

MEMORIES

On Saturday we had to drive to Sarnia to play two basketball games. These games were not for the team I coach, but rather involved players from my daughter's high school team. We were excited to go to Sarnia because from 2001-2009 we spent a lot of time there living nearby in Petrolia. The town of Petrolia is only a 15–20-minute drive to Sarnia, similar to driving from Paris to Brantford. Between games on Saturday, we decided to take our daughter on a trip down memory lane.

Coral was only 3 years old when we moved from Petrolia back to Brantford, but she can still recall a few things from that time. One memory she still recalls is when we would take her under the Bluewater Bridge in Sarnia. If you have ever been there, you will know how beautiful it is to spend a summer afternoon or evening under the bridge. There are playgrounds and swings for the kids, an area where you can feed fish, food trucks to enjoy French fries or an ice cream cone, and many benches to sit on and watch boats and ships pass under the bridge. Coral can still remember playing on a pirate ship slide at this park and feeding the fish.

On Saturday we spent an hour or two reliving some of these memories. We bought our lunch from one of the food trucks and enjoyed sitting at picnic tables watching a ship go by. Then we went over to the children's play area and looked at the pirate ship that Coral used to play on. It seems to be a lot smaller now than when Coral played on it as a 3-year-old. Coral listened as Nadine and I pointed out certain slides she preferred to go down on the pirate ship. Then we made our way over to feed the fish again just as we did so many times when Coral was younger. After this, we showed Coral some of the things we used to do with her there that she could not remember like getting down close to the water to throw stones in and make big splashes. We all enjoyed the opportunity on Saturday to walk down memory lane and revisit some of our experiences from our time under the Bluewater Bridge in Sarnia.

Revisiting some of our pleasant memories can be such a joy and blessing. I often share at funerals that I officiate how the memories we have of the deceased are a gift that God has given to us. Remembering some of those

pleasant memories, as my family did on Saturday, are a much-needed gift that God provides. For an hour or two our minds were taken off all our priorities and focused instead on special times we were provided by God at a certain season in our lives.

With Mother's Day coming this weekend, I hope that you might be able to take a walk down memory lane and remember some of the special times you spent with your mothers. I think it will provide you with a much-needed distraction that will make you smile and appreciate the gift that God gave you in your mother. If your mother should still be living, I think it would be a great gift to share with her the special memories you have recalled. We may also want to share these memories we have of our mothers with our own children too. The reason why I encourage this is we do not want these memories to escape our minds and hearts.

This advice is found in Scripture. In **Deuteronomy 4:9**, Moses was speaking to the Israelites about what they saw and experienced God do for them during the 40-year period they wandered in the wilderness. Moses told them:

Be careful never to forget what you yourself have seen. Do not let these memories escape from your mind as long as you live! And be sure to pass them on to your children and grandchildren.

Moses wanted the people never to have the memories of the things God had done for them escape their minds, or their children's or grandchildren's.

Just as God did special things for the Israelites during the 40 years in the wilderness, He has done many blessed things for us. Some of the blessed things God has done for us can be found in our memories. As we reflect upon our memories, as my family did on Saturday, we will be reminded of how God's hand was at work in those moments blessing us. It was always an incredible blessing for Nadine and I to watch Coral as a 2-3 year old laugh and play on the pirate ship, and marvel at feeding the fish. God blessed us by allowing us to give Coral that experience at such a young age, in such a beautiful setting. So let's follow this wisdom and use this Mother's Day weekend to reflect upon the memories we have spending blessed time with our mothers. As we reflect upon them, pay attention to the blessings that God

provided in creating these experiences and opportunities. Let's share these memories and blessings with our mothers and our children so they will see the wonderful experiences God has provided for us. By so doing, we will be giving ourselves a gift, as well as our mothers and our children. We will also be ensuring that these memories do not escape our minds and our hearts. What a shame if that were to happen. What a blessing it is when we can remember these special memories and be blessed by them once again.

When asked about how the games went on Saturday Coral mentioned they were okay, but her voice lifted when she spoke about reliving her memories under the Bluewater Bridge. She loved the experience of walking down memory lane. We experienced this gift last weekend. I hope you experience the same gift from God this weekend.

Keep safe and God Bless

Pastor Dean