

SOMETHING IN COMMON REGARDLESS OF AGE

During the first 94 years of her life my mother avoided fracturing or breaking any bones. In her 95th year, however, she experienced a fracture for the very first time. After she fell, I took my mother for an x-ray which revealed her wrist was fractured. She was not happy to learn this and actually accused me of not praying hard enough. I was praying, however once I learned of her fall, that if there was something seriously wrong, that God would reveal it. I saw the x-ray showing the fracture as an answer to prayer even if my mother thought otherwise. Off to the emergency room we went and after a few short hours my mother returned home wearing her first cast ever.

A few days later I went into Tim Hortons for my morning coffee, and I saw at one of the tables a young boy around the age of 5 also wearing a cast covering his wrist. I wanted to go over to his table and ask him if this was his first cast and share with him about my mom at age 95. Unfortunately, the family got up and left before I had the chance to do so.

I began thinking afterward how interesting it was that a boy so young, and somebody of my mom's age (notice I did not say so old) were experiencing the exact same thing regarding their wrists. No matter what end of the spectrum we are at when it comes to our age, experiencing adversities with regards to our health is just one thing we can share in common.

Regardless of the kind of adversity someone who is young or old may be going through, something else they can share is noticing their strength is weakening in the midst of it. This is something I was reminded of from a passage I preached on in church this past Sunday from Isaiah:

Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. (Isaiah 40:30-31)

Isaiah not only spoke about the young and old experiencing this amidst adversity, but also how both age groups can have their strength renewed by putting their trust in the Lord. The prophet's advice reminded me of two stories in the Bible of people from each of these spectrums in age who put their trust in the Lord. First, I remembered the story of the young boy who showed a lot of trust in Jesus by offering his lunch of just 5 loaves and 2 fish to feed the crowd of 5,000 men. I then remembered the story about a prophet named Anna who was 84 years old. Luke tells us in his gospel that Anna's husband

died after they had been married only seven years. We discover from Luke that Anna lived the remaining years of her life as a widow trusting in God to provide for her physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.

The Bible reminds us how people at both ends of the spectrum of life, and all ages in between, can share in common, not only adversities, but also placing their trust in Jesus, too. When it comes to placing our trust in Him, something Jesus encourages those of us who are older to do is to have the same kind of faith displayed by those who are younger. We see this encouragement offered by Jesus after the disciples tried to prevent some mothers from bringing their children to Him to be blessed. It was customary back in those days for a mother to bring her children to a rabbi for a blessing. The disciples felt Jesus' time would be better served doing other things. Jesus called for the children to come to Him and said to the disciples:

Let the 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. (Luke 18:16-17)

The kind of faith that Jesus is saying we should have in common with children is showing the same simple, trusting attitude in Him that the young show toward their parents whom they depend upon. Children look to their parents to help them with their problems, rely on them to receive guidance and good advice, and to have their needs met. Children show an explicit trust toward their parents who love them. Jesus desires for us older children who are believers to have this same trust and attitude toward Him.

The challenge as we get older in life is that we sometimes move away from showing this kind of child-like faith in Jesus. Our desire as adults to become self-sufficient when it comes to our needs, and our pride when it comes to seeking help from others, can cause us to lose the child-like faith we once had. We often wish as we get older to be able to do some of the same things we did when we were younger. One thing we can still do in our old age that we did in our youth is to have a child-like faith when it comes to trusting Jesus.

Keep safe and God bless,

Pastor Dean