

FATHER'S DAY GIFTS

With Father's Day approaching this Sunday I began thinking about the gifts I gave my father on this day. I'll be honest, I had a hard time remembering any of them. I do remember giving him a homemade gift that my kindergarten teacher had us make, but that is because my mother saved it and gave it to me a couple of years ago as a keepsake. I am sure I made my dad a card each year and wished him a happy Father's Day, but I cannot remember anything else I may have given him on his special day. I do not know if the reason I am struggling to remember is because I am now 58 years old, or because my father passed away 24 years ago.

This Sunday will mark my eighteenth Father's Day as a dad. I have been blessed over these years to be given some very special gifts on this annual day. On my first Father's Day I received a pendant for my necklace that said, "#1 Dad" on the front and had Coral's name engraved on the back. Several years on Father's Day I received shirts as my gift. A couple of these shirts Coral designed herself. One shirt had her handprints and footprints done in paint on the front and back. On another shirt she included crosses, so I wore it to church on that Father's Day Sunday and led the service wearing it. She also got me a shirt one year that said, "Blessed to be a dad". One of my favourite Father's Day gifts was a tie that had three pictures of my daughter at different ages in her life. I get complimented so often when I wear this tie whether I am in church or having Sunday brunch after the service at a restaurant. Last year I received a framed picture of Coral and I together after we played our final game at the provincial championships for basketball. I always smile when I see this picture. I definitely have been blessed by the gifts I have received.

I mentioned earlier how I cannot remember the gifts that I gave to my father in past Father's Days. I do not know if other people have a better memory than I do when it comes to gifts they have given but what I have frequently observed is how quickly people remember the special things they did with their fathers on this annual day. I can recall several times when I have sat with somebody after their father passed away and they shared with me how it was their tradition to go golfing with their dad every Fathers Day. Others have told me how they would celebrate Fathers Day by having a barbeque with their dad. Some people have even shared how they would spend that weekend camping with their dads.

We may not remember the gifts we have given to our fathers, but we will easily remember spending quality time with our dads and doing fun things like these with them every year. I know Coral will have these memories too. We went to the movies together on Father's Day a few times when she was younger. Lately we have gone to Ben Mar on Father's Day to do mini golf or hit balls at the driving range. Many years I have come away humbled from the driving range after having my daughter out hit me at times with her distance off the tee. Thankfully the last two years I have gotten my swing back and have been less humbled on this day.

I hope on this Father's Day that every one of us takes the time to remember some of the gifts we may have given to our dads over the years and some of the experiences we shared with them on their special day. As believers we are also blessed to have God as our "Father in Heaven!" Last week we looked at the Lord's Prayer in our mid-week message and how Jesus taught us to start off by saying, "Our Father in Heaven!" We often look to our Heavenly Father to be the one to offer us gifts especially when it comes to answering a prayer request.

Just as Father's Day is a time we give gifts to our earthly fathers, we look upon the Sabbath as a day to give our Heavenly Father the gift of our offerings and worship. As I thought about these two gifts that we offer to our Heavenly Father on the Sabbath I was reminded of a passage found in the Old Testament book of Micah. The question was asked in Micah 6 as to what kind of offerings or gifts we should bring to the Lord. Some suggestions were offered but then God made His wishes clear when He said:

No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what He requires of you; to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)

We discover in these words that if we **really want to give our Heavenly Father a gift** that will please Him, the best way we can do this is to **always do what is right in God's eyes; to show love and mercy to anyone who may offend us; and to walk humbly with Him each day.** These are gifts that do not require money but do involve us living our faith in these ways.

As we take time this Father's Day to ponder the gifts and activities we have done for our dads, **may we also consider if we are living our faith each day in a way that reflects these three attributes God desires.** If we realize after taking time to ponder this question that we have not been living our life in these three ways, hopefully starting this Father's Day and every day forward we will transform how we live our faith to please God, ourselves, and others by displaying these three godly attributes, not only in our words, but in our actions too. It will make for a happy Father's Day in Heaven, as well as a happy one in our hearts knowing we are putting a smile on the face of our Heavenly Father.

Once a year we honour our fathers on a day known as Father's Day. Every day we should honour our heavenly Father by living our faith in these three special ways.

Keep safe and God bless,

Pastor Dean