

My Father's House

King Jesus, Pt. 8

Luke 15:11-32

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I. INTRODUCTION

a. Every single person has a moment in their life, unless they're born royalty or super rich, where life gets real.

- i. Here's what I mean – we all have a moment where the reality of living life on our own without the protection and the safety net of a parent or a guardian hits us.
 - Maybe that is when you went off to college or graduated from college...and all of the sudden you have to manage your own finances, you have to work, you have to make ends meet, you have to control your own schedule and be responsible.
 - For some of you, you may have been forced to face that reality much sooner in life than you would have likes.
 - For some of you, maybe you lingered in your parents' house for a little too long avoiding that reality.
- ii. Either way, we all have to step out into life and face the world on our own at some point.

b. About a year ago, my son had a small taste of this reality.

- [I'm reluctant to share this story because some of you might question my parenting style...]
- i. But last summer before we bought our house here in Herndon, my family was renting a town house that was here in downtown Herndon.



- And one night my son was throwing a temper tantrum about something.
 1. And as I was trying to talk to my son about whatever it was he was upset about...he screamed in a rage:
 2. "I don't want to live here anymore. I'm not sleeping here tonight!"
 3. Keep in my mind, my son was 4 at the time.
 4. I said: "Oh Really? Where are you going to sleep tonight?"
 5. He said: "I'm going to sleep outside!"
 - So, I said: "Alright buddy. Put your shoes on"
 1. He looked at me with this confused look and asked me why.
 2. I said: "Well, your sleeping outside, right?"
 3. He said: "Yeah"
 4. I said: "Well, put your shoes on. Let's go outside."
- ii. **So, Leland goes to put his shoes on. We walk outside. It's dark, about 8:30pm. And I walked him downtown to a park bench.**
- And I said: "Okay, here we are. Lay down."
 1. And he looked at me with this worried face.
 2. And it was this perfect scenario because it was a really nice night...but in the distance were these thunderstorm clouds and you couldn't hear the thunder but you could see lightning flashing in those clouds in the distance.
 - And my son says: "But it's going to storm!"



1. And I said: “But don’t you want to sleep outside on this bench instead of sleeping in our home?”
 - So, at this point, things just got real and Leland looked at me and said: “No, I want to go back home.”
- iii. **And I scooped him up in my arms, sat on the bench with him on my lap, and said to him:**
- “Leland, you will always have a warm bed in your Daddy’s house...no matter how upset you get.”
 1. And Daddy would never put you in danger.
 2. It wasn’t a: “I told you so, moment.”
 3. It was a teaching moment.
 - I explained to him that there are people who don’t have homes who do sleep on those park benches.
 1. I wanted him to understand the blessings he has in a home, and food on the table, and clothes to wear, and a mommy and daddy who will always protect him.
 2. Because there are so many who don’t have those blessings.
 - And I wanted my son to understand the enormity of a blessing it is for Him to live in His daddy’s house.

II. SERIES PLUG

- a. This morning, we are going to start the second chapter of the KING JESUS sermon series. We are calling this chapter THE KING REDEEMS.**



i. **And I share this story with you because it is a metaphor for the reality that in our sin, we have rejected the blessing that it is to live under the authority and protection of our heavenly Father...our King.**

- ...thinking that we know more about His creation than He does...
- ...thinking that we can take better care of ourselves than He can...
- ...thinking that we are better off on our own than submitting our lives to His Word and His rule.

ii. **But the truth is, it is better to live under the authority of our heavenly Father who is good than to claim our own authority.**

- There is abundant blessing and joy in our Father's house.
- And there comes a point in the life of every follower of Jesus...
 1. ...where they must come to themselves,
 2. ...realize that they are like my 4-year-old son who thinks He's better on his own,
 3. ...and come back to the Father's house willing to surrender their life to the Word and the rule of the Father,
 4. ...because they know and believe down to their bones that it is so much better that way.



b. As many of you know, Jesus tells a story just like this...it is the parable of the Prodigal Son found in Luke 15.

- i. And I would like to study it with you this morning as we think about the blessing it is to live under our Father's roof, with Him as King, and we joyfully following.
- And as we read this parable, we'll also have an opportunity to do a quick recap of some of the theology that we built through the first chapter of this sermon series.
 1. Remember, every week, we are summarizing what we're learning through a simple theological statement.
 2. This is a way for us to remember what we are learning about God and ourselves.
 - So, as we work through this parable in Luke 15, we'll be able to also be reminded of some of the theology that we have already built.
 1. And at the end of our study together, we'll add the first theological statement of this second chapter.
 2. You'll notice in your bulletin, we wrote out for you on the back of your notes page all the theological statements from the first chapter of the series and left you a space to write in today's statement.
- ii. Now a Parable is a fictional story that Jesus would tell in order to teach his listeners something about the Kingdom of God



III. LUKE 15

a. Read Luke 15:11-16

- i. Now remember what I said...these parables are designed to teach us something about the Kingdom of God.
 - The Kingdom of God is a place where God is King and all of his people joyfully follow Him.
 - So, in our parable here, the Father obviously represents God, our heavenly Father, and his house, his estate, represents the Father's Kingdom.
- ii. Now, our first theological statement from this sermon series was:
 - In love, God created me not to be the center of my story.
 1. We studied how God made us image bearers of Himself and created us to live for His glory in His Kingdom.
 2. The two sons living in the Father's house represent this truth.
- iii. But our second statement was:
 - In sin, I have abused God, creation, and others in order to be the center of my story.
 - And when we look at this parable, we get an illustration of this in the younger son.
 1. The younger son essentially goes to his Father and tells him that he wants his Father's riches and blessing but he doesn't want the Father anymore.
 2. He wants to be on his own, under his own authority.
 3. And the son takes the riches of his father and he abuses them all for himself.



- This is an illustration of the fall of mankind into sin.
 1. We want the benefits of God's Kingdom and His creation, we just don't want God.
- iv. **But as we see in the parable, we think we are doing something that is going to contribute to our joy, but we're doing the exact opposite. Which is why our third statement was:**
 - **There is no joy when I am the center of my story.**
 - All of the fun and wild living was only temporary and it certainly did not produce any lasting joy in the life of the younger son.
 1. He finds himself poor, in the middle of a famine, hungry and nowhere to go but to take a job a feeding pigs.
 - At this point, just compare the life that the son once lived in His Father's house and his life now.
 1. The son thought he knew what he was doing.
 2. He thought he could handle life on his own without the authority and protection of His Father.
 - But there is no joy when we live this way.
 1. God designed us, created us, to need Him.
 2. The fact that we need God, we need his direction, we need a relationship with Him, is not a result of our sin, it's a result of our humanity.
 3. We were designed to live with God at the center, to live in His house, under His authority, and under His protection.
 4. That's what it means to be human.



- v. This is an inescapable fact. Which is why our fourth statement was:
- God will be the center of my story whether I like it or not.
 1. We cannot change who we are and the purpose that God created us for.
 - And as we continue to read the parable, we see that the son ends up having the only response that makes sense.

b. Read Luke 15:17-19

- i. The son finally came to himself and had the realization: Life is not good outside my Father's House! I am stuck. I blew it. I cannot do this on my own. I need help.
- Our fifth statement was: I am lost, I need help.
 1. This is the only response that makes sense for the younger son.
 2. This is the only response that makes sense for fallen humanity before a holy God.
 - To humble ourselves, go back to the Father and confess that what we've done did not work and we were wrong.
 1. And this is what the son is willing to do.
- ii. But the son doesn't just decide to humble himself and ask His Father for help, he also realizes that life in His Father's house is better.
- And our sixth statement that we talked about last week was: My heart is sick, I need a new heart.
 1. It's like that moment my son had on the park bench.



2. The son realizes that His heart's desire is to be independent from His Father was not only wrong, but foolish, and leads to death.
3. And his Father's way and His Father's authority and His Father's house is so much better than his way.

c. And don't we all have moments like the son? Where we ignore God's way and give our way a try for a little bit?

- i. If you were at our Summer Bible Study last Wednesday, we are studying through the book of James, and on Wednesday we looked at James 1:15, which Steve also just read for us earlier in the service.
 - James 1:15 - *"...desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death."*
 1. And if you look at this progression, one of the things that we see is that it is not sin to have a desire to sin...but something happens to fertilize that desire that turns into sin.
 2. And we said what fertilizes a desire to give birth to sin is the belief that my way is better than God's way.
 3. It's that belief that gives you the permission to act on the desire.
- ii. So, for the younger son, he had this desire for the freedom to go spend money wildly on all these pleasures...
 - But that desire turned into sin when his belief that his way was better than the Father's way gave him the permission to act on that desire.



iii. **Let me give you some other examples...**

- Is it sin to have the desire to hoard all my money to myself and use it for my pleasures alone?
 1. Well the desire itself isn't sin. We can all relate with that.
 2. But does your belief that your way is better than God's way. That viewing money as your own and not viewing your money as God's. Seeing your money as your pathway to happiness and not a pathway to generosity. Does that belief give you permission to turn your desire into action?
- Is it sin to have a sexual desire that goes against God's good and right design for healthy sex between a husband and a wife?
 1. Well the desire itself is not sin.
 2. But does your belief that your way is better than God's way. That God's way is archaic, too restrictive, too limiting...and that it is better to do it your way...does that belief give you permission to turn that desire into action?

iv. **See, these are just examples how we have these moments like the younger son where we veer away from God's authority and we're convinced that we know better than He does.**

- And if you look at James 1:15 again, it tells us that the desire turns into sin and that the sin brings forth death.
 1. That in our sin, as we veer away from God's way, we will have a similar experience to the son.



2. Our sin has not led us to joy and peace, it actually has led us to brokenness.
3. And we come to ourselves and realize that life is better in our Father's House living according to His way and not my way.
4. My Father knows better than I do.

d. And so, this is the place that we find the younger son in the parable. He's ready to go back to his Father and confess his sin...and he has no idea if his Father will receive Him back.

- i. You can see in the text that the Son already assumes that his actions will cause the Father to disown him and renounce him as a son.
 - He thought the only chance he had to get back into the Father's house was not as a son but as a servant.
- ii. And many times, when we realize that we have really messed up and we've really done some bad things, we can have the same assumption about God.
 - We want to return to God. We want to find a way to repair that relationship.
 1. But we assume that we've messed up so bad that the only kind of relationship that is possible between us and God is one of master/servant...creditor/debtor.
 2. We owe God for our sin and we need to work to pay off that debt. We need to find a way to atone for the sin that we've committed against God.



- Have you ever felt a desire to pray to God but stopped yourself because of the guilt that you feel from something that you did?
 1. You had this picture of God in your head saying: Oh, look who's back? Look who decided to pray to me. What are you going to ask for forgiveness again? Let's see how long this lasts!

e. Well, it was time for the son to go to his Father and see what would happen...Read Luke 15:20-24.****

- i. In the same way that I scooped up my son on the park bench, embraced him and told him that I would always protect him...in the same way that the Father ran to his son and then celebrated that his son has returned...this is how God, our Father in Heaven, reacts when we come to him after a period of wandering and rejecting his way.
 - As we studied through all of the last chapter of this sermon series, God created us to be in His House and living according to His ways.
 1. And we have rejected Him.
- ii. But here is what I want us all to understand this morning (and this is our theological statement for this week that you can write in your notes):
 - **God is eager to restore me to His Kingdom.**
 1. Not as a servant.
 2. Not as someone who needs to work off their debt.
 3. But as a son. As a daughter.



- And our heavenly Father is eager to restore us into His Kingdom because He has sent His Son, Jesus, to come after us, to take upon himself all of the debt that we owe God for our sin, and to pay it off completely through his death on the cross and his resurrection.
 1. And because Jesus has done this for us, when we return to our Father, He is not angry, He doesn't have a grudge against us, He is not annoyed...He is eager to bring us back into His house and to celebrate.
 2. And the remainder of chapter two is going to be all about how Jesus is able to accomplish our redemption and what that means for how we live the rest of our lives.

f. But we're not done with our Parable yet. In fact, we may not have even gotten to the main point.

- i. I didn't tell you this before, but if you go all the way to verse one in Luke 15, you'll read that the group of people that Jesus is telling this parable to is the religious elite...the Scribes and the Pharisees.
 - And what prompted Jesus to tell this parable was the fact that the Scribes and the Pharisees were grumbling that the Tax Collectors and the Sinners were drawing near to Jesus.
 1. They were filled with this self-righteousness and pride over how well they followed the law.



2. And they saw themselves as the only ones who were worthy of God and all these sinners who were beginning to follow Jesus were not worthy.

- And so, Jesus tells this parable that illustrates that God is eager to restore sinners into His Kingdom if they'll return to Him.
 1. But Jesus isn't done with the story...

g. Read Luke 15:25-32

i. The imagery is striking here.

- The story ends with the younger son, who had sinned in such demonstrable ways and repented, he is inside the house celebrating.
 1. But the older son, who never strayed away from the house is on the outside.
 2. Remember what the house represents.
 3. One son is in the Kingdom and one son is not...in fact it says the older son refused to go in.

ii. And remember who Jesus is telling this parable too, the religious elite.

- The people who thought that their works and their ability to follow the law qualified them for the Kingdom of God.
 1. Actually, it wasn't that they thought their works qualified them, they actually believed that they were entitled to it.
 2. Just like the older son, who felt he was entitled to the Kingdom and yet he finds himself at the end of the story outside of it.
- See, although the older son didn't reject His Father and His Father's ways in the same demonstrable way that the younger son did, he still had the same heart....



1. A heart that abused His Father to make himself the center of his story.
2. A heart that needed to have the same moment as the younger son...where he comes to himself and realizes that his ways are not the same as his Father's ways.

h. So, here is what I want us to leave here today thinking about.

- i. We're all familiar with the younger son's testimony.
 - Maybe that's your testimony.
 - You rebelled against God in spectacular ways but had a moment where you came to God, found forgiveness in Christ, and your life completely turned around.
- ii. But many of us probably fit the profile of the older son.
 - We see ourselves as Christians. We don't rebel in these huge demonstrable ways.
 1. But there are these subtle areas in our life where we believe that my way is better than God's way.
 2. And because I don't live my life like the younger brother, I'm entitled to God's blessing and my conscience is okay with these little pet sins.
- iii. It could be something as simple as having a relationship with the local church as a consumer and not a family member.
 - God has called you to be involved in a local body of believers and to follow Him together and reach your neighbors together.



- He has commanded us not to neglect gathering together so we can encourage one another.
 - And some of us prefer to have a relationship with the church that is subservient to the rest of our life...a relationship with the church where I am served but am not obligated to serve.
 - I think that's sin. I don't think that's God's way when it comes to how we should be involved in the church.
 - But we don't feel the conviction because we don't sin like the younger brother sins.
- iv. It could be something as simple as allowing your marriage to slip into mediocrity or being okay with the road rage in the car, or the occasional gossip with your friends.
- It's okay because we're not like the younger brother.
 - But it is the same heart.
 1. A heart that doesn't allow God to be the center of everything in our life.
 2. And we need forgiveness just as much as the younger brother.

IV. CONCLUSION

- a. And regardless, this morning, if you identify more with the younger brother or the older brother...**
- i. I want you to know that your Father in heaven is eager to restore you to the Kingdom.
- The Father ran out to the younger son to restore Him.



- The Father came outside to the older son to entreat him to come in.
- ii. And what we're going to be talking about through this second chapter of this sermon series is what it means to be restored to the Kingdom of God.
 - What it means for God to become the King of every single part of our life.
- b. And so, this week, my encouragement to you is to meditate on this picture of the Father.**
 - i. One who is eager to restore you. Eager to grow you. Eager to show you grace and mercy.
 - A God whom you don't have to fear returning to and seeking His forgiveness and grace.
 - ii. A God who is good and is after our joy.

V. PRAY

