: I guess you're right like that. Is he resting okay?

Max: Yeah.

Pastor Brock: It must be kind of sad for you right now, because I know you like Uncle Hugo. I know that he doesn't get out and play with you the way your Uncle Mike does, but I'm sorry to hear that about Uncle Hugo.

Max: Yeah, well, he's out in Pittsburgh, so you know I don't see him very often. But...uh...I really like to go out and visit with Aunt Ginny all the time. And now I won't be able to, you know...because...well...

Pastor Brock: Well, I'm sorry to hear that, Max.

Max: But...uh...I was thinkin' maybe, you know, you said that tonight there is this, this...uh... we're doin' somethin' special tonight.

Pastor Brock: Yes, you're right. We're having a healing service tonight.

Max: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. So, if I can bring Uncle Hugo here maybe we can fix him?

Pastor Brock: Oh, well...uhm...well...we would pray for Uncle Hugo...uhm... A healing service doesn't necessarily work that way. Just because someone takes part in a healing service, doesn't mean that if they have something wrong with them, or something physically that isn't quite right, that that will go away.

Max: Well, well, then, what good is this here service if you're not going fix my Uncle Hugo? I mean Uncle Hugo is really sick and...and...I want him to be...I want him to be better.

Pastor Brock: I know, Max. Calm down. I know you do, but...uhm...I'm not saying that people can't be cured, but we would call that...if someone were to come to this service, and as they come forward and I put my hands on them, and I pray for them, and I make the sign of the cross on their forehead, they might be healed instantly. We would call that a miracle if their physical ailment went away. And, and, that can happen. But what this service is really about is to help us remember that no matter what happens to us, God is with us.

Max: Well what good is that going to do Uncle Hugo?

Pastor Brock: Well, it will help Uncle Hugo, I think, in remembering that he's not alone.

Max: Well, of course he's not alone. He's got Aunt Ginny.

Pastor Brock: I know he's got Aunt Ginny, I know, and he's got you. And those are very fine things. What's great about that is that because of Aunt Ginny and because of you, Uncle Hugo can feel God's love. He can feel God's love through the two of you, just like all of us here can feel God's love as we're gathered together in worship tonight, or we can feel God's love through others when we're at home or at work or wherever we go. And the service is about helping us remember that in all that happens to us, God is always there with us.

Max: But, but...I...I...I want Uncle Hugo, you know, to be here for a while.

Pastor Brock: Well, I know you do, and he may well be here for a while. But, more importantly, though, Max, he's always going to be with you in your heart and in your

memories, and those are important things. But no matter what happens with Uncle Hugo, what we celebrate here at this service

Max: Celebrate? I don't want to celebrate what's happening to Uncle Hugo.

Pastor Brock: No. We're not here to celebrate what's happening to Uncle Hugo. We're here to remember that God is with us. It's not even about physical ailments, Max. Sometimes, you know, sometimes we get hurt on the inside.

Max: Oh, yeah, yeah, I know that. You know, the Coyote Brothers and I – we were playing and they rammed me the other day and my insides still hurt.

Pastor Brock: No, no, I don't mean our insides hurt like that, Max. I mean, uh, well, remember how you told me that you and Harold aren't talking to each other right now?

Max: I don't want to talk about that.

Pastor Brock: I know you don't want to talk about that, because you and Harold are very good friends.

Max: No, we're not.

Pastor Brock: Yes, you are. Yes, you are very good friends. You're just mad at each other right now for reasons we can't go into right now. But, you hurt inside, don't you?

Max: No, I don't. He's just a rabbit and I'm not going to get all hurt inside over some dumb old rabbit.

Pastor Brock: Oh, Max. I think maybe you are hurt inside.

Max: Well, maybe...a little bit.

Pastor Brock: Yeah, okay. It's those hurts inside that God will help us with also.

Max: Really?

Pastor Brock: Yeah, really. God helps us when we hurt inside; when our heart is broken or our feelings are hurt, we feel all alone, or sometimes we just don't know what to do. God is with us in those times also. And that's another thing that this service does, to help us to remember that God is not only with us with the physical problems that we might have, but that God is with us through all the inside things. Through all of the hurts that we might encounter with friends, or all of the struggles we might have at school, or trying to learn something new at work. God is there with us and God understands all of that, and God wants to help and be with us and give us the strength and love that will help us get through those times. Just like God can give you the strength and love right now to help you with Uncle Hugo and Harold.

Max: I don't need any help with that rabbit.

Pastor Brock: Are you sure?

Max: No. Well, maybe I do.

Pastor Brock: That's what I thought. So, we're here tonight with this part of the service, Max, to ask God, and to help us to remember that God is with us. And that's what that service does. When I put my hands on different people's heads, I'll pray for them.

There's a very special thing that I say. I remind them that Jesus loves them. Then when I'm all done praying, I make the sign of the cross on their forehead just like what happened when each of us was baptized. When we were baptized as little...well, in your case, as a little pup...the pastor poured water on our heads.

Then the pastor took his or her thumb and put it in a little thing of oil. As a matter of fact, it's here on the altar. You see that?

Max: What, what, yeah...okay.

Pastor Brock: That little silver case...I have some oil in there. I'll put my thumb in that oil and I'll make the sign of the cross on our foreheads just like what happened at our baptism. Because that sign of the cross helps us to remember that we are baptized, that we are chosen, that we are marked special. You know, you wolves go around marking territory.

Max: Yeah, but we don't use oil.

Pastor Brock: I know. You don't need to talk about what you use, Max. But, the oil helps us remember. Because, even though I'm not going to be able to see that cross that I make on anybody's head because it's oil — well, maybe I'll see it for a minute or two because oil is a little bit shiny in the light — but it will pretty soon fade. But, the oil that I use has a little bit of a scent to it so that everybody here will be able to smell that oil. And as well, then, we're reminded that a long time ago each of us was chosen and marked by God, to be part of God's family. That's another thing that the service does. So there's all kinds of things that happen with this service. And different ways that the service can help us.

Max: That's more than I thought when you started in with that, you know, weird talk, right at the beginning.

Pastor Brock: I'm sorry it was so strange to you. But that is what this service is about. To help us remember in all that happens to us, the good and the bad, the physical and the inside stuff, the emotional things, that God is with us. God loves us and cares for us and wants us to know that we are not alone.

Let's have a quick prayer and keep going so that we can get to that part of the service. Can we do that?

Max: Oh, okay.

Pastor Brock: Let's join together in a word of prayer.

Almighty God, there are so many things that go on in the lives of each of us gathered here. Some of those activities bring us great joy and happiness. Others bring about sorrow. Some of us are able to physically do all that we want. Some of us, Lord, are restricted. Some of us are healthy, some of us are ill. Some of us are whole, some of us are hurting. We pray, dear God, that tonight at this time you would help us. You would be in us and fill us. We pray, Lord, that you would heal us. Heal our hearts, mend our spirits. Help us, Lord, to go forth from this place strengthened by your grace and love and forgiveness. We ask this in your holy and blessed name. Amen.

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