

## SEEING A PROUD FATHER

I am writing this message on the day my daughter celebrates her 20<sup>th</sup> birthday. Twenty years ago, on this day I was at London's Sick Kid's hospital awaiting the arrival of our daughter's birth which came six and a half weeks before we expected. The people I talked to that morning were my wife Nadine and the various nurses who were attending to her. I did talk as well to some of the staff at Tim Hortons at the hospital as I had to have a few coffees to calm my nerves.

Twenty years later I found myself at the bank on the morning of my daughter's birthday. When the bank teller asked me what my plans were for the day, I shared with her how it was my daughter's birthday and that we would be driving to her university in London later to take her out for supper. That led to a conversation with the bank teller asking me about what programs my daughter was studying at university.

When I shared with her how she is planning to take a double major in governance-leadership-ethics and history, the teller smiled and said that her father apparently is quite interested in history. She went on to say how much her dad would love to engage in discussions with a student like my daughter. As the teller continued processing my deposits, we continued the conversation by talking about some of the areas my daughter's degrees might lead her into after graduation. When we came to the end of our conversation, the bank teller said something that caught me by surprise. She said, **"I can tell how proud you are of your daughter."**

As I walked out of the bank I began reflecting upon the bank teller's comment. Did this teller pick up on this by listening to my words and comments during the conversation, or could she see it in my facial expressions too? I am sure I was smiling and beaming a bit talking about my daughter, but I was focused more on what I was saying than on my expressions. The experience got me thinking about some examples in Scripture when we see our Father in Heaven speaking proudly about some of His children.

In the book of Job, we learn how one day God had a conversation with Satan. When Satan shared how he had just come from patrolling the earth, watching everything that was going on, God asked if he had taken notice of Job. God proceeded to talk proudly about Job by saying:

**He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless – a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil. (Job 1:8)**

Just like we as parents may talk proudly of our children, we see in this example how our Heavenly Father does the same with His children. We also see this when it comes to His Son Jesus. Scripture shares with us how when Jesus came up out of the water after being baptized, a voice from heaven said:

**"This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy." (Matthew 3:17)**

These two examples from Scripture should make us pause and consider whether we are living in ways right now as His children that are making Him talk proudly about us. For instance:

- Is our Heavenly Father proud that we are living our lives in a way showing **godly character and integrity** like He saw with Job?
- Is our Heavenly Father proud of the respect and love we are showing **toward Him and to others**?
- Is our Heavenly Father proud how we are trying to **resist evil** and stay away from it in our lives?
- Is our Father proud of how we are **patterning** our lives after Jesus?

When we were younger, I am sure we tried to live our lives in ways to make our parents proud of us. This desire should not change when it comes to our relationship with our Heavenly Father. Let's make sure as we approach the start of another "Holy Week" that we do so committed to living our lives in these and other ways that will make our Heavenly Father proud of us.

Keep safe and God bless,

Pastor Dean