

JULIE'S STORY-GLIMPSES OF GOD IN EVERYDAY LIFE

The Kissing Contest



SCRIPTURE STUDY

Romans 16:16
 1 Corinthians 16:20
 2 Corinthians 13:12
 1 Thessalonians 5:26
 1 Peter 5:14
 Song of Solomon 1:2
 1 Corinthians 3:16

PRAYER FOCUS

Dear Jesus,
 Help me to express love and affection to others in a genuine way. Teach me to be pure in my relationships with others.

In Jesus' Name,
 Amen

TONSIL HOCKEY

The story you are about to read is absolutely true. The names have not been changed to protect the innocent.

P.E. was the bane of my existence. Even in first grade when the bunny and turtle classes marched to the gym, I was definitely the slug of the bunch. Dodge balls pelted me, tether balls whacked me in the jaw, and soccer balls whizzed between my legs to the goal of the opposing team. When George and Buddy, team captains, surveyed their potential team mates, I was the last girl standing. How humiliating! I had no physical impairment, I just excelled in “klutziness.”

Once third grade rolled around and folk-dancing became our rainy-day curriculum, I finally found my niche. Clogging, hopping and wiggling my hind end came naturally. Of course, rainy days came only once a month, so my class mates had little use for my talent to “bust a move.” I did have certain classroom skills. I could spell my socks off and captivate the crowd at Show and Tell.

Recess was particularly boring for a “non-athlete.” One could only hang upside-down on the monkey bars for so long. Swaying back and forth on the swing was iffy after lunch because I had just downed a sloppy joe filled with mystery meat and a plateful of canned peas. So what’s a girl to do?

One sultry Monday afternoon, Diana Worthington, George McCaleb and I had an epiphany. Why not have a kissing contest? I was sure I could wipe out the competition because I could hold my breath underwater for at least sixty seconds. I practiced pursing my lips for hours sucking my Melodica harmonica while I watched Andy Taylor teach Opey how to fish.

Tony Sirchia, my partner, was a shoe-in because he took trumpet lessons. Puckering and spitting were essential skills for playing a brass instrument and his spit wads always landed with amazing accuracy. Diana and George were definitely at a disadvantage. Diana had thin lips and George was so pudgy he could hardly reach her face without falling over.

Yes, I was certain I had the potential to master the fine art of smooching. News of our adventure sport traveled fast and a small knot of Bunny and Turtle class gathered to watch the competition. The crowd hollered “on your mark-get set-go!” Kissing a boy was much more disgusting than I anticipated. Tony had been shooting hoops earlier, so he had B.O. and smelled like salt. I was also surprised to learn that little boys don’t often brush their teeth as often as little girls. I was sure I tasted last night’s Hamburger Helper. Beside the fact that tasting and smelling Tony was unappealing, kissing him was like playing tonsil hockey with a vacuum cleaner or touching my tongue to a flagpole on an icy day. This would not end well.

The cheering onlookers counted to thirty, chanting and clapping louder as we locked lips longer. I glanced at Diana and George out of the corner of my eye and they looked as miserable as we did. However, neither couple wanted to call it quits and admit defeat.

By the time the crowd reached 45 seconds, Principal Moffet threw open the hall window above us and leaned out so far we feared he would fall “splat” headlong onto the blacktop. I don’t know where Mrs. Hubbard and Mrs. Chase were during recess. They had probably retreated to the safe confines of the teacher’s lounge to down a couple of valium and watch “As the World Turns” before social studies.

Principal Moffet was not a happy camper. He dispersed the saliva-thirsty mob and had a few choice words to say to us before we tried to escape. “I am very disappointed in you.” He spoke in measured tones to express the gravity of the situation. “I am letting you go this time, but limit your playground activities to tag and foursquare or I’ll banish you to my office for a week!” Saddened by the prospect that my athletic prowess would not land us a spot in the school trophy case, I returned to the mediocrity of team sports and longed for square dance days.

My secret talent would go unnoticed and unappreciated until I married Mr. Right. Kissing my husband Roger was much more fun than smooching Tony Sirchia. Roger bathed and flossed regularly-definitely a plus. However, Roger and I did face a few kissing challenges. He was 6’2” and I was 5’2” so a step ladder was often involved. I also had to remember to remove my retainer.

All humans long for affection. God created us to express our love, but kissing should not be taken lightly.
True love, pure love waits for the right person at the right time.

- Many New Testament letters encourage us to “greet one another with a holy kiss.” (Romans 16:16, 1 Corinthians 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12, 1 Thessalonians 5:26 and 1 Peter 5:14) A “holy kiss” was simply a way of affirming another brother or sister in Christ. “Kissing” in the New Testament context was akin to a handshake in our modern culture, but the injunction to warmly greet other believers was obviously important. Make others feel loved and valued when you encounter them. Make an effort to greet those who enter your church doors or small group. Look people in the eye, express your joy in seeing them and give them a welcoming hug or handshake. Such acceptance and gracious behavior really reflects the character of Christ. Make a list of people you greet this week.

