



Navigating Change

I had forgotten about the power of the pen. My six-year-old was looking through her school yearbook from last year and seemed a little sad. She looked at me and asked, "Do you think my friends from last year still remember me?" It caught me a little off guard. In my best mom voice, I assured her that they did. She continued to ask questions. As I looked into her face, I saw a need to reflect and remember on all of the good memories with her. I have been reminded so much lately that in a season of uncertainty and unrest, it often helps to reflect on the past goodness of God.

We looked through her yearbook together. I let her talk about field trips, crazy sock day, the princess ball, and running to catch snowflakes with her friends on a day last January. She never got to officially finish the year with that group of kids and two teachers, whom she dearly loved. At times, those feelings still bubble to the surface with her. I prayed that God would comfort her heart.

The very next day she received a package in the mail. **The NEXT day.** Last May, Ruthie had been assigned a teacher for 1st grade. She got that envelope in the mail and it just happened to be one of her favorite people. This teacher told Ruthie they would be pen pals after hearing of her leaving. She has been so faithful to write her. However, the neat thing about this package was that it included cards from some of her former classmates. Her smile lit up the room. A soothing balm to her little soul. The power of the pen emerged as she read through each of the cards they had sent her. Some of them included phrases such as, "we are still friends, I have not forgotten you Ruthie, we love you and miss you", and "we are still learning, hope you are too." It was almost as though they had heard her very thoughts the day before.

It was an answered prayer, even before I had uttered the words.

A reminder to me that many times God provides what we need, even before we know we need it.

I am not sure what you need as you begin 2021. My list as a mom is especially long lately. I was reminded to be found faithful seeking the One who does know our needs, thoughts, and prayers. Lately, I have so many questions, especially in regards to parenting through this season of life. Covid. Politics. Anger. Fear. The more news I watch, the more anxious I become. More questions, less answers. As I bring them to the feet of Jesus, I am sure He shakes His head at me many times. He knows. He is able. It has to be in His Strength, His Wisdom, and His Righteousness. It has nothing to do with me at all.

These verses have been especially meaningful to me during this season and I am sharing in hopes they may speak to you and help, even just a little, as we navigate leading our children to the foot of the cross. It has helped me tremendously to take a verse and personalize it with the names of my family. Here is the one God led me to during this season:

“Lord, I pray that your great love would overflow more and more in Stephen and I and in Natalie, Tyler, and Ruthie’s life in 2021. That we will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding of your Word. Lord, I want us to discern what is best and understand what really matters. Help us to live pure and blameless lives that are filled with the fruit of righteousness that only comes through you-----that our lives would glorify and praise your Holy Name.” (Philippians 1:9-11).

My prayer is that God would work in and through us this year in a bigger than better way than we have seen before. May 2021 be the year where our families grow closer and more connected to Him than ever before.