

STEPPING BACK IN TIME

I stepped back in time so to speak twice last week. The first time was on Wednesday night while Coral and I were watching television. All of a sudden, she spotted an ice cream truck out front of our house with kids from the neighbourhood already at it. We looked at each other and decided we needed to join in. By the time we got our shoes on and went out the door the ice cream truck was already halfway down our road. Thankfully another group of kids had waved the truck down to buy some ice cream. Coral and I ran down the street to try and get to the truck before it drove off again. I don't remember huffing and puffing as much when I ran after an ice cream truck as a kid. It was truly a step back in time for me to buy ice cream from a truck coming down my street. I just wish the prices were a step back in time because I do not remember an ice cream costing \$5.00 in the early 70's.

On Thursday afternoon I stepped back in time again by returning to Brock University where I was a student from 1983-1987. The reason for my visit was so Coral could tour the university to see if it would be one of the schools she might consider applying to. Because I am part of Brock's alumni, I received a complimentary gift at the beginning of the tour. I wish the gift had been a full scholarship for my daughter, but the thought was nice. Brock University has changed so much since I was a student there, but it was interesting to step back in time during the tour. I was able to point out to Coral where some of my classes were, where I stayed in residence, and some of my favourite places to hang out. A lot of memories came back to me as I stepped back in time touring Brock University on Thursday.

It was an interesting week for me experiencing these instances of stepping back in time. It can be quite nostalgic for us when we step back in time and take a trip down memory lane. There may be some moments from our past that we would prefer not to step back into. One step back in time the Bible warns us not to take is to return to our old ways from before we started following Christ. When Peter saw this tendency happening amongst early believers, he tried to discourage them from taking this step back by offering the following advice in **1 Peter 1:14-15**:

So, you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy.

Peter was trying to remind believers here that they should be continuously striving ahead in becoming more holy in their living both outwardly and inwardly. Peter hoped this advice would encourage believers to stop stepping back into their old ways of living and sinning as before in order to satisfy their desires. Just as believers back in Peter's days stepped back in this way, it can still be a problem for us today. Seeing this tendency that can happen, an interesting question for us to reflect upon is whether we have taken any steps back in striving to become more holy on the inside and out. For instance:

- Have we taken steps back in our prayer life with God?
- Have we taken steps back in our desire to follow Jesus?
- Have we taken steps back with respect to being forgiving, or controlling our anger, or showing love toward others?
- Have we taken steps back when it comes to desiring to experience worship?

If we have stepped back in any of these or other ways in our goal to become Christ-like, then we need to rely on the power from the Holy Spirit to help us to resist this tendency so that we can keep moving forward and become more Christ-like.

I have no university tours planned for this week but if a certain ice cream truck comes down our street playing music I might be tempted to step back in time and run after it again. It is one way to keep in shape.

Keep safe and God bless,

Pastor Dean