

A NEED INDEED

On Saturday afternoon I took my daughter Coral to the Lynden Park Mall because she wanted to purchase a book at Indigo/Chapters that she knew was available there. My daughter loves to read and whenever we go to this store, she takes a lot of time looking at various books on the shelves. She could spend a whole afternoon in there if I let her.

While she was looking in her section, I decided to go over to the Christianity section to see if there was anything I wanted to buy. Just a few shelves down from the Christianity section are the self help and wellness books. As I was looking through my section, I could overhear a conversation going on between two customers at the self-help section. These two customers were both male and in their mid-to-late twenties. The one man seemed to be mentoring the other about setting goals in his life. The man, who was being mentored, acknowledged he was struggling with trying to define some goals and needs in his life. He said to his mentor, "Some people will say they have a need to have a relationship with God in their life, but I don't see that as a need for me right now." I was not trying to eavesdrop but standing just six feet away from these two men it was hard not to be aware of what they were saying.

I have been thinking about what this man said for the past couple of days. It is so true that many people do not feel they need God in their life. This incident reminded me of a story I read not long ago about a pastor who was sitting beside a woman on an airplane. During the course of the flight the two of them began to talk and when she found out that this man was a pastor, she made it a point to tell him that she did not need God in her life. The flight began to experience severe turbulence. The captain came on over the speaker and asked everybody to put on their seatbelts because the turbulence was getting worse. Hearing this, the woman turned to the pastor and said, "I still do not need God, but would you include me in a prayer for our safety?"

Her story is not unique. More and more I am approached by people who do not think they need God on a daily or consistent basis in their lives but

express a need for me to pray into various situations for them. Often it is when a parent or child is going through a serious health problem that I am asked to pray for them. I am always glad and honoured to do so. I take this request very seriously. Yet, in these situations the people asking for prayer are in fact expressing their need for God. For many people it is only when they face a life-threatening situation or crisis in their lives that they realize they need God. I am glad that they recognize this need in these moments, but so often after God answers the prayer they once again feel as if they do not need Him. This may be a common way for how many people live their lives, but it is not the best way to live. A better and more contented way to live is to acknowledge our need to have God in our lives each and every day.

This is a truth the psalmist brings out in Psalm 104. The writer of this psalm is anonymous but one of the themes he touches on is how recognizing our need for God each day will be a source of joy for us. He used an example from God's creation to show this. The psalmist pointed out all the animals and creatures God created that live on the land, in the sea, and fly in the sky. This is what the psalmist acknowledged:

They all depend on You to give them food as they need it. When You supply it, they gather it. You open Your hand to feed them, and they are richly satisfied. (Psalm 104:27-28)

Then the psalmist said in the verses that followed how these same animals would panic and not be at peace if God turned away from them, or if they turned from God. If God's creatures recognize how much they need God and are richly satisfied from so doing, how much more do we need to recognize this truth. God does not turn away from the animals He created, nor does He turn away from us, who He created in His image and likeness. But as I acknowledged earlier, so many people turn away from God once life returns to some form of normal after a crisis. I wish it was a rare occurrence but having served God in ministry for over 20 years now, I have seen this happen so many times in my life. It fills me with sadness whenever I see this. I just know how much happier and satisfying their lives would be if they understood they need God each and every day. I have a sign in my house that reminds me of this. The sign says, "I need a little bit of coffee, and a whole lot of

Jesus!" My wife and daughter can be my witnesses that if I don't get at least 3-4 cups of coffee into me each day, I can be quite unpleasant to be around. As much as I need my coffee to be satisfied, I need my prayer time with Jesus as well in order to be richly blessed to face whatever challenges I may have to deal with that day.

This man at the bookstore said that he did not need God, but also shared that he did not know what plans and goals would make his life feel richly satisfying. The answer was just six feet away. On a different shelf in that store was a Holy Bible. I was standing right in front of it. I hope he realizes one day that he does need God in his life. Maybe it will be on a day when I find myself once again in the Christianity section while my daughter is shopping elsewhere in the bookstore. If this does happen, I know exactly which book, and which page from it I would turn to in order to help him discover how much more satisfying life can be when we realize our need for God every day.

I hope that each one of you has discovered how much you need God in your life each and every day. If you have not yet done so, reread Psalm 104, or take a look at God's squirrels and birds still busy at work around us. Both will remind you how much you need God and are richly satisfied as a result.

God Bless and Keep safe

Pastor Dean