

A DATE IN TIME

I am actually writing this message on my wedding anniversary. Nadine and I were married 36 years ago on September 2, 1988. I can remember the weather being really good that day because I spent the afternoon golfing before arriving at the church for the 7:00 p.m. ceremony. As I reflect upon that day, I am reminded how things were so different back then. Renting an apartment was definitely cheaper. The first place we lived in was a two-bedroom apartment including utilities for just under \$300.00 per month. I was glad rent was so cheap back then because interest rates were quite high and there was no way we could afford a mortgage on my yearly salary of just \$21,000.00.

The car I drove back then was a Ford Granada. I cannot remember the last time I have seen such a car on the road. I had just finished university a year earlier with a degree in business specializing in accounting. Despite this amount of education, I still had at least two more years of night courses to take in order to become a Certified Management Accountant.

When Nadine and I stood at the front of the church on September 2, 1988 and exchanged our vows, she thought she would be married to an accountant the rest of her life and so too did I. It was 8 years into our marriage when God revealed His plan to me to become a minister. In 2001 I completed my studies and was ordained as a minister in the Presbyterian Church in Canada in June of that year. On my 13th wedding anniversary on September 2, 2001, I actually found myself leading worship for the first time at my new pastoral charge in Petrolia. Only God could make this kind of arrangement happen and He alone could have me be the pastor right now at the very church I was married in 36 years ago this day.

Being reminded of this date in time each year on my wedding anniversary allows me to see how God's hand has guided my life through the years. I am always amazed and humbled to see the plans God has had for my life. It is on this date I am often reminded of these words David expressed:

You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in Your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. (Psalm 139:15-16)

David came to understand through reflecting upon his life, the many ways God's hand had been guiding him in order to experience the plans that had been laid out for him. In order to benefit from such a reflection, it helps as I have discovered to have a date in time that encourages us to do so. I do not know what that date was for David. It may have been on the anniversary when he defeated the giant Goliath, or when he was anointed by Samuel, or when he eventually became king. These are just a few of many dates in David's life when he could have reflected upon the ways God had been guiding his life.

We all have memorable dates in time from our lives that can provide us with perfect opportunities to reflect upon how God has been guiding our footsteps in order to experience the plans He has in store for us. Once we choose that memorable date and begin to reflect upon our memories, we will begin to see how God has been at work in our lives. When we discover just how much God has been guiding us, we will be humbled and appreciative that:

- His watchful and caring eye is always upon us,
- He is always in control ensuring His good plans for us come to be in His perfect timing,
- His love for us is so genuine that He always wants the best for us in life.

September 2nd is that date in time for me to be reminded just how much God's hand has been guiding my life. Whichever date in time it is for you, ***I pray that you will be touched as I always am by how blessed we are to experience God's plans for our lives.***

It's too bad that Stanley Cup parades take place before September 2nd each year. It would be the perfect date in my mind to attend a Leaf's Stanley Cup parade!

Keep safe and God bless,

Pastor Dean