

SO MANY QUESTIONS

Now that the Toronto Maple Leafs have been eliminated by the Montreal Canadiens on Monday night, Leafs fans, media, and sports talk radio will be asking many questions through the course of this week. Some of the questions already being asked are:

- Why did the Leafs blow a 3-1 series lead?
- Should the team stay the same for next year or should they rebuild?
- Do the Leafs need to trade some of their star players?
- Should the general manager and president be fired?
- Do they need more scoring up front or better defence?
- Why can't they seem to win a playoff series?
- Do they have the mental fortitude to succeed in playoff hockey?
- Why do teams less talented than the Leafs seem to have playoff success?

The questions asked over the next few weeks will be endless. Some of the questions may be easily answered and others might be harder to answer. Fans and sports media always ask these types of questions whenever a team like the Leafs experiences loss and disappointment.

It is not only when we see sport teams lose that we see hard questions being asked. Loss and disappointment in life often raises these kinds of questions. An example where we see this happening in Scripture takes place in John 11. This is the story of Lazarus' death. When Lazarus became gravely sick, Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus about their brother's condition. These two sisters had hoped that Jesus would depart right away and heal their brother. Jesus delayed leaving and did not arrive until Lazarus had been dead for four days. These sisters questioned why Jesus did not come sooner in the midst of their loss. When Jesus first met with Martha, she acknowledged this question had been playing on her mind by mentioning to him that if He had just been there sooner Lazarus would not have died. Jesus did not answer Martha's question why He delayed in coming. He mentioned the reason to the disciples before they departed, but not to Martha. Instead of answering her question, Jesus said this to Martha:

I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha? (John 11:25-26)

Jesus was basically saying to Martha, do you still trust and believe in me even though I am not giving you the answers to all of your questions? To Martha's credit she responded:

Yes, Lord, I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God. (John 11:27)

Martha's belief in Jesus was well placed. Even though she did not have her question answered, she soon experienced the raising of her brother back to life.

As I mentioned earlier, it is in times of loss and disappointment when we have so many questions. This pandemic has had its full share of disappointments and loss for each of us. With these losses come questions for God:

- Why did this have to happen God?
- What lessons are you wanting us to learn from this?
- Why have I struggled at times through this God?
- Why do I feel so anxious and afraid?
- Will my life ever return to normal again?

We know that God always welcomes our questions. Sometimes God will provide us with the answers to our questions, and other times He does not. The reason for Him not giving us an answer might be that we are not quite ready to hear it, or we are not at a moment in our faith journey when we will be able to fully understand. Regardless of whether we receive the answer to our questions during this pandemic or not, God still wants us to do this:

TRUST AND BELIEVE IN HIM REGARDLESS OF WHETHER OUR QUESTIONS ARE FULLY ANSWERED

Hopefully, this is where we are in our faith journey. It is a comforting position to be in as we move closer to life post pandemic. We might still have questions left unanswered from what we have experienced, but at least we will keep moving ahead assured and confident in our Lord. As Mary and Martha discovered by trusting in Jesus despite their questions going unanswered, wonderful and blessed things were in store for them. We too can look forward to wonderful and blessed things our Lord has in store for us as we come out of this pandemic.

I was disappointed that the Leafs were eliminated on Monday night. Tuesday morning my neighbour, who is a Canadiens fan, sent me a text saying: **I heard there is a strain of Montreal flu going around the neighbourhood. I hope Dean is not too sick from it!**

My question to all of you is do you know of a remedy for this illness?

God Bless and Keep Safe

Pastor Dean