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**Verse of the day for Monday July 31 2023 – John 1: 12-13**

**To all who received [the Word, that is Jesus Christ], to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.**

**Read John 1 for meditation and inspiration.**



**From the theater Thalia (comedy) and Melpomene (tragedy)**

Dear Lakesiders and friends,

If you’ve ever been to the theater, you’ve seen them — the comedy and tragedy masks. These familiar laughing and crying faces pop up everywhere, staring up at you from playbills and acting company logos. The next time you see them, consider this: the drama masks have been a symbol of the theater for more than 2,500 years!

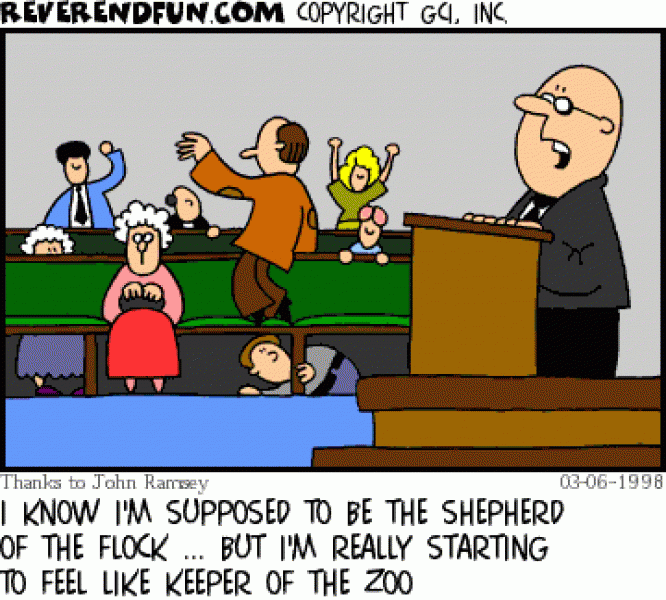
It all started in the city of Athens in the year 535 BC. The city had just built the first theater in the world — the iconic Theater of Dionysus. All the actors wore masks of different styles and expressions but only two remained until today. The names Thalia and Melpomene are references to two of the Greek Muses, the deities who were the source of inspiration for artists and musicians. Melpomene was the Muse of Tragedy, and Thalia was the Muse of Comedy.

Several years ago, a Gallup Poll reported that Americans are about equally divided on whether Jesus was fun-loving or somber. I wasn't among those polled, but if anyone were to ask, I would answer that I love the weeping Jesus and the joyful Jesus, both. I for one believe God loves equally the saint who dances with joy and the saint who weeps over the sins of humanity. But for many people, there is no one so dull as a saint.

Yet consider the Apostles Peter and Paul setting out on their great adventure to evangelize the world for the Love of Christ. Consider the classic example of risk-taking, free-spirited devotion to the Cause of Christ portrayed in the life of Francis of Assisi. Consider the Christian champions of human dignity and justice and brotherhood down through the Ages. The true picture of Evangelism is that of high adventure. It's a daring thing to set out to conquer with love a hate-filled world.

For the serious Christian, not just the religious but the whole of life is transformed from routine to adventure. There's a big difference between doing a job because you need the paycheck and doing a job because you are honestly interested in the work. There's a big difference between studying to pass an exam and studying because you really want to know. There's a big difference between writing the word Christian on a form where it asks for your religion and living the Christian life with all of its tragedy and comedy, its ups and downs, its heartaches and hysterical laughs, joys and sorrows.

Yes, Jesus, I am sure, felt the fullness of life. He is laughing and crying with us as we walk down our own pathway of life with all the beautiful vistas and the thorny steps.

In the fullness of life,

A close-up of a signature

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Roger

