

A MIGHTY MOMENT -- A MODERN DAY PARABLE

INSPIRED BY MARK 1:7-11



This is what Fire Chief Watkins proclaimed: "One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not strong enough to loosen the straps on his boots. I arrived first to assist you, he will assist your son."

It happened this day that Jacob was taking his boy on their first Father/Son camping trip. Jacob had been planning this day since Benjamin was born. He had hoped to make this a grand tradition. One they both would look forward to each year, and one his son would remember fondly for years to come.

Jacob's head was spinning as he now stood before the burning car with his boy trapped inside. His eyes burned from the red hot flames, his nose filled with smoke, and his ears ached from the sounds. It all happened so suddenly. They were driving the familiar path to Jacob's favorite camping spot from his childhood. He had spent many a weekend there with his father when he was a boy. They had discovered a perfect plot of flat ground near the lake. It was surrounded by acres of woods to explore and discover new wildlife and plant life. Each morning began with eggs and bacon cooking over the campfire, and each evening ended with a fish fry of the day's catch served with tall tales, silly songs, and root beer toasts. Memories made. Relationship deepened. Love expanded. Trust sealed.

Now he wanted the same with his son. But they never made it to the campsite. A deer came out of nowhere. One minute they were rocking out to the Rolling Stones, and the next minute the car was rolling over. It hit a tree and burst into flames. Jacob had been thrown from the car. It took him a few seconds to gain his bearings and process what had happened. Chief Watkins was passing by on his way home and

saw the collision. He immediately dispatched his top crew and was able to hold the father at bay as the flames grew more intense.

Jacob felt weak and defeated and greatly relieved to see the quick action of his son's rescuers. Chief Watkins reassured him. "Big John is here with the jaws of life," he said. "Your boy will be out in a matter of minutes." He watched as the firefighter fearlessly approached the flames. In his gear, Big John looked more like a machine than a man. He immediately went to work on the mangled metal, removed the car door, and extracted the boy from the wreckage. It seemed like an eternity, and like the blink of an eye, all at the same time.

On coming out of the smoke and fire, Big John had little Benjamin in his arms. The paramedics tended to the child, who miraculously only had minor scrapes and bruises. Thankfully, he had no burns and no memory of the accident. A voice came from behind the rescue team saying, "You are my hero! Thank you for saving my son's life. I have never before witnessed such an act of bravery." Big John chuckled and shook Jacob's hand with a firm grip. Putting his strong hand on Jacob's shoulder, he answered, "There is one mightier than I who came before me. I get my strength from Him who sent His Son to save me, that I might have the courage to save your son."

