

Regrets

My daughter just turned 18 and upon returning home from our vacation to California she immediately began packing her belongings and promptly announced that she was moving out. The shock at the suddenness of it hit me like a ton of bricks, and from the time she did move out last week on the same day that she announced it, my mind has been playing like a broken record all the things I may have done wrong throughout her life to have caused her to so abruptly leave like that.

And there is plenty to regret. I think of all the times when she was little that she came to me for attention and I was too busy trying to get chores done. Or when she just needed me to take a moment, look in her eyes, hold her face and tell her I love her more than the world, but instead I was raising my voice at an infraction she had done. I kept thinking, 'later I will take the time for her'. But the moments passed and later never came. Or all the hugs she needed that I never gave her and all the harsh words in frustration at life I spoke to her. I weep when I think of all the ways I did not take the time to express the very real love that bubbled in my heart for her. Instead my energy was focused on fixing our circumstances, so I missed out on the more important thing of nurturing her love. And now it's too late. I can never go back in time to speak to her little heart about how absolutely precious she is. Instead my actions declared the opposite in that they showed those things I was giving my time to were more important than her, so I know I broke her heart in a lot of ways.

And as I have been wallowing in the pain of the hurt of what was lost and can never be regained, I have been coming helpless to the Cross and waiting, broken, at God's feet. And in these moments God has been speaking to me. He has been showing me all the times that I did hold her in my arms like a baby, even when she was older, all the times I sang her to sleep, all the stories I read to her, all the words of encouragement I spoke into her life, all the big birthday parties I threw for her, all the trips and adventures we had together, all the sleep-overs we had in our home with her friends, all the dinners I cooked with love for her and her sister, all the countless times I told her I love her so very much, all the special little surprises I did for her, and especially all the times I let her know just how very special she is to me.

God has been comforting my heart with those reminders of the good I had done for her and is loosening the stronghold of regret. And I am assured, I AM a good Mom. At least I did my best.

His peace will be the guard over my heart. None of us get it all right, but if our intention is to honor God in it all, I believe He works it all out for good.

We have an enemy who is the accuser of our souls, and he wants very much for us to stay in a place of brokenness and anguish. None of us can change the past, so we should not live in it. And for those things we did wrong, we take them to the Healer of all who come to Him, and ask for mercy, and then leave them there with Him.

Let us rise up as children of a great King! Tear off your garments of despair and REJOICE in the love He has given you and be GLAD in all the LOVE you did share with others.

For now, so that we do not add to any moments of regret, let us put on kindness and love in every

moment. In order to do so we have to push aside any fear or frustration of our current situation, reject any regret that has been submitted to God in Christ Jesus and trust Almighty God to take care of those things.

Let genuine uncompromising love be our pursuit. When it is, I can defeat the regret that tries to rise up in me concerning my amazing daughter, and instead take joy in all the beautiful moments I got to share with her as she was growing up.

Philippians 3:13 “Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Jeanette

Presbyterian Outreach, Director

P.S. A quote that was told to me this morning, "If you are living in with regret, you are living in the past. If you are living with anxiety, you are living in the future. If you are living with peace, you are living in the present".