

## I STILL GOT IT

Last week was very busy for me to say the least. Besides all of my regular ministry duties I had to find time to help my daughter with her upcoming math test. Coral is in Grade 11 right now and she is taking functions in math. She is usually really good in math, but this recent unit has been giving her some struggles. I was really good at math back in my day so she asked for my help as the test approached.

It has been 42 years since I did Grade 11 math. When I first looked at the math, none of it looked familiar to me. I told Coral I would have to spend a little time familiarizing myself with the unit before I could help her. That was Wednesday of last week. On Thursday I began reviewing each unit being covered on the test. I had to familiarize myself again with:

- quadratic functions and their various forms
- determining the maximum and minimum values of quadratic equations
- finding the inverse of a quadratic function
- solving operations with radicals
- solving quadratic equations
- finding the zeros of quadratic functions
- finding families of parabolas

I am sure many of you remember how to calculate these things despite the years that have passed. I talked with two ministers on Thursday and shared with them how I was reintroducing myself to these math concepts. They both shook their heads and were thankful it was me and not them having to do it. In fact, the one minister who has two children in high school said he refuses to help them with math and pays for a tutor instead.

There were moments when I was thinking about opening my wallet and doing the same, but my cheap (frugal) side won out. I worked through lesson after lesson and tried to follow the examples provided. By Friday some of the math was making sense and I was actually answering a few questions properly.

Over the weekend I was able to help my daughter understand better some of the things she was struggling with. I heard her say a few times that she gets it now. I am typing this on Monday morning. Tonight, we are going to go through

some of the practice questions given for the test in order for her to be prepared to write it on Tuesday. I think I could show up on Tuesday and get at least a 70% on the test. It would not be the same mark I typically pulled off in Grade 11 (above 90 if you are wondering), but I would at least pass and do okay. This exercise during the past several days has been a good reminder to me that I still have what it takes when it comes to Grade 11 math and quadratic functions.

It is so easy for us to think we no longer have what it takes to do certain things again because of all the time that has passed. This may be true with certain things. I used to be a pretty good goalie in hockey back in my teenage years. I do not think I could do the splits anymore like I did back then to catch a puck or stack the pads sliding across the crease.

There may be other things we think we can no longer do because of the amount of time that has passed but are incorrect in believing so. Let me give you some examples of this:

- Some people may feel they don't have it in them to find their way back to the Lord after so much time away from Him,
- Some people may be thinking they don't have it in them to feel hope or joy again after some loss or hurt,
- Some people may think they don't have it in them any more to keep persevering through each day,
- Some may feel they don't have it in them to forgive the person who hurt them,
- Some may feel they don't have it in them to experience God's forgiveness after all of these years.

Time, age, hurts, loss, and so many other things can make us think we no longer have it in us to do these things. We should not be so quick to assume this. With a little effort on our part and by **asking for God's help** we may discover we still have it in us to do these things again in our lives. I have had to do these two things in order to understand Grade 11 functions and quadratics again. Yes, I put the time and effort into learning it, but I also asked God to help me do so. With God's help I remained patient, persistent, and determined to learn this difficult math again.

I did not understand it all at once. Slowly and surely with God's help I began to understand it and realized I still have it in me when it comes to math. What if we all took this same approach with something we think we no longer have in us? Perhaps one of the examples above is what may be missing from your life. Maybe it is something else, but you feel strongly you would like to have it again. **If so, pray and ask God** for help to have it in your life again if it is His will. Then put the effort into it each day and at some point, like I did, you will discover you have it once again.

I hope the next unit of math after the test on Tuesday comes easier to Coral. If not, I know that I still have it in me to help her. Personally, I would be quite happy to go another 42 years without having to think about quadratic equations or other Grade 11 math concepts.

***Keep Safe and God Bless***

***Pastor Dean***