

WHEN WE ARE IN NEED OF BEING LIFTED UP

This past week while I was waiting in line with another customer at Tim Hortons one of the regular employees saw me, smiled and waved. The other customer standing beside me took notice of this. At first, she said nothing, and then she turned to me and asked if they were waving at her. Before I could respond the employee said, "**No, I was waving at him. He is a ray of sunshine to me and always makes me smile.**"

I have been described in many ways before and not all of them have been positive. This was the first time I can recall somebody ever referring to me as being a "ray of sunshine." As I have shared in some of my previous messages, I just try to be personal and friendly in my interactions with the employees there. Many times, they are the ones who lift me up and make me smile when they wave at me or make a special effort to have my coffee ready even before I order it.

When I got home and shared with my wife what this employee said about me, she smiled, nodded her head and rolled her eyes because she knows me better than anyone else. Naturally I had to share this with my daughter too. Little did I know at the time I shared this with her, that she would use it the next time she wanted something from Tims. On Saturday my daughter was working a 9-hour shift so we told her before she left that we would bring her a coffee at some point. When she was ready for us to bring it, she messaged us and said, "I would like a Cold Brew coffee, but tell dad to use some of his *ray of sunshine* ways to encourage them not to put too much ice in it." Her comment made me laugh and lifted me up on Saturday night.

This interaction from last week got me thinking about how we all need to be lifted up by somebody at times. No matter how strong we may be physically, emotionally, or spiritually, life's circumstances and daily challenges have a way of draining us. When we feel drained it is hard to feel happy, and even smiling can prove to be an effort for us. We need somebody to be a "ray of sunshine" for us in these moments, to uplift us and make us feel better.

The Bible encourages us to look toward God in these moments to be uplifted by Him. This is something the prophet Isaiah encouraged people back in his day to do. In order to encourage his listeners to do this Isaiah first shared how

it was God's desire to help them because He cares deeply for them. Isaiah then reminded them how God's power and strength never diminishes, and that He is never too busy or tired to help and listen. These truths that Isaiah shared about God can be found in chapter 40 of his book. Isaiah then provided his listeners with this visual image in **verse 13** describing how God can uplift them if they turn to Him for this help:

But those who trust in the lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.

The visual picture Isaiah paints here for his readers of God lifting and raising them up on eagle's wings is powerful and reassuring. Regardless of how weak we may feel emotionally, spiritually, or physically, ***Isaiah encourages everybody to turn to God and be uplifted by trusting in His power to raise us above our trials.*** Let's remember and take full advantage of this gift God offers to us when we need some uplifting in our lives.

An employee at Tim Hortons reminded me how we all need somebody to be "a ray of sunshine" in our lives at times in order to lift our spirits and souls. I did not realize God has been using me to be that "ray of sunshine" for this person. If I am being honest, God is using many of the employees there to uplift me too, at times. Since I am being honest, the coffee uplifts me too. God works in mysterious ways in order to uplift us.

Keep safe and God bless,

Pastor Dean