

PRAYER FOR GOD'S PRESENCE WITH EACH STEP

Scripture: Psalm 126

March 24, 2020

The young boy was playing a war game on his iPhone as we waited, among many other strangers, for a table at a local restaurant. Since I didn't know him, I politely tried to avoid staring too long over his shoulder. But I couldn't help noticing how well this young "general" mastered the simulated battles. His side won every time with a celebratory "Victory!" banner appearing on the screen, and with winning points piling up. I wanted to ask him, "Who are they? What happens now? Where are their families? Will they be reunited and survive?"

I couldn't help pondering what this skilled young warrior will eventually encounter in real life as he grows older. As he matures, will he learn the actual consequences of war? Will he understand that after the victory, there are other challenges? In spite of the victorious tallied points, families can become separated and devastated. Neglected land and environment will need tending. And our young man might ask, where is God in all of this? Has God been with us all along, waiting to help us restore?

Psalm 126 celebrates victory over oppression, but also cries out to God for restoration now that the battle has been won and the exiles are back in their homeland -- their stark, scarred homeland. They pray for restoration of abundance, restoration of soil for planting. And though they tearfully plant, they anticipate God's help in a successful harvest.

Can our young war gamesman know that God will be with him in all his real world battles? Can he know that God will be there as he sows and as he reaps?

Prayer: Dear Lord, watch over our young people as they take on battles yet unseen, unimagined. Stay with them through the strife and through the aftermath. Let them feel your presence in each step they take. Amen.

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