

“HOLD ME TO YOUR HEART, JESUS”

By Donna Jensen

I used to squirm in my distresses, bucking against the trials that came my way. I couldn't see that Jesus' plan was to walk with me through hard times, not pluck me out of them all. Because He has proven Himself to me again and again, I have nothing to fear and feel no need to control what He is directing or those making the journey with me. That is peace.

In my old age, I recently got my first pet. She is a delightful caramel-colored “Morky” with black highlights on her face and lower back. I have the privilege of introducing the world to her and teaching her to deal with it. I discovered in reading about her breed that she naturally is protective, although very friendly. She immediately barked at any unusual sound in our home or out on the street. I worked at training her not to do that for my peace and that of my neighbors. Very quickly she learned to control her barking. She responded bodily to noises as she froze and perked up her ears. Then she looked at me to take her cue. If I remained calm, so did she. How smart she is! Isn't that just what Jesus did when His disciples woke Him as He slept through the storm? The quicker we learn to take our cues from Jesus the less stress we will experience and the better will be our witness to those observing how we live as the result of our Christian faith. It has gotten so that now, when I'm in the middle of something, I think, “Boy this will make a good story when it's over!”

For sometime I've been thrilled by the opportunities our Lord gives me to touch those who care for me in my need. Last week I spent several hours at our local hospital having outpatient oral surgery under a general anesthetic. I was brought to the hospital by a medical transport and had the opportunity to be encouraging to the driver and another patient.

One of the nurses who prepared me for surgery recognized me from a Christian Writer's group from several years back. I asked her if she had had anything published. She replied that she only wrote for herself. I offered to help in any way I could, should she want to publish one day, then told her I'd been advised that if I wanted to have an effect on my readers I would need to “open a vein and bleed” for them. She smiled and said she would keep that in mind.

Two resident anesthesiologists talked with me about my procedure and one mentioned that she was from Russia and asked if I'd been out of the country. I told her I'd spent a year in Taiwan teaching school. She asked how that had come about. I told her that since I had been born again at the age of twenty-nine, I'd considered myself a missionary to the United States, but after reading a book called, HOW TO THINK LIKE LEONARDO D' VINCI, I wanted to see more of the world. At sixty, I got online and found the position in Taiwan. One week later, on the first anniversary of 9/11, I arrived in Taiwan.

As I had my I V placed, the loudspeaker came on and I got to hear a devotion on hope given by the hospital chaplain. It thrilled my soul. As it ended my surgeon stepped in to see me and I commented to him how I had been touched by the Chaplain's message.

The young lady from transport arrived to take me to surgery and the doctor left. Sara introduced herself. I couldn't help but notice that she seemed very sad. I told her I had worked at Queen of Angel's Hospital in Los Angeles as a ward secretary when I was in college. One afternoon I was asked to help transport a patient to surgery. I was in awe. I thought that was certainly very important. Sara smiled her thanks. She said she'd been transporting cancer patients for several years and it had been too hard when after getting to know them, they died. Now she only transported surgery patients. I told her that I was reminded of when I had been a foster parent. People asked how I could let the children go after learning to love them. My answer was that so many of my friends and family members had passed away that I'd learned to love people for as long as they were allowed to be a part of my life. Sara said she was so glad I'd told her that. She had lost several close members of her family in the last couple of years and one of her best friends just last month. She didn't understand it at all and was physically showing her grief. I told her to contact me later if she wanted to talk more. I'm praying for her.

As I was being discharged, I gave each of the two nurses my homemade Christmas card that included a true story from my life. Thanking God for the whole experience. I was taken home by my son-law where he and my daughter nursed me back to health.

There has never been a time since I began my relationship with Jesus that he left me to deal with anything, alone. The bigger the problem, the closer He is. When the struggle I am going through is so great that my knees buckle and I can't take another step, Jesus scoops me up in his arms and carries me close to His heart.

