



“Not ashamed”

I read a story the other day about a young girl named Mary Anna Martin; she grew up during the depression. Her family despite its poverty was rich in love and happiness. Her dad and mom were caring and tender parents, and laughter filled their home. Her father always whistled, and her mother sang while doing her housework. Her father was a baker, but he lost his bakery shop in the first years of the depression. He had to take any job he could to pay the family’s rent and keep food on their table. He worked at the local YMCA for awhile, then with the WPA. When that job ran out, he found a job as a janitor. He was an older man, small and gray, and it was hard work. But he did his best and whistled as he worked.

Mary Anna said, “My life was happy and carefree until the year I left elementary school and started junior high. I was thirteen, and soon became part of a new group of friends. I knew that daddy was a janitor, but I didn’t know where, until that awful day during lunch break. Mary Anna was seated at a table with her new friends when she heard a teacher call her father’s name in a loud voice. Someone had dropped their tray, and food and milk covered the table and floor. She saw him walk toward the table, carrying a mop and old rags. One of the girls said to Mary Anna, “that janitor has the same last name as yours. Do you know him?”

Mary Anna slowly raised her head and looked at the little, gray man cleaning up and spilled food. She hesitated, and then said, “I’ve never seen him before in my life.” A wave of intense embarrassment swept over her, and she instantly felt ashamed of denying her dearest friend on earth. She hated herself for those words and tried to make up for what she had done by showing her father that she loved him more than ever. He loved for someone to brush his hair as he sat in his easy chair. She would do it. She sang to him and read to him and spent time with him. But regardless of how hard she tried, nothing made her feel better.

The years passed, and her father developed Alzheimer’s disease. One day when he was ill and she was sitting with him, she started crying. Her mother asked her what was wrong, and Mary Anna poured out her heart and told her what had been bothering her for more than fifteen years. She said, “I have been asking God to forgive me, but I can’t get over what I had done.”

Her mother drew her close and held her tightly as she wept. “Honey, she said, your daddy knew you loved him. And he would have loved you even if he had known about your being ashamed of him when you were so young.”

I’m reminded of how Peter was given the same opportunity as this young girl, and three times he denied knowing him as well. And Jesus loved him just the same. When we are given the opportunity to stand up and proclaim Jesus as our heavenly father, how do we respond? Are we like Peter and this young girl and have regrets, or do stand with boldness and say **“I KNOW HIM”!** **Remember what Jesus tells us in Matthew 10:32 “whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my father which is in heaven”**

Bro. Jeremy