

1-23-2023 - Winners and Losers

Recently I ran across the below story and wanted to share it with you in hopes that it will re-focus us as to what we should all be about in The American Legion, whether it is within your Post, District, Department, or Nationally. If this story is not about you, be thankful. If it is, your success and ours is in **your** hands.

“What makes a winning team? What makes a losing team? The answer is the same for both: attitude and the ability to work together toward a common goal.

A young man played on a winning football team for his high school. The team had a great attitude and every member worked together toward the goal of winning the league championship, and they were well on their way to achieving it. Mid-season his family moved, and the young man joined the football team at his new high school. They also had the goal of winning the league championship. The difference there was that every player on that team wanted the championship for himself, not for the team. They had a hard time playing together and had a poor season.

Both teams had equally talented players. What made the difference? Attitude and the ability to work together toward a common goal. When every person looks after his own interests, the whole group is likely to fail no matter how hard each individual strives. Goals can be achieved when talents and resources are used to benefit the whole group, serving something bigger than self.” (Pam Bridgehouse, July 21, 2008)

We all are on various “Teams”, whether that “Team” is our immediate family or extended family, a church group, a Bridge Team, or especially the American Legion Family. If our personal goals are for the “Team”, or for ourselves, THAT makes the difference. Within the American Legion Family, who all share in common goals, as spelled out in our Pre-Ambls, Constitution, Bi-Laws, and our “Four Pillars”, if we all work together for the commonality of those goals, we WILL SUCCEED. Otherwise, our “Team”, and ourselves will lose. Where there is contention, unresolved disagreements, or mistrust amongst us, there is little chance of success. We ALL must come and stay together, for the common good. Just as it says in the Bible, *“...every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city and household divided against itself will not stand.”* (Matthew 12:25) [NIV] President Lincoln also recognized this in his speech when he accepted the Illinois Republican nomination for Senate and stated that *“A house divided will not stand”*, understanding that we must pull together to succeed.

I Pray that we all can pull together for the common good and to our mutually affirmed Pre-Amble when we start with “For God and Country”. It is not for JUST God, or for our Country, or most certainly NOT, FOR OURSELVES, but “For God AND Country”. May we never forget from whom all our Blessings and Freedoms come, and be together in One Voice:

“For God and Country, we associate ourselves TOGETHER for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;

To maintain law and order;

To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;

To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations of ALL wars;

To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to community, state, and nation;

To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;

To make right the master of might;

To promote peace and good will on earth;

To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;

To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.” AMEN