

THANKFUL EVEN IN SORROW

English missionary Hudson Taylor lost his wife and a child while serving in China. Two weeks after Maria, Hudson's wife, gave birth, the baby died and Maria herself had little strength remaining. Hudson went to her and asked, "Darling, do you know that you are dying?"

"Dying? Do you think so? What makes you think that?" she said.

"I can see it, darling. Your strength is giving way."

"Can it be? I feel no pain, only weariness."

"You are going home. Soon you will be with Jesus."

There was silence for a moment. Then Maria whispered, "I am so sorry."

Hudson looked at her and gently said, "You are not sorry to go to be with Jesus."

"Oh no, it's not that. But it does grieve me to leave you alone at such a time. Yet He will be with you and meet all your needs."

A missionary who stood nearby said later, "I never witnessed such a scene. As dear Mrs. Taylor was breathing her last, Mr. Taylor knelt down and committed her to the Lord, thanking him for having given her to him and for the twelve-and-a-half years of happiness they had had together."

A few days later Mr. Taylor wrote:

I cannot describe to you my feelings. I do not understand them myself. I feel like a person stunned with a blow, or recovering from a faint, and as yet but partially conscious. My Father has ordered it, so therefore I know it is—it must be—best, and I thank him for so ordering it. I feel utterly crushed. Oftentimes my heart is nigh to breaking, but withal I had almost said I never knew what peace and happiness were before—so much have I enjoyed in the very sorrow.