

Polly's Pondering

"For we walk by faith, not by sight." 2 Corinthians 5:7

A young mother was visiting her sister and was spending time with her niece and nephew a couple of weeks before Christmas. The cousins were together in the living room with toys strewn around as she walked in with great excitement and said,

"Guys in a couple of weeks Santa will be coming down that chimney."

Her five-year-old nephew looked up with a quizzical expression and asked "How does he do that?"

A bit taken aback his aunt answered "I don't know how he does that! I have never seen him"

With a great deal of conviction her nephew replied "I will sleep here and watch him do it."

"You can't sleep here," the aunt replied, "Santa, won't come if you are not sleeping."

Quite perplexed, the young boy inquired, "Can you explain why that is necessary?"

Isn't that just like us. We want to know the how and why behind things. We want to understand them. And at least as far as I am concerned, we want to analyze them, perhaps even argue them. It occurred to me that the most important things of life, are to some degree unexplainable. I remember being asked by one of my children and a multitude of other youth, "How do you know when you are in love? And "How do you know when he is the one?" My father-in-law and I thought deeply about the way people talk about love multiplying when we give it away, yet we usually talk about an individual's power as diminishing when power is given away. How can a person talk about what they believe when true belief is not evidenced until a choice is made that costs that very person deeply? And what about faith. If you have to have evidence then it is no longer faith but response to proof.

What all these things seem to have in common is leaps. Taking a leap of faith, falling in love, vote of confidence, benefit of the doubt, jump into the unknown, etc. The truth is that even waking we give a vote of confidence that the sun will arise one more time. But that is just a leap of faith based on past experience and assumed assurance. Truth is we have no more control over the continuation of the Sun rise than we did the initial sunup.

So, we make leaps of faith. We plan for the future of which we are not absolutely sure we will have. We fall in love we give birth to children; we make decisions everyday because we choose to believe that life is good, and the God that created us loves us and wants the best for us. We have heard the story of Christ's birth and we choose to believe and because we do, we receive the assurance of eternal life. Sure, it is a leap of faith but remarkably once you take it everything seems to fall into place, the world seems clearer, fear seems conquerable, doubt seems diminished, suffering seems bearable, troubles seem purposeful, peace seems desirable if not obtainable, silence becomes a vehicle for hearing God more clearly, baptismal waters become the outward symbol of an inward grace being poured out upon us, and juice and bread become the body and blood of Christ.

I don't know what this next year will hold. I can't sit at the base of a chimney and get a rational explanation, but I know this. After this last year with all of its unexplainable chaos, illness, and

conflict I have never been more ready to start the new year with a leap of faith. A faith that God is not through using us for His glory, and He is not through pouring out grace, forgiveness, and mercy upon His people through His Only Begotten Son Jesus Christ. He has work for us to do, relationships to forge, and Biblical truths to discover. I am ready to jump - how about you?

Want to take another leap of faith?

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen". Hebrews 11:1