
The Best Day of My Life

An article for the *Cathedral Times* by the Very Rev. Sam Candler

I do not mind the routine answers that people usually give when we ask them, “Hey, what’s up?” or “How are you doing today?” Most of us answer rather easily, something like, “Pretty good,” or “Alright, how about you?” Those are our manners.

Most of us realize that there is probably a lot more going on, with both of us, than we are willing to discuss right then. When we ask those pleasant greeting questions, I think it is okay that we don’t prepare ourselves for a thirty minute full disclosure of someone’s problems or achievements! Our polite manners accepts the reality that neither of us wants, or needs, to go there right then.

Occasionally, I will hear from some earnest soul, “Don’t just tell me things are pretty good; how are you REALLY doing?” At that point, of course, I have to make a decision about time and resources. Who is this person asking, or sometimes demanding, that I tell them more about myself? If it is simply some random person who thinks he/she is doing good by pressing for more disclosure, some person that I am not really interested in revealing to, then I will probably find a way to share a touch more, but not entirely more.

Of course, if the person who asks, “How are you REALLY doing?” is my mother, then I will answer more fully (or not!). If the person asking for more, is my trusted spouse or friend, and if my history with them informs me that they really do care about me, then I realize they are sincerely inviting me to share more, so that they can share my burdens. However, such friendships can be rare. In these encounters, both of us are sensitive as to whether the occasion is opportune for intimate sharing.

Years ago, I had a good friend who had developed another habit, another answer, to that routine daily question. When someone asked him pleasantly in the morning, “How are you doing today?” he would look at them and say, “Today is the best day of my life!”

“Today is the best day of my life!” What a joy it was to hear those words from him. People smiled when they heard that reply. We realized, and he realized, that things might not have gone so well for him so far. But his were words of happiness and hope. He had practiced his immediate reply to that simple question. If we are going to have a practiced reply to that ordinary question, why not make it a hopeful one? Yes, indeed, this could be the best day of my life!

Practice. The way we act on routine occasions, over and over again, can shape our souls. Maybe when we answer, “Pretty good,” to daily status inquiries, we are practicing taking the optimistic path. Maybe if I say, “pretty good,” maybe my day will be pretty good! Okay. But how about, then, if we practice saying, “Today is the best day of my life!” I think I might need to practice saying that more, practice not just optimism, but practice the best! And, of course, “best” can mean lots of things. In some way or another, this could be the best day of my life!

“Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” –Philippians 4:8.



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