

Growing in Serving Canada

Sermon November 11, 2018

Dear beloved, as you know, 18 years ago I emigrated with my wife and our two daughters from Hungary. God brought me to Canada to serve as a Presbyterian Minister to His people. We arrived with our two small children (they were 6 and 8), with our suitcases and less \$800 CAN, which I borrowed to buy the one-way tickets.

We, as an immigrant family, went through many difficulties as we placed our roots in this Canadian soil. We did not speak English. Our oldest daughter was proud of herself on the airplane, telling us that she can speak English. She knew two words: Zoo and Elephant.

I started my English training program in London, driving 200 km every day from Delhi. On the very first day, my English teacher asked me if I spoke any English. I said to her proudly what I knew: I LOVE YOU. She said, “Frank, you cannot say that.”

Two weeks later, my teacher said a sentence to me: “Your accent gets me excited.” I did not understand what she said to me, so I wrote down this sentence in my notes. I went home and asked one of our parishioners, who was helping our children with English, to translate this sentence to me. She read the sentence with widely open eyes: your accent gets me excited. Then she said: “Who said that to you?” I said: “My English teacher.”

We, as first generation immigrants, took a very long journey to be where we are today. I feel very blessed as I am sharing this story with you, that I am a proud Canadian. I am very proud to be a Canadian citizen for 15 years. I am very proud of my Canadian Passport.

I get very emotional when we are singing our Canadian Anthem. When I was in Hungary this year, and I heard there the Canadian Anthem, I got so emotional that I broke out in happy tears, as I was singing: “God, keep our land, glorious and free.”

I am proud of my Hungarian roots, of my heritage in which I was raised. I am thankful for my parents and grandparents for giving me character. I love Hungary, but I live in Canada, and I am Canadian: a proud and faithful Canadian with my whole mind, soul and spirit, with my whole being. Not only my house is here, but my heart also.

On Remembrance Day, I am asking you to be proud of Canada and join me in being a proud Canadian. If we would like to keep Canada glorious and free, we have to know our Canadian heritage, we have to keep our heritage, and we have to protect it today and always. We proudly say that Canada is a multicultural country. We live together as one, although almost everybody comes from different roots. We do not differentiate each other based on culture, the colour of our skin, neither based on gender or religion or sexual orientation.

As we are, one by one, we are precious children of God and precious Canadians. We, who worship here in this church, are all ONE, united as God's children, maintaining our Christian faith and our Christian heritage. We got this land from God, who created heaven and earth. We got our faith from our Lord Jesus Christ. We are inspired by the Holy Spirit, which teaches us to love each other and to love our country Canada.

On Remembrance Day, let us remember those who gave their lives for Canada's freedom, who were facing so many dangers to keep our country glorious and free. However, on Remembrance Day I want to remind you to keep this country in your heart and your hand and pray for Canada.

On Remembrance Day, I remember that, 20 years ago, when a new immigrant got his or her Canadian Citizenship, they received their Canadian Citizenship Certificate and a Holy Bible, with the Canadian Maple Leaf on the main cover. They were encouraged to read the Bible as God's words, which can keep Canada glorious and free.

This is the Bible of a person from this congregation who got this in 1997 as she got her Citizenship. Only six years later, in 2003, I did not get a Bible as a new citizen. It seems things have been changed quickly.

Twenty years ago, our students prayed the Lord's Prayer in school, which was hanging on the wall. The Lord's Prayer was teaching them to forgive each other as God forgives us ...

Twenty years ago, all the students started their day at school with singing our Canadian Anthem. Today, some students leave the classroom when their schoolmates sing the Canadian Anthem because for some reason they are not allowed to sing it, although they live in Canada.

I do respect and admire our Queen, Elizabeth, and we took our oath on her name. Today people are debating that some people, who dislike the Queen, should get the right NOT to place their Canadian oath on our Queen.

Twenty years ago on Sunday, the stores were closed because we sanctified the seventh day ordered by God.

Today, thousands of Christians are killed in other countries, but we are not strong enough to raise our voices from Canada, because we do not want to hurt our neighbours.

Based on this, I am expecting from our Canadian Government to respect my faith, my Christian tradition and to restore the damages they already caused to Canadian Christians. We are at the point when we Christians have to fight for our rights, which we had 20-30 years ago, but were taken away from us gently, in the name of tolerance.

Please love your neighbours, love each other as Christ loves us. Keep Christ in your heart, and share Christ's love with each other, so the light and love of Christ should shine in darkness.

People should realize that Canada is glorious and free because of the original traditions of our country, that Christian values are still values here and now, today for us and tomorrow for our next generation. Let us help new immigrants who are coming to join our freedom and our industry to embrace our language and our culture as well. We have to help the newcomer to bring here not only their dreams but their hearts as well. With our love, we have to help immigrants to get a new Canadian identity, honouring their past roots and growing their new roots as Canadians. We have to help each other to grow in Christian love and Christian rules, not forgetting that rules are rules, which have to be respected by all Canadians. We Christians have a weakness. Somebody said: "Many people profess Christianity. Very few live it".

To be a Christian means to be Christlike. A Christlike character is the only kind of character that could enjoy heaven and the only kind of character that could be trusted in heaven. A Christian has to fight for Christian rights and has to show Christian love. Love and respect have to grow together in our country.

On Remembrance Day, I am inviting all of you to be a good soldier of Christ and a great guard of Canadian values. Amen