

DON'T STOP THE STORY

When I stopped into Tim Hortons for my morning coffee on Friday, I did not encounter anyone being arrested as I shared last week. While I was waiting for my coffee I looked over at the one group of tables where the regulars tend to gather to discuss stories and events. Sure enough, a story was being shared by one of the men at the table. I could not hear what the story was about, or how long it had been dragging on, but finally the one regular said,

"You have to stop telling the story. I have heard enough. I need a break from it. Why not tell the rest of the story when the other guys are here again on Monday!"

With that, the man telling the story stopped and another word was not spoken amongst them while I was still there.

When I walked into Tim Hortons on Monday morning, I remembered this incident from a few days earlier, so I looked over at the table where these men usually gather to see if they were resuming the story that had been paused on Friday. Unfortunately, I could not tell because not a word was spoken amongst them while I waited for my coffee.

Upon leaving with my coffee in hand I began thinking how there are some stories we wish would just continue and keep going in our lives. Perhaps we have come to enjoy watching a certain television show or reading a book series and do not want these stories that have entertained us to come to an end. Sometimes we experience a break in these stories we love and are forced to wait in anticipation for the television series to return with new episodes or for the author to publish the next book in the series. I talked with a young lady at church on Sunday about how she cannot wait for an author she loves reading to put out their next book. My own daughter has been waiting two years for a television series she loves to come out with the second season. Her wait finally ended on Sunday night when she was able to resume watching the storyline of season two.

While there are some stories we want to continue in our lives, there are others we are happy to see come to an end or get a break from like the man expressed at Tim Hortons last Friday. The stories that fall into this category tend to be the stressful, challenging, or unpleasant ones to hear or be part of. I am sure we all have been through adversities when it comes to our health, or dealing with difficult people, or stressful situations that we are happy when that story came to an end.

As I focused on these things, I found myself reminded how God has written a story for our lives too. We discover in **Psalm 139:16** how God's story for us began even before we were born:

You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life has been recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

The psalmist David found it overwhelming to think how God had laid out the story for his life. The apostle Paul came to understand this truth as well in **Ephesians 2:10**:

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.

Both David and the apostle Paul remind us how God has created us and has planned out a story for our lives. The question we need to consider at this stage of our lives is whether we are continuing to live out God's story for us, or have we followed in the example of the man at Tim Hortons and put a stop or hold on this story? We may think we need a break from God's story, or that we want to try and write our own story for a while. The prodigal son tried this and eventually discovered the best story for him was to return to the one his father was writing.

I hope we have not strayed from the story God is writing for us. In order to ensure we do not stray from God's story it is important for us:

- **to keep learning from God's stories in the Bible.**
- **to keep listening to His guidance each and every day, and**
- **to keep sharing our stories with others of the good things God has done for us, and the ways He faithfully answers our prayers.**
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A regular at Tim Hortons wanted a break from hearing the story that was being told on Friday. May we not follow in this example when it comes to being part of the story God is writing for our lives.

Keep safe and God bless,
Pastor Dean