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CHILDREN ARE THE FLOWER AND THE FUTURE

BY REV. DAVID SON



If you asked me when I was 5 or 6 years old, "What important day is in the month of December?" I would not have been able to tell you the expected answer, "Christmas Day." But if you asked me, "What about in May?" then I would definitely have

told you, "Children's Day!"

I have so many good memories of Children's Day. My Dad was a busy man who toiled to provide for his family. But this day, without exception, he spent it entirely with my brother and me. We often went to amusement parks, the zoo, or historic palaces. Our favourite site was Changgyeonggung Palace in Seoul.



This photo was taken on one Children's Day in that palace. Whenever I see this photo, it makes me smile, and brings me back to that old day – a day full of smiles, laughter, freedom, and the feeling of holding daddy's hand. The sign says "Keep Out" but I entered the restricted area and tempted my innocent younger brother to join me. As we ran around victoriously in a delirious sense of freedom, my parents happily took this photograph.

Life was tough then. Like every mom and dad in Korea during that time, my parents were putting in more than their share of work to support the family. Our grandparents had no freedom, hope, future, nor Korean citizenship under the Japanese colonialism.

But children were their future - their only future. Korean history tells us that Children's Day in Korea was conceived by social leaders on the basis of the March First Independence Movement in 1919. One innovative children's story-book writer, Bang Jeong-Hwan, wrote "An Open Letter to Adults" to Korean people in May 1923. He said, "Children are the future of our nation. Let us show respect for our children. Children who grow up with ridicule and contempt from others will become people who disrespect others, while children who grow up with respect from others will become people who respect others in return." Thus it became a national movement but Japanese colonial power oppressed this movement until 1939.

Independence came to the Korean peninsula on August 15, 1945. But less than five years later, the Korean War broke out in 1950. Again the nation had no freedom, hope, nor future. But even in the midst of the war, Korean people observed this special day. A Time Magazine issue in 1951 described the day as this: "Some 30 years ago (1923), in the days of Japanese rule, the elders of Korea saw no hope of freedom for themselves. But their children, they felt, might be more fortunate. They began to observe May 5 as Children's Day. Last week (1951) battered Seoul celebrated Children's Day with a parade by the police, who marched 600 strong behind a brass band and a huge placard: "Children are the nation's flower."

I was the flower and the future for my mom and dad. Children were the flower and the future of the once lost Korean nation. What more can I say? Children are the flower and the future of our St. Timothy community.



INTRODUCING THE SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

BY SIMON PARK



The Board of Managers decided at the beginning of the year to create a special committee to help us with the third part of our church's mission: to stand in solidarity with the weak and vulnerable. While our church has been fairly involved with actively serving those in need, we agreed that it is also very helpful

to take a step back and reflect on why we do what we do.

There is a term that originated from Latin American liberation theology: *praxis*. It means simultaneous action and reflection. You cannot have one without the other. Therefore, in order for action to be meaningful and effective, it must be rooted in contemplative reflection.

That is what we hope to do at St. Timothy – to get a deeper grasp of some of the issues in our community and society, so that we may take spiritually meaningful and rooted actions to stand in solidarity with the weak and vulnerable.

Our first seminar was on issues in the Korean community, led by Younglee Ha, the Executive Director of the KCWA Family and Social Services. We hope to have more seminars in upcoming months addressing issues such as inner city poverty, North Korean human rights, and other issues that are relevant to our congregation. We are thankful to be part of a community that values both intellectual and spiritual reflection, as well as meaningful action. We hope you join us in this journey!





SERMON TITLES & SUMMARY

APRIL 2014

April 6

Scripture: John 11:17-44

Sermon: Living in the In-Between Times

By not choosing to go to Lazarus immediately but rather after his death, Jesus points to the fact that we also live in in-between times. From where we are to where we hope to one day be or the kind of person we hope to be. This in-between time may seem like a wasteful time of waiting and, full of agony, but we must accept that it is a part of life. Through the story of Lazarus, Jesus reminds us that he is with us during these in-between times, at times weeping with us and inviting us to join him in his ministry of raising life. We don't raise people to new life but God calls us to help. And because Jesus is with us, we can continue striving forward without losing hope!

April 13: Palm Sunday

Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11

Sermon: Humility Brings Peace

There are two symbols for Palm Sunday - palm branch (victory & triumph) and donkey (serving, peace & humility). These two didn't go together usually, but Matthew saw in these a message of Palm Sunday. Jesus' victorious entry was for "peace" and this peace was different than worldly peace. This peace makes that which was once divided into one again. Peace from the powerful divides, but peace of Christ unites (Eph. 2:14-16). And on the Palm Sunday 2,000 years ago, by riding on the donkey Jesus showed that this true peace is only possible through humility. Humility makes the divided two into one, as humility brings that peace. Our life and the world are often divided into two, so let us remember this Palm Sunday message that Jesus showed us.

April 20

Scripture: John 20:1-18

Sermon: He Knows My Name

There are different levels of reality. The physical reality is only the first level. A whole lot of things are going on beyond the physical reality. Mary physically saw Jesus and thought he was a gardener but when Jesus said, "Mary!" her eyes opened and truly saw Jesus. The voice of Jesus opened up a whole new reality. When Jesus called her name, her soul was awakened. We don't experience God physically. We experience God deep in our hearts. We experience love not physically but deep in our hearts. When God said in the book of Isaiah, "See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands." (49:16) Isaiah experienced this not physically but deep in his heart. You don't experience the resurrection physically but deep in your heart.

April 27

Scripture: John 20:19-31

Sermon: Transforming Our Fear

Fear is not necessarily a bad thing. We need fear to avoid danger that is ahead of us. Fear is a part of us. Fear is necessary for survival. But sometimes fear takes over our lives. And it prohibits us from being who we can truly be. Fear forces us to be where we are, not allowing us to go beyond. We become truly who we are when there is a movement in us from "who we are" to "who we can be." But fear blocks that movement and makes us get stuck in who we are. Fear gripped the disciples who were behind the locked doors. Fear will always be with us, but depending on who takes over your life, the fear will look very different. Don't fear the fear. Don't make it your boss. Don't let it be in the centre of your heart and control you. Have the Spirit in the centre of your heart.



AS WE CELEBRATED MOTHER'S DAY...

Moms were asked what makes being a mother special. Here are some responses from our St Timothy moms:

"It's like being given a new gift over and over everyday for the rest of your life - and the hugs and kisses are nice too."

"A long, warm hug."

"The unconditional love I have for my children. I don't think I will love anyone this much."

"Gifts given from God."

"Having long talks and laughing together..."

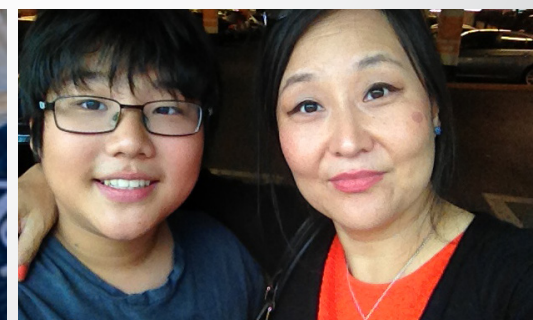
"Hearing my children's laughter."

"To know I am the person who can comfort them wholeheartedly."

"Watching them grow...and being able to communicate and get to know them better".

"Looking at them makes me happy."

"I'm the first person my kids go to for comfort when something bad happens or if they're hurt. I think that's a special privilege we have as moms. A mommy's hug is always comforting and warm!"





UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, May 15th, 2014
Evangel Hall (YA)

Fri. May 16 – Mon. May 19, 2014
Women's Gathering:
Sheraton Centre, Richmond Hill

Saturday, May 17th, 2014
Men's Group Golf

Saturday, May 24th, 2014
Food Bank Interviewers Training:
10am – 12pm

KSM Mission Dinner: 6pm

Saturday, May 31st, 2014
BOM Meeting: 9am

Coffee House: 7pm
St. Timothy Church

Fri. June 20 – Sun. June 22, 2014
ESM Summer Retreat: Fair Havens
Retreat & Conference Center

Thursday, June 5th, 2014
CAMH Workshops for Parents: 7pm

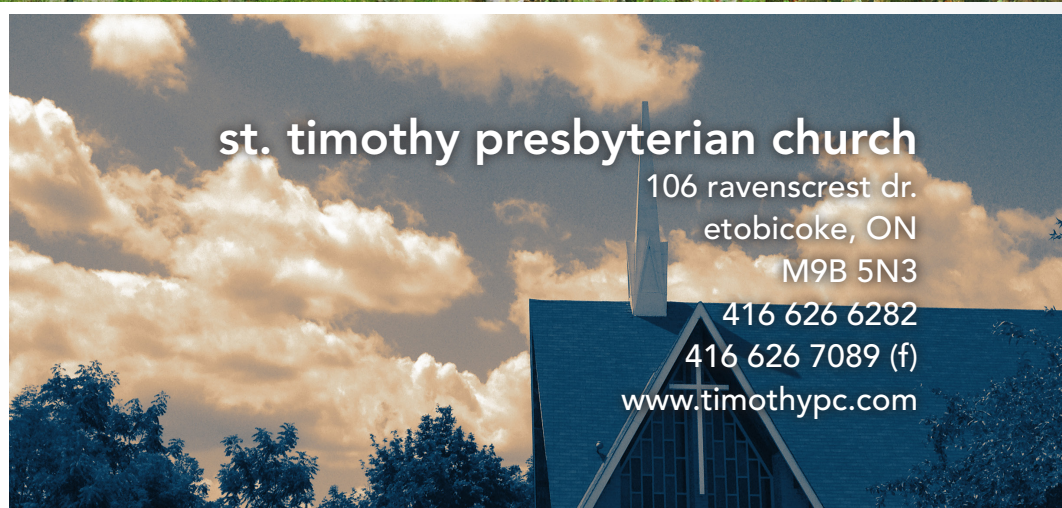
Saturday, June 14th, 2014
University Fair

EDITOR'S NOTE

As spring finally arrives the land around us have many challenges from properly irrigating the melting snow, grass seeds taking root again and trees starting to bud. At the end of this struggle comes a celebration of intense greenery and rebirth of abundant flowers.

As a church we struggle; keeping and striving to meet our church's mission statement, expanding Kids Church, and trying to enrich our spirituality together as a whole community. These all appear to be great obstacles but with God's grace and through initiatives like SJEC that Simon mentions above, the hard work from Rev. Son and all the teachers as well as a new addition featuring our talented resident chefs from Manimogo we see many fruits of our labour. There will be days of celebration just like our Children's Day, Mother's Day and with our upcoming annual retreat in June. Join us to further celebrate our efforts in deepening our relationship with God and one another.

And just like that one day in spring when everything appears to be the brightest, the greenest, that of the most perfect day, all the work will be well worth it.



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