

THE CHEROKEE INDIAN YOUTH'S RITE OF PASSAGE

Thrust of the story.

- *Just because we can't see God, it doesn't mean that He is not close to us.*
- *"We walk by faith, not by sight."*
- *God is ever present, especially in the worst moments our life.*

The Story

The boy is taken by his father into the forest, He strips him of his clothes, blindfolds him and leaves him alone in the thick of the woods. He is required to sit on a stump the whole night and not remove the blindfold until the rays of the morning sun shine through. He cannot cry out for help to anyone.

The boy is naturally terrified. He can hear all kinds of noises. Wild beasts must surely be all around him. Maybe even some humans might do him harm. The wind blows the grass. The earth shakes. His stump creaks, yet he must sit stoically, never removing the blindfold until sunrise. If he survives the night, he will be considered a man. This is the only way for him to become a man.

Finally, after a horrific night the sun rises, and he removes his blindfold. As he does, he discovers his father sitting on a stump next to him. His Dad had been watching the entire night long, protecting him from harm! He had not been alone!

We, too, are never alone. Even when we don't feel it, God is watching over us, night and day. He is so close, sitting on a stump beside us. When trouble comes, all we have to do is reach Him out in trust.