

Polly's Pondering

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

I was at the state game ready to watch our team's bid for a three peat. As I was sitting there with the rest of us from Franklin, full of pride in our hometown and our kids, dressed in all kinds of uniforms: football, cheerleading, twirling, and band; I noticed the top running marquee had "Jesus Gets Us"; it was surrounding the whole stadium. I wondered how many others noticed. Then I began to ponder.

How interesting it was running during the beginning of the game. And how appropriate, cause win or lose Jesus gets us all. He knew the high points of recognition when a voice from Heaven declared that this was God's beloved Son in whom God is well pleased. Later at the Transfiguration that same voice would make that declaration again and tell the disciples to listen to him.

But Jesus also knew the low points. He grieved when he heard that John the Baptist was beheaded. He wept when Lazarus was dead and buried. He struggled in the garden when the crucifixion was just hours away. He felt the pull of his own will even asking God if there was a way the cup could pass by him. But it was, as it was in the Passover, the blood of the lamb that would save the people of God. And this time not only for the first born but all those who believed in Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God the Father, who because of His great love for the world sent him into this world as a little baby wrapped in swaddling cloths. Jesus understood that he would be the lamb of God sacrificed for our sin, our forgiveness, our salvation.

He is the reason we can begin again each morning without the shame of sin, which means missing the mark, hanging over us. Each morning starts fresh with possibilities for us to do our best, to do something that honors God, to do something that helps those who are struggling to believe that Jesus gets them. We can pass along words of kindness. We can receive the circumstances of life knowing they are not what defines us. We can kick Satan and his words of belittlement, discouragement, and hopelessness out of play. While things might not always go our way, we can be sure that there is a great gathering of the Saints we have our backs and fellow Christian believers who will help us through tough times. All because we know that it does not ultimately matter if we are put to success or put to failure but rather that we trust in the one who created us, who came to live among us, and who died for us, all because God the Father loves us, God the Son gets us, and God the Spirit encourages, convicts, and teaches us every day.

As we begin this new year, with it's up and downs, successes and failures, moments of affirmation and times of utter humiliation, with moments surrounded by friends and moments when loneliness is your only companion; let's remember that Jesus gets us, each of us, everyone of us! And with bravery face each new day with conviction, faith, courage, and freedom from our past sins. Yes, sometimes we miss the mark. But a saint is a sinner who falls down and gets back up. And know this; God never stops loving us. Jesus' salvation never loses it saving power. And the Holy Spirit never stops cheering us on.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." 2 Corinthians 5:17