

## A HUMBLING TIME

These past eight weeks during our COVID-19 isolation have been humbling for me at times. If anyone asked me at the start of this if I was good at math and answering questions on the Bible I would have responded “of course I am”. A person like myself who earned a professional accounting degree as well as having a master’s in divinity should be good at answering questions in these areas.

During COVID-19 students like my daughter Coral have had to do their learning online. Several times when she was struggling with a math question, she came to me and sought my help. How hard could it be for me to answer a Grade 8 math question? I have come to discover it is very hard at times. I will look at some questions and realize I have no clue where to begin.

So, I tell Coral to give me a few minutes to research it. Once I think I have it figured out I sit down with Coral and show her how to come up with the answer. Even though it took me a bit longer than I hoped it would, I came away satisfied thinking I helped Coral find the answer.

But that feeling has been short lived. On Fridays the teacher gives the right answers to the questions. Apparently, many of the math questions I helped Coral come up with the answer to have been wrong. This has not happened just once but apparently over several weeks. It has become such a pattern that Coral finally said to me this week “Dad, you used to be my go-to person when I struggled with math, but with the number of wrong answers lately, I think I will try these questions on my own,” For a numbers guy like me, her comment was humbling to say the least.

Coral has been attending a private Christian school these past three years. Presently her class is studying the Book of Acts. I have been able to help her with many of her questions until recently. One morning she yelled down to me from the office, “*Hey dad, the teacher is asking why did the religious leaders kill Stephen?*”

I yelled up to her, “*because of his belief in Jesus.*” She gave the answer to the teacher and yelled back to me, “Dad, he says the answer is wrong. It was because Stephen claimed Jesus was God.” Now that is what I was implying when I gave Coral my answer, but in her mind and according to the teacher it was the wrong response. This was even more humbling for me than getting the math questions wrong.

Now you can see why the past eight weeks have been humbling for me at times. I do not think I am alone in experiencing these moments of humility during this

crisis. Challenging times have a way of humbling us. The reason for this is challenging situations force us to set our pride aside to do what we need to do. For example, right now with hairstylists and barber shops closed, many people have had to forego their hair looking their best and go in ball caps or with slightly greyer or raggedy hair to do their shopping. Yes, humility is something we must embrace during this COVID-19 crisis.

I think it will be a good thing for many people to learn humility through this experience. Humility does not mean putting ourselves down or beating ourselves up emotionally. Each one of us has great worth in God's eyes. Humility is laying aside our selfish desires or proud attitude and treating others with respect, common courtesy and putting other people's needs ahead of our own. We have been seeing this kind of behaviour and attitude from those on the front lines in the battle against COVID-19.

There was a lot of pride, greed, and selfishness in our society before COVID-19. Wouldn't it be wonderful if through this crisis we see more and more humility on people's part? The Bible points out many benefits when people begin to display more humility.

- Humility helps us be more obedient to God and His ways.
- It gives us a more accurate perspective of ourselves.
- It helps us to be more accepting of God's gifts and more willing to use them.
- It allows us to recognize God's work in us.
- It helps us overcome evil desires.
- It helps stop quarrels
- And it helps us to become more Christ-like as we know Christ humbled himself by coming to be our Saviour.

Humility has so many positive effects as this list shows. Wouldn't it be nice if each and everyone of us could come out of this crisis more humble than we were before?

I know I have been humbled by this entire experience of COVID-19, especially helping Coral with her schoolwork. Being humbled is not a bad thing but a blessed thing. This may be a humbling time for you as well but remember good things flow out of our lessons of humility.

God Bless,

Rev. Dean