

## LIFE IS NOT ALWAYS FAIR

God had a purpose for me to be at Tim Hortons on Saturday morning at a certain time, but I did not know this at first. Around 8:30 on Saturday morning I realized that I had left something at church the previous Sunday that I needed so I made a quick trip to get it. I hadn't had my morning coffee when I left the house, so I decided to stop into Tim Hortons and get one to enjoy on the way. When I walked out with my coffee, little did I know that God would have me return an hour later.

On the car ride home from the church I received a text from my daughter requesting that I bring her back a coffee. How could I say no to such a request, and it gave me the perfect excuse to go in and get a second coffee for myself that morning. When I entered Tims the second time, I spotted a man that I run into regularly sitting in the corner reading his book while sipping on his coffee.

After grabbing my two coffees I went over to his booth to say hello and ask how he was doing. I was caught by surprise when he replied, "Well to be honest not very well. I saw my doctor this week and he told me I only have six months to live." I was aware that he was having health problems, but I did not realize it was this dire. I told him how sorry I was, and we spent the next 5-10 minutes talking about this reality he is facing. One of the things we spent time discussing was how unfair life can be at times.

He is a very kind man, who donates his time toward supporting various charities now that he is retired. He still has so much he wants to experience and do in life. To him, and to me as well, it seems so unfair that he has been told he only has a short time frame to live. It took a lot of courage on this man's part to open up and be so honest about his feelings. When I left Tim Hortons after this conversation on Saturday morning it became evident how God had arranged for me to go back so I could be there at the same time this man was. It showed a lot of compassion and love on God's part to have somebody be present for this man at a time he needed it.

I am glad that God made me present for this man on Saturday morning at Tim Hortons. I have found my heart grieving with sadness for this man ever since. I know death is an eventual reality for all of us at some time, but it is hard when it seems the timing is unfair. As I reflected upon this, I was reminded of

something that was written by Solomon in **Ecclesiastes** about uncertainties we come across in life:

**I have observed something else under the sun. The fastest runner doesn't always win the race, and the strongest warrior doesn't always win the battle. The wise sometimes go hungry, and the skilled are not necessarily wealthy. And those who are educated don't always lead successful lives. It is all decided by chance, by being at the right place at the right time. (Ecclesiastes 9:11)**

When Solomon wrote Proverbs, he shared what things would be like if everyone acted fairly, but in Ecclesiastes he reflected upon some of the unfair things that occur because we live in an imperfect and sinful world. The wisdom that Solomon offered to anyone who might be experiencing an unfair situation in life was to ***keep enjoying God's gifts to us while we can.***

This was the perspective I took on Saturday morning with the man at Tim Hortons. I encouraged him to see Saturday morning as being a good day for him that he was able to enjoy sipping his coffee, eating a donut, and reading his book as I would normally see him doing before his diagnosis. I then encouraged him to embrace each good day like this moving forward as a gift from God. Even though life was not fair to this man last week, God was.

Just as God had me reflect upon Ecclesiastes 9; He also drew my attention to **Psalm 99** in the days that followed this conversation. As I read through the Psalm, I was reminded that God is always perfectly just and fair and because He is, we can trust Him completely. Life may not have been fair to this man last week, but God showed how fair He is by providing this man with compassion and care on that morning when he needed it. I trust God completely that He will continue to show this kind of care and compassion for this man as he continues dealing with this unfair situation in his life.

Life is not always fair as I was reminded on Saturday morning. If we maintain a perspective of seeing each day as a gift from God, and remember He is perfectly just and fair, it will make all the difference when we face some of life's unfair realities.

**Keep safe and God bless**

**Pastor Dean**