

Published based on [The Frog in the Hole -- Devotional](#)

# **The Frog in the Hole -- Devotional**



Very recently, Nathan (my 12 year old son) and I were in our back yard throwing Frisbee. He has gotten into Frisbee golf (disc golf) and was showing me some of the tosses he had learned. We were having a blast. During this fun time, Nathan walked over to a small sink-hole in the ground he had discovered a while back. The hole is about 5 inches in diameter and about 18 inches deep. Peering into the bottom of the hole, Nathan exclaimed, "The frog is still living in here!" He went on to share that he had seen the frog in the hole about a week earlier. He had concluded that this is where the frog had chosen to live.

That's when it happened. I felt a wash go over me from the tip of my head to the bottom of my feet. I was smitten by a deep compassion. I knew the frog had not chosen to live in that hole. I remembered as a child the times we had dug holes to catch an old toad frog. I walked over to the hole and peered down in there for my own look. Sure enough, there he sat--an old brown toad. I explained to Nathan that the frog was in the hole and couldn't get out. I shared that the ole toad may have deliberately gone in the hole after something he wanted, but once there, he discovered he couldn't get out. The conversation continued:

"We've got to get him out!" I said.

Nathan replied, "You get him out; I'm not touching him."

"I will get him out," I quickly responded.

"Why?" Nathan asked.

I answered, "He can't get out on his own, and I'm not leaving him in that hole. I know how it feels!"

I had connected with that old toad. Of course, the toad didn't have a clue, but I had been infused with a new mission. I would do whatever it took to get him out of that hole. It did not matter in the least to me how he had gotten there. He could have accidentally fallen in. He could have chosen to hop off in the hole in the hope of finding a goodie to enjoy. He could have ran and hid there trying to escape something chasing him. He could have been placed there by a mischievous youngster. I didn't know, and I didn't care. I just wanted to liberate him.

I knelt down on the ground and reached my hand into the hole. I must admit that I thought about the possibility of something else being in the hole that might bite me, but I reached down anyway. I had thought I would simply reach down, pick up the frog, get him out, let him go, and watch him hop off into the land of frog freedom. It did not prove to be that easy.

As I ran my hand down into the hole, the toad jumped to the side to avoid being captured. There was a root that ran across the bottom of the hole and he would move from one side to the other of the root and I couldn't get him in my grasp. The first time I touched him, he startled and jumped really hard. It also startled me, and I quickly withdrew my hand. This "cat and mouse" game or I should say "man and toad" game continued for a little while. Interestingly, there was one place that ole frog could get in that hole that I could not touch him. Of course, he found that place. He jumped, turned around and backed into a little cave-like scooped out place underneath the root in the bottom of the hole. I reached and could not get to him. I thought, "Mister Frog I am trying to help you escape, but you are working against me. If you only knew that I have no intention of hurting you. I just want to set you free." He was so afraid, so he was doing everything he could to avoid me and my rescue efforts.

It was really hot in the yard. Nathan suggested that maybe the frog wanted to stay in the hole. I let him know quickly that the frog did not want to stay in the hole. In the present circumstance, the frog probably felt that it was safer in the hole than allowing something so big to get a hold of him. I knew how he felt. Imagine looking up and seeing something so big. The very shadow of me had filled the hole with darkness. The frog had no way of knowing my intentions. We did not have the ability to communicate. Because I was bigger and more powerful, I had taken control of the situation and determined that I would get him out of there. I hated that he was so scared but I knew that the end result would be worth whatever terrifying experience he had to go through in order to be set free. By this time, I had decided that the frog was coming out of that hole if I had to go rent a backhoe and dig the whole back yard up.

I can't explain it fully, but one thing that has happened to me in this season is I have discovered a compassion for anyone or anything that is hurting. My heart melts at the thought of the pain a wounded animal or person experiences. My own pain has made me aware of another world that had always been there but I now feel like I have my own membership in it. Like the frog in the hole, it is easy to walk by and not even realize the trauma that is going on right next to you in another's world. Even worse is a wrong attitude about it.

That frog got in the hole; let him figure a way out!  
He shouldn't have jumped off in there in the first place! (Implied, let him die in the hole.)  
Let someone else get him out!  
I can't believe he jumped in that hole!  
I'm not touching that dirty frog!  
I'm not going to darken myself by going in a hole after a dirty frog!  
Hey everybody! Come look at this frog in the hole!

Knowing why or how the frog got into the hole does not determine whether or not the frog should be helped out. When an ambulance pulls up to the emergency room at your local hospital with a person who has been in a car wreck, they do not evaluate whether it was his fault or not before they elect to treat him. The goal is to help him survive and get back on his feet. To refuse to help the person because they chose to run a red light is unthinkable. "But what if they might run another red light in the future?" Or "What if other people were hurt because they ran a red light?" All those things are addressed later when the person is back on their feet. It is not a consideration during the time when emergency care is needed. One of the most painful things for our family during this season has been dealing with people's responses who felt as if we should not be given care during the time we were trying to get back on our feet again. Sometimes it was not spoken but seen in their faces when they looked away when there was eye contact, or when they sent cards that basically stated, "Go away!" Or "God will help you through this and you will have a happy future *somewhere else*."

I devised another plan to free the frog. I would reach on the opposite end of the root, run my fingers underneath, moving the dirt out of the way, and poke the frog from behind and scare him out of the hole. So I put "Operation Surprise" into action. Sure enough, once I broke through the barriers in the way and touched that ole toad, he jumped out into the middle of the hole and I was ready--I NABBED HIM!

In a flash, the frog was free!

He began jumping around. I do not understand frog talk, but it sure seemed he was happy to be hopping again. He had a whole big yard with all kinds of bugs. Life was good again!

I wonder how many frogs are in a hole close to you. Maybe you are a frog in the hole. It has only been recently that I feel I got out of the hole I had jumped into. I will be forever grateful to the Lord and the people He has used who were determined to reach down into my hole and help me out. For a season, I did not want out. Though it was confining and barren, it felt safer than the outside world. Most of us have had our "Cave of Audullam" experiences. Regardless of how a person ends up in the hole, they need help. Sometimes, they will even tell you they don't want help. Thank God for the people who "know better" and keep persevering until the frog is out of the hole.

This is God's true grace in action. Grace comes to us and sets us free. It is costly to the person giving it, but it is free to the person who becomes its beneficiary. In order for us to receive everything, Jesus had to give everything. By the way, remember, he didn't do what he did to extend grace to us because we deserved it. He did it because he truly loved us. Enough to bear our shame, carry our sin, and participate in our sorrow. He suffered in order to get all us frogs out of the holes we had chosen to jump into.

Dear Reader, be encouraged! When the dark clouds overwhelm you as you are tucked away in the hole of darkness, scared out of your wits wondering where God is, His hand of grace has a way of finding you and bringing you up and out of the deepest darkness you've ever seen. It may frighten you. You may even fight it. But rest in the fact, that God knows better for you than you do yourself. He can be trusted!

I am so happy to be out of the hole! You know, I didn't have to help that ole frog out of the hole. I just wanted to and it was the right thing to do.

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