

8. 6-19-22 Father's Day

Sermon- Honor Thy Father

Scripture- Luke 15:11-15:31, CTW- Ps 42

Hymns- 639, 776, 758

Theme- We honor fathers and father figures today and by faith trust that we will be all that we can be with the strength of Christ. We not only look at the Prodigal son's return but also the faith of the waiting father.

I. Introduction- The Current State of Affairs

Have you ever had broken or shattered dreams?

Have you ever wanted the best for someone and they seem to be on a destructive path and not even desire your help?

Have you ever been so entangled in a situation that you see no way out of that situation?

A. That is how this father from our text must of felt, and I believe that our Heavenly Father must feel as He looks at us at times.

This morning we want to honor our Fathers. Men that want to be men that honor God with what they do and who they are.

I know that there is not one Father here that would not lay down his life for his children. That is the way it is supposed to be.

I also know that there is not one Father here that has not blown it, especially if your children are older. **(realize we have been far from perfect!)**

I know there are times that we wish we could change how we handled a situation.

Most of the time for Father's Day we look at leadership qualities, look at being a role model, but I want to look at the Father of this Prodigal son and how he handled himself when things did not go according to his plan and at the faith he had for his son to return.

A Parable is a simple story told by Jesus in the gospels to illustrate a spiritual truth.

A Prodigal is someone that is wasteful, extravagant.

This is an example of a person that was wasteful, made bad life choices, and had to come to his senses. Can anyone relate to that so far? SURE!

B. In an attempt at finding themselves, our culture seems to have taken a ride down a very slippery slope. Do you agree?

We have gone farther away from God, and a lot of people just do not care about that kind of thing anymore.

We have alienated ourselves from others by not letting anyone get too close.

We have made ourselves so busy that we have no time to just breathe and refresh.

You don't believe we have gotten away from caring for others? We used to take pictures of others, now everyone takes selfies!

It is all about us! (demonstrate taking a selfie)

In this parable, the young boy thinking that his life at home was so bad that he must leave it all, is not anything new under the sun, it is still happening today.

This Father had two sons, one was older and one younger.

The younger son decided that he had had enough and wanted to go find himself. He was in a total rebellion mode!

He wanted what he felt his father owed him and he was going to take it and do what he wanted.

The older son by choice had stayed and was working the family farm and only became enraged after his father had given such a warm reception of his brothers return.

One stayed and one strayed.

II. Today's society looks at nothing as sin. It is a right for you to do as you please, whether it goes against God or family values, or moral values.

A. The church universal has to be careful that we don't fall into the same trap. We now grade sins from "everyone does it" to "not so bad", to "yes I did it once but never want to do it again!"

We look at certain sins as acceptable, tolerable, and then some that we just cannot get past.

I want you to know with the shooting that happened in Texas recently that this was not the wrath of God coming down on sinners.

God did not cause that shooter to go into a place and gun down innocent lives. It was an evil demented act of hatred.

The church universal has to embrace the fact that lives were lost and that God grieves at the loss of life. Those people's lives mattered to God.

You cannot evangelize and antagonize at the same time.

We better sit ourselves down and realize that our sin is no better or worse than someone else's. WE ALL NEED JESUS! WE ALL ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD AND ONE ANOTHER!

As much as most see this parable about the change in the boy's life and his return to his father, there is another side of this story

of a father that never gave up hope that his son would return and had already decided what and how he would act when that day came.

B. Let's go back to today's parable and gather the principles of how we are supposed to behave as the children of God.

1. The boy decides that he will leave and demands his portion of the family estate. (Younger son gets 1/3, older son 2/3) what is bad is by asking for it, he is saying that he wishes his father was dead.

2. He wasted his money on a wild lifestyle to the point there is nothing left and there is famine in the land and this man has gone from plenty to need.

3. He has gone from many friends because of having money to no friends because he has gone from broke to totally broke.

4. It is at his point of need that he remembers that what he had at home was not so bad and that even the servants of his father lived better than what he was at that time.

It is at our lowest point that God does his best work.

Whether we are the son or daughter that needs to return or we are the parents of children that have gone astray, **God does his best when we are at the lowest.**

He does more at those times because we understand we need God and open ourselves up to believing that God can do the impossible and that while we see nothing we know God can and will be working.

This boy was a Jew feeding pigs! You cannot get much lower than that! And to desire to eat what the pigs were eating was another slap in the face.

C. A couple of things happen at that point in our lives.

1. We come to our senses! (Verse 17) in the midst of our rebellion, we lose track of the truth. The characters in this story came to their senses.

This unnamed son had to come to the point of his life where he was not satisfied at all where he was, and he had made a mistake!

2. I have a mantra that I have accepted for my life and have tried to pass on to everyone who will listen: "Everyone makes mistakes and the difference between a godly man and another less godly man is what you do once you realize that you have made the mistake. That is at the heart of this story for us!

Acts chapter 2:12 says that on the day of Pentecost, the people were "Amazed and perplexed, and asked one another what does this mean?"

The believers were amazed at what God was doing but also not sure how or what God was going to do but knew that He would do something.

This kid was broken and would soon just collapse in total failure!

He had lost everything. Home, relationship, his money all gone.

His family and his father were now looking better than they ever did, especially as he ate with the pigs.

At wits end, with lack of resources and the need for food, he first tries to fix this himself.

He gets a job that is subpar of what he had at home and the distant owner could not have cared less for his immediate needs only that he feed his pigs.

He had this "ah ha" moment that brought him back to his senses and he reacted, he changed his course and returned home.

III. So What Does This Mean For Us?

A. I don't know where you are at this morning, but I know that at some point you need to have a Ah-ha moment, that moment that you know what needs to be done and you are willing to do it.

This son knew that it would be better to go back to the father and take second best because the path he had followed was not working.

To this boy's surprise the return and embrace from the Father was incredible. He did not even have time to recite his speech about just letting him live like the servants live.

What an example of God's love! Arms open and embracing us to be a part of the family again.

That is why we cannot grade sin. Sin is sin. God wishes for all his children to come home. He desires to restore what rebellion has stolen.

The Bible tells us to be careful of what you say in God's name! Be careful when you speak for God because He is a loving God and desires to see us return to Him.

He doesn't condone sin, and we have to stand on God's word but He opens doors and He keeps the porch light on so we have an opportunity to come back home and be embraced by a loving God.

B. When we are responsible for the lives of others we must remember that Our Heavenly Father is not on the throne with a hammer ready to beat His children over the head. He is lovingly drawing us to Himself and we need to be willing to respond.

That wayward child has to have an open door to be able to be welcomed back into the family, the same way that our heavenly Father is waiting his children to come back to Him.

There is a consequence for disobedience, but that is not God's desire, He will give every opportunity for us to "come to our senses."

I do not know where you are at this morning, but I know that our heavenly Father who has not made the mistakes we have is wanting us to come to Him this morning, whether we have made mistakes as a parent, or as a wayward child that just needs to come back to Him, He is waiting with open arms for you.

This parable celebrates a father hopefully and patiently watching for his child's return, and who embraced him when he returned.

It reflects the boundless mercy and love of God and His refusal to limit His love on time or circumstance.

As long as we have breath, He offers life! He is waiting for you to come back!

What would this society look like if all the wayward children would return? What celebrations would happen this weekend?

This world needs Jesus! This world needs to turn around and return back to **the Father** who desires His best for their lives. It begins with you- He already has made his desire known, what are we going to do with it?

Amen? Let Us Pray...