

And They Lived Happily Ever After...

Perhaps you, like me, grew up hearing Fairy Tales. Specifically, one of my favorites as a young girl was "Cinderella".

I guess most of us, at one time or another, can relate to wanting to meet our Prince or Princess and living happily ever after. Perhaps we even fell in love and started out with the seemingly right match, but unfortunately the 'forever commitment' didn't last the way we dreamed. However, contrary to what sometimes happens in real life, the Cinderella story ended with "...and they lived happily ever after".

Cinderella's life wasn't always happy, in fact, quite the opposite. Remember when her stepmother only gave kind words, love, and hugs to her own daughters? Not only that, but Cinderella didn't have any of the new dresses, good food, or comforts of home that were given to her step-sisters. Poor Cinderella, all she got for all her hard work was "hand-me-downs".

Do you remember the part of Cinderella's story when her ugly step-sisters got all dressed up and went to the ball and Cinderella had to stay home and clean the cinders out of the fireplace? How did Cinderella respond to that situation? Did she run after her step-sisters and yell and scream at the unfairness of it all? No, instead she sat down and cried. She maintained her emotional integrity and chose to grieve the loss of the situation instead of being angry. Moreover, when she cried, that's when her Fairy Godmother came to the rescue.

That makes me think about how we respond when life treats us unfairly. Do we get angry and run around like a chicken with its head cut off? Or, like Cinderella, do we sit down and cry? I think God likes when we are real with our emotions and choose to just sit down and cry. He knows that tears have a way of cleansing the soul. And it is when we are broken and vulnerable that God comes to us.

Yes, life can be unfair at times. Yet, God uses our pain to make us beautiful. He has a bright future planned for us. When He appears, our filthy rags (like Cinderella's) will be changed in the twinkling of an eye. We won't need a pumpkin coach, because we will be caught up in the air...and forget the glass slipper...we will enjoy the unique and glorious "sea of glass".

Cinderella was able to celebrate life in the end of her story. But, Christ has made it possible for us to celebrate life now.

John 10:10 says *"I have come that they might have life and have it more abundantly."*

We can experience life more abundantly each day as we claim God's promises and ask Him to walk by our side through life - not taking away our trials, but holding us up as we walk through them. And the best part is that we don't have to watch the clock, worrying and fearing that God will change His mind at midnight. God never changes, He is faithful and constant!

Then, soon, in the twinkling of an eye, we shall be caught up with Christ and live eternally happily ever after...with our Prince of Peace.

Sound like a fairytale? God doesn't think so...and neither do I.

Sherry Westland, October 2007