

## **A CONSTANT REGARDLESS OF THE DAY**

I celebrated my 59th birthday on Sunday. With my birthday falling on a Sunday this year I got the privilege of having the congregation sing "Happy Birthday" to me on the actual day. I even took advantage of my birthday being on a Sunday to incorporate it into my children's story. It is not every Sunday I can make those participating in the children's story put on hats, make noise with party horns, and blow out candles. My birthday celebration continued later that day with friends coming over to my mother's house for dinner.

While I was celebrating on Sunday, I was also aware of somebody else who was experiencing a very rough day dealing with grief. My heart was breaking for this person, and I wished there was something I could do in order to turn it into a better day for them.

Sunday was a day where there was celebrating happening for me but unfortunately sadness and tears occurring for somebody else. This is a reality of life. Some days we find ourselves happy and joyful but other days can be very difficult to get through. We have all experienced being on both sides of this pendulum.

This was not the only reality I was reminded about on my birthday. The other reality I was reminded about on my special day is that we can consistently count on God being there for us on either of these two kinds of days.

The first reminder of these realities came from two cards I received on my birthday. I was handed a birthday card by a congregation member on Sunday morning before the service. When I opened it later, I was surprised to see it said:

### **Five Things God Wants You to Remember In Trying Times**

At first it seemed like an odd card to receive on my birthday, but after hearing the news that afternoon about how difficult this Sunday was for somebody else I could see why God led the congregation member to give me this unique card. The card reassured me that God was doing these five things for this person who was struggling on the same day I was celebrating:

- 1. God was ensuring this person was never, ever alone.**
- 2. He assured me this person's struggle did not take Him by surprise.**

3. **He reminded me how on the days we are weak, He is strong.**
4. **He is the God of new beginnings and with His help better times will be ahead.**
5. **His love never gives up on us.**

It was a timely card for me to be given on a day when I was celebrating my own birthday while at the same time experiencing grief in my heart for somebody else having a trying day. It gave me reassurance that God was looking after this person in these ways.

The other card that God had His hand on for my birthday was the one my mother gave me. She bought a card saying "Happy Birthday Son" but she could not find where she put it. Instead, she gave me a card that said, "Happy Birthday to my sister-in-law". The card brought a lot of laughter to everyone in the room. I saw it as God's way to help us celebrate my birthday in a way we will never forget. These two cards served as a reminder to me on Sunday how God is our One true constant regardless of whether a day is one of celebration or struggle.

The second reminder from God to me of about these two realities happened on Monday. My heart was still breaking on Monday morning for this person going through a rough time on Sunday. As I was considering this person's journey through grief, I ran into somebody at the coffee shop whose wife passed away a few months earlier. I stopped and asked how he was doing, and I realized very quickly how God meant for this interaction to happen at the time it did.

This man was very open about the rough days he has been having at times dealing with his loss. He shared how God has brought several people into his life recently that have been helping him through this journey. It was a rough start to this Monday for this man, sitting at the coffee shop with tears flowing from his eyes as he spoke, but it was evident from his words he was seeing God's constant help through this journey.

On Monday evening I was at a church service celebrating the induction of a new minister. These kinds of services are always celebrations of God's faithfulness in leading a new minister to a congregation. The celebration

started with a touching worship service followed by good fellowship and food afterward. There was a lot to celebrate that night at this church as a result of what God had done in bringing this minister to them.

Sunday and Monday were two days that I was part of different celebrations happening. On these same two days some people were enduring trying times rather than celebrating. We wish every one of our days were filled with celebrations, but we have our fair share of ones that are rough and difficult too. The one constant however we can truly rely on regardless of the day is of **GOD'S FAITHFUL CARE AND LOVE**. May we constantly remember how blessed we are with the **One true constant** in our lives no matter what kind of day it may be.

Keep safe and God bless,

Pastor Dean