

REMINDED OF LIFE'S JOYS

When I took our dog Daisy for a walk on Sunday night, I began thinking about what my mid-week message would be. Usually something from the past week serves as my inspiration, but my mind was blank which happens from time to time, so I prayed and asked God to place an idea on my heart.

As soon as I finished praying my eyes were drawn toward the leaf bags that several neighbours had placed out front of their homes. Some homes I passed had only a few leaf bags for collection while others I counted had upwards of ten or more. Seeing this reminded me of something Coral enjoyed doing when she was younger.

Our property backs onto bush so I usually have upwards of 45-50 bags of leaves to rake up every fall. The weeks when I would have 12 or more bags, we would line them up out front so Coral could run and make a Superman landing on them. She would start from the neighbour's driveway and run full speed at the bags and try to leap across as many as she could. After a successful landing Coral would emerge with leaves in the hood of her jacket with the biggest smile on her face. Nadine and I would set the leaf bags back up so Coral could run and jump into them safely again.

By the end of the night the leaf bags were in pretty bad shape and some of the leaves that had been bagged would now be sitting on my front yard. None of this mattered because our daughter was having fun and enjoyment from these bags of leaves. When I finished walking Daisy around the block, I realized God had just provided me with inspiration for this week's message by filling me with these joyful memories.

As I began to sit down to write this message, I started thinking about the journey these leaves took, thanks to God's hand at work, before my daughter could joyfully play in them. The journey for these leaves began in spring when their buds started appearing on the trees. As these buds began to open and the leaves started appearing it created excitement for us seeing that spring was here, and summer was fast approaching. During summer we may have found comfort under the shade of the leaves from the intensity of the sun. We would also see these leaves withstand strong winds, intense rains, and even long periods without precipitation falling during the summer. Then as summer

turned to fall, we would see these same leaves turn colour and slowly drop onto the ground. From there they would eventually be raked up, placed in bags, and jumped on by my daughter. As I considered this journey God has designed for these leaves, and my daughter's joy playing in them, I was reminded of this passage from ***Ecclesiastes*** how God desires for us to enjoy the whole scope of His work:

**Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end. So, I concluded there is nothing better than to be happy and enjoy ourselves as long as we can.
(Ecclesiastes 3:11-12)**

The writer of Ecclesiastes came to understand how God wants us to enjoy life, and the best way to do so is to have a proper respect for Him and to enjoy the gifts He provides us with along the way. While we may not be able to see the whole scope of God's work when it comes to our lives, we are able to see from spring to fall the whole **scope of His hand at work** when it comes to leaves. We may have noticed as I shared the scope of seasons in a leaf's journey the many joys we experience as a result.

Just as God desires for us to experience joy from the whole scope in the season of a leaf, He wants us to experience this same happiness from each stage in life He has planned out for us. I hope we all have been enjoying life the way God desires through having a proper relationship with Him, and finding joy in the gifts He is always giving to us. If this has not been the case, then I pray this reminder God provided me with on Sunday night how Coral would do her "Superman" leap into a pile of leaf bags **will inspire us to once again find joy in the gifts He provides us with in every season and stage of life.**

Keep safe and God bless,

Pastor Dean