

At the Still Waters

(in Timothy's voice)

From Timothy's Journal

Today the road was long and heavy on our feet. The sun was hot, and wearing us down, and Paul walked a little slower than usual — yet he never stopped speaking the Word. It was as if the miles could not touch the joy that lived inside him.

At a certain spot along the road, he paused and led us into the trees. “*There's a nice pond back here,*” he said with a quiet smile. “*I've stopped here before.*” We followed him into the shaded forest, and soon the dust and noise, and the traffic of the road were gone.

We came to the pond that he spoke of … fed by clear spring water, cool blue, and bright, flowing down from the hills above. We laid our things down and waded in. And for the first time all day, we laughed like boys again. Paul was the first to dive in.

He moved through the water with an easy strength. His past sea perils helped him to be a good swimmer — the water was like an old friend to him. He swam with a calm, steady grace, as though the years of dangers he overcame gave him resolve not to fear, but trust in the Living God.

As Paul turned, I saw the horrific scars on his back and legs — marks left by rods and whips, and wounds from rocks and stones. Some of them were fresh. “*So, this explains why he's walking slow,*” I said to Luke and Silas.

I must have looked too long, because he caught me staring and splashed water my way with a grin. “*Timothy,*” he said, “*don't look so serious. We've got the Word — and that's more than enough.*”

We talked about the things God had shown him — about the home fellowships, and the hope set before us, and the faithfulness of God through every trial. His eyes were bright, full of love, joy and expectation.

After we left the water and dressed, we shared dried meat, figs and apples, and felt our strength return. We were now so energized! The woods were quiet, the water was still, and for a little while… the road, the dangers, and the pain faded into the background. It was just the Word, and Paul, and us, and the gentle goodness of God.

After an hour or so, Paul glanced toward the trees and smiled. “*It's time to go,*” he said. “*The believers are expecting us for supper tonight.*” We gathered our things, stepped back onto the path, and returned to the road — refreshed, encouraged, and ready to serve.

As we had adventured to this haven of still waters, I understood something new today: even a weary body cannot slow the heart of a man that is alive with the truth of God's Word.

By Jack Northart

