

WHAT ONE EMPLOYEE IS LOOKING FOR

Last week at my regular Tim Hortons they held two "Hiring Fair Days." The reason why I knew this is I stumbled over the sign board displaying these hiring days while I was paying for my coffee. I noticed they were hiring for part-time and full-time employees for both their day and afternoon shifts. I thought about attending and applying with the hopes of getting discounts on my coffees, but I decided to stick with my regular day job.

Two days after the job fair ended, I talked with an employee who has worked there for at least the past six years. I have not talked much to this employee over the years because she usually works in the bakery or in the drive through area. Recently I have had the chance to finally engage her in a few conversations. The first time, she was outside the restaurant with a long broom sweeping away all the cobwebs and spiders. I kidded her by saying, **"I thought with all your seniority you would delegate somebody else to do this work."** She smiled and said, **"I should task it out, but I am the only one around here who does not seem to be scared of spiders."**

This past Sunday she was on the front counter when I arrived at 6:30 a.m. to get a coffee before church. It was not busy so I asked her if they had her sitting in on the interviews at the job fair. She said "no", but she would have loved to participate in that process. I asked her what qualities she would look for in a new co-worker. She thought about it for a minute, and replied, **"I would ask them if they would abandon me or not when things get busy around here!"** I found her response very interesting. Obviously, this is something she has experienced from other co-workers during her years working at this location. Naturally I had to end the conversation by asking, **"You wouldn't ask them if they are afraid of sweeping away spiders?"** She smiled and said, **"Oh, that too!"**

I found myself reflecting upon her response on Sunday and Monday. I think we all have the same wish that we will not be abandoned or left alone when life becomes stressful. Sometimes believers wonder if God has abandoned them in their time of need. It seemed like the disciples wondered this after Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. He had foretold on several occasions that He would be betrayed into the hands of His enemies and killed but would rise to life on the third day. The disciples' actions and doubts after His arrest reveal how they felt abandoned and lost at this time.

Just as He promised, Jesus rose back to life and reassured them He had not abandoned them. When it came time for Jesus to ascend into heaven and return to His rightful home, He wanted to reassure His disciples that He was not abandoning them. His final words to them before He ascended into heaven were: **And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20).**

Up until this point Jesus was with the disciples physically. After ascending into heaven, He would be with them always spiritually through the presence of the Holy Spirit. The disciples had been told earlier by Jesus that something the Holy Spirit would do for them is provide them with assurance and a sense of peace that they had not been abandoned: **I am leaving you with a gift– peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid (John 14: 27).**

Jesus has provided us with the gift of His on-going spiritual presence in our lives through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's presence provides us with a sense of assurance and peace that He is always with us and has not abandoned us.

As the employee at Tim Hortons who I talked with on Sunday morning shared, we cannot always count on others to be there for us in our times of need. We may feel abandoned by some in these moments, but that is not the case when it comes to our Lord. We should not be surprised in those moments when we need reassurance of His presence if the Holy Spirit places this reminder on our hearts: **Surely Your goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life (Psalm 23:6).**

We may not have co-workers or others in our lives who are always there for us, but thankfully we do have a Saviour who is, and always will be.

I hope for this long serving employee at Tim Hortons that some of the people that were hired at the job fair prove to be reliable when things become stressful. I hope, as well, that some are not afraid of spiders. It will make her life at work a little easier moving forward.

Keep safe and God bless,

Pastor Dean