

REMINDED OF MY YOUTH

On Saturday morning I happened to look out my window while waiting for my coffee to brew and noticed a young boy skating on the ice at our park with a hockey stick in hand. When I saw this my first thought was how crazy it was for him to be out on such a cold morning, but then I remembered how I used to do the same thing at his age. Our family home backed onto a park which always had ice in the winter to skate on. I used to spend hours and hours on that ice even on the coldest of winter days. I usually would not get off the ice until I had to come home for supper, or until I saw the porch light turned on which was my parents' signal to me it was getting late, and it was time to come home.

I am sure some of those winter days were extremely cold out on that ice, but it did not stop me from being out there as long as I could. Now that I am 58 years old, I would not be able to stay out there very long. I get annoyed with the dog on extremely cold days if she takes too long to do her business while we are outside. Even if the temperature was just below zero, after 30-45 minutes on the ice my ankles would be hurting, my upper thighs would be screaming at me, and the rest of my body would be telling me it is time to get off.

As I looked out the window on Saturday morning at the boy skating on the ice on one of the coldest days of this winter, I was reminded of what I could do in my youth, but also what I am capable of now. Some days, we see things that remind us of our youth. These reminders quickly make us realize some of the many ways we have changed over the years. These changes in us may include:

- the colour of our hair, or the quantity of it we still have on our heads,
- our athletic abilities and fitness levels,
- the number of responsibilities we now have as opposed to back then,
- our view of the world,
- our view of ourselves,
- our health,
- our relationships and level of trust in others,
- and even our view of and relationship with God.

These are just some of the things that may have changed in us since we were children. One change that **Jesus does not want to see happen in us as we get older is losing that child-like faith we once had in Him.** Jesus made this very clear to His disciples when they scolded some parents for trying to bring their children to Him to be blessed. Jesus was angry with His disciples when He saw this and said to them:

Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.

(Mark 10: 14-15)

It pleased Jesus to be provided opportunities like this to be with children so He could bless them with His presence and teachings. Children feel secure when they are in the presence of a parent or grandparent who truly loves and cares for them. Having this kind of relationship with parents and grandparents allows children to develop a true sense of trust. What Jesus wanted the disciples to understand is **how believers need to have this same child-like faith and trust when it comes to our relationship with Him.**

Just as I took a moment on Saturday morning to think about my experiences as a child skating on outdoor rinks in the coldest of temperatures, let's do the same now when it comes to our younger years spending time with Jesus. I imagine most of us can still remember certain things about the experiences we had in Sunday school and church. We might still remember some of the Sunday school teachers or ministers we had; dressing up and sitting in the pews with our parents and grandparents; as well as certain hymns, stories, and lessons from our younger years. For many of us, I imagine, it was in these early years when we first came to learn about Jesus and start trusting in Him. It was at this stage we may have developed the same child-like trust in Jesus that we had in our parents.

As we have grown and matured over the years, has this same level of child-like faith and trust in Jesus remained, or has it left us? One of the things Jesus hopes has not changed in us as we have gotten older is losing that child-like faith in Him. If we have lost it in some way, then **let's spend some time with Jesus like we did in our youth and rekindle it again.** Nothing would make Jesus happier, and nothing would make our life more blessed than **restoring our child-like trust and faith in Him.**

The ice in our park has melted since that cold Saturday morning. I won't see skaters on it again until we get another cold stretch of winter. I don't see myself on it if it happens unless the cold temperatures are a bit more reasonable for this once young guy.

God Bless and Keep Safe

Pastor Dean