

Sermon Notes, March 14, 2010

A Father's Love

Luke 15:1-3,11-32

A Prodigal God

prod-i-gal / prōdigal—adjective

- 1. Recklessly extravagant
- 2. Having spent everything

THREE WAYS TO TREAT YOUR CHILDREN AS YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER TREATS YOU

1. Build a \_\_\_\_\_ For Your Children. \_\_\_\_\_

(Luke 15:17 NIV) "When he came to his senses . . ."

(Deu 6:6-7 NIV) These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. {7} Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

a. Children need to know the difference between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

(Mat 17:5b NIV) "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

b. Children need to know they are \_\_\_\_\_.

c. Children need to know we are \_\_\_\_\_ of them.

d. Children need to know where they \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Give Them an Example of \_\_\_\_\_.

(Luke 15:17-19 NIV) "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! {18} I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. {19} I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.'

3. Be Quick to Show \_\_\_\_\_.

(Luke 15:20-24 NIV) So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. {21} "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' {22} "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. {23} Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. {24} For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

What is forgiveness? (Matthew 6:12; 1 Corinthians 13:5; Ephesians 4:32)

- 1. I will not dwell on this incident.
- 2. I will not bring this incident up and use it against you.
- 3. I will not talk to others about this incident.
- 4. I will not allow this incident to stand between us or hinder our personal relationship.

What is extravagant forgiveness?

- 1. Best robe = \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Signet Ring = \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Sandals = \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Fatted Calf = \_\_\_\_\_

The father's love extended to the \_\_\_\_\_ son.

(Luke 15:28 NIV) "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him."

A Parent's Love. \_\_\_\_\_

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ሁሉንም ይጻፉ። Describe your feelings at a time when you may have lost a child, even for a short time?

1. Some have called Luke chapter 15 the lost and found department of the Bible. What evidence is there for such a statement?
2. In reprimanding the Pharisees, Jesus uses a parable about a rebellious son. What do you think Jesus knows about rebellious people?
3. What is a parable?
4. Who's who? There are several characters in this story and they each represent something. Who are they and what do they represent?
5. In your own words, describe what you consider to be a prodigal.
6. Verse 17 is a key verse in this passage, "When he came to his senses. . . ." Pastor Mark implied that the prodigal's parents had already provided a strong foundation. What elements do you think are included in building such a foundation?
7. When the prodigal recognized his pitiful condition, he remembered how good things were back home. What does that say about the character of the parents?

8. How important is parental character in rearing children? Why?
9. Where do you see tough love in this story?
10. Forgiveness in this story is remarkable, especially in light of the gifts given to the lost son. Discuss what you think of the definition of forgiveness printed in the sermon notes.
11. When do you think it becomes difficult for a parent to forgive a child?
12. The father was not passive, but took the initiative to reach out to both of his sons, the rebel and the jealous son. What does that say about our Heavenly Fathers love for us? Parental love?
13. Note the words the father used with both of his sons. How did he use his tongue for righteousness? (Read James 3:1-12 with regard to the tongue).
14. How can parents demonstrate God's love in parenting (grandparenting)? How can you encourage parents to demonstrate God's love to their children?

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In a time of transition at St. Paul's, pray that we will strengthen one another's relationships (*In Action*, p.1) and discourage any harmful gossip.

Pray for one another.