

IN NEED OF HEALING

We ran into one of our neighbours yesterday while we were out walking Daisy. She had just returned recently from Vienna, Austria after attending her mother-in-law's funeral. She shared with us how she watched all the protests going on in Ottawa and at the Ambassador Bridge on television while she was away. She was surprised these events were making news in Vienna. I discovered these events were also making the news in Slovakia after I talked recently with a friend who is now living there. CNN and Fox News in the United States have also been carrying coverage of these events. The world has been watching these events unfold and so have we. It seemed so surreal to me at times to see these events happening in Canada. We have maybe seen this happen in other countries, but not here.

Watching all of this unfold made me think back to two years ago when COVID began drawing our attention. Do you remember how united we were for the most part when we first had to confront COVID in March 2020? We were united in staying home and keeping ourselves and others safe. As life slowed down, we saw families and people come closer together. Businesses stepped up by changing their production lines in order to produce masks, ventilators, and other items needed in the fight against COVID. People would step outside at 7:00 p.m. to make noise in order to show support for our front-line workers. Some people banged pots and pans, others played music, and we played the chimes at our church. When encouraged to start wearing masks we put them on even though it was strange at first. For the most part we were united when we began this journey with COVID.

Over these past two years we have lost that sense of unity and have become divided. I have heard stories of families that were once close but are now divided and disagreeing over vaccines and other issues surrounding COVID. I have heard similar stories happening between once close friends, neighbours, and even in some church settings. I am sure many workplaces are experiencing it as well. The recent events in Ottawa, at the Ambassador Bridge, and elsewhere in Canada are showing this division is happening across this great country of ours.

As I thought about this shift from unity to disunity during these past two years the saying, "United we stand, divided we fall" came to mind. This saying was first used by one of the founding fathers of the US Constitution. It has been said often ever since because there is such truth to these words. Where there is division and conflict there is a

need for healing in order to become united again. It was evident to me watching the protests that many people are hurting emotionally, physically, and spiritually right now as a result of the events of these past two years. Some of the healing needed to bring unity again may come from our political leaders. I feel the best source of healing to bring unity back to families, friends, and our nation can be **FOUND IN GOD**.

The Bible is filled with stories of God healing people as well as nations. One example of this is found in **Matthew 15** where a vast crowd of people brought individuals to Jesus who were in need of healing. Amongst the people brought to Jesus were individuals who were lame, blind, crippled, unable to speak, and suffering from other conditions. Matthew tells us that Jesus healed them all. People were amazed that the blind could now see, the lame could walk, the crippled were made well again and so on. He healed a vast crowd back then and He can still do the same today. We have seen vast crowds gathered during these past weeks in need of healing of the anger, hurt, disappointment, loss, and frustrations they have had build up inside of them during these past two years. *The best gift we can bring to them and all who are suffering emotionally, physically, and spiritually right now is to bring them to Jesus for healing.* The way we can do this is to pray for them and ask Jesus to heal them. By lifting these individuals up in prayer, we are following the example of what the people did in this story by bringing them to Jesus and leaving the healing up to Him.

The other way I think we can help in the healing of others right now is to ensure we have let Jesus heal us of our hurts through all of this. I think we need to check our emotional, physical, and spiritual health right now as well to ensure we are not hanging onto hurts or wounds we have experienced since March 2020. At first glance we might think we are okay and coping well through the experiences of these past two years. Below the surface however, there might be some anger, judgement, frustration, or hurt simmering and just waiting to boil over at some point. If this happens, we might say or do something that is out of character for us that will add to the already existing division that is occurring. None of us would want this to happen. So, let's add ourselves to the list of those in need of Jesus' healing. With Jesus' healing power, may we all come to be healed of the pain and wounds experienced during these past two years. With a little bit of healing, wouldn't it be nice to see Canada united once again? It can happen, but it cannot be done without prayer and without letting Jesus do the healing.

God Bless and Keep Safe

Pastor Dean