



Dear Neighbour,

Recently I read a true story about a husband and wife, Peter and Margaret, who accompanied their daughter, Paula, and a group of children for a day in the Canadian country. It was a sunny, fun-filled day until three successive events changed their lives forever...

Paula began to cross the river and as her father reached out his hand to pull her to safety, she slipped and fell. Within seconds she had been sucked into a whirlpool and fell over the 20m falls into a 13m deep glacier pool. At the top of the falls, her father, Peter, clutched his chest and fell to the ground with a heart attack. Margaret, using a rope, frantically crossed the river but in her haste she slipped and broke her arm. Just imagine the human chaos!

But God is never taken by surprise. He had the situation totally under control. At the bottom of the falls, attending to her daughter, was a nurse trained in drowning accidents. At the top of the falls, attending to her husband, was a nurse trained in cardiac arrest. The nurses were on strike that day. All three family members were taken to hospital and the next morning a nurse asked Peter if she could pray for him and his family. After praying she asked permission to read a poem. It was the well-known and much loved 'Footprints' poem.

One night I dreamed a dream.

I was walking along the beach with my Lord.

Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.

For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand,

one belonging to me and one to my Lord.

When the last scene of my life shot before me

I looked back at the footprints in the sand

and to my surprise,

I noticed that many times along the path of my life

there was only one set of footprints.

I realised that this was at the lowest

and saddest times of my life.

This always bothered me

and I questioned the Lord

about my dilemma.

'Lord, you told me that when I decided to follow You,

You would walk and talk with me all the way.

But I'm aware that during the most troublesome

times of my life there is only one set of footprints.

I just don't understand why, when I needed you most,

You leave me'

He whispered, 'My precious child,

I love you and will never leave you,

never, ever, during your trials and testings.

When you saw only one set of footprints

it was then that I carried you.”

The nurse said that she did not know the author, that it was anonymous. Peter replied, “I know the author very well...it’s my wife”. They were overwhelmed that something Margaret Fishback Powers had written in 1964 was speaking so much comfort to their hearts 20 years later! Friend, when you next walk on the beach remember that one set of footprints is a reminder of a Living God who loves and cares for you. Put your trust in Him. He will never leave you or forsake you. ***In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the Angel of His Presence saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; And He bore them and carried them All the days of old.*** (Isaiah 63:9)

X Libby