

SERMON NOTES 17 September 2023

sunnysidechurch

Bible Reading: Luke 15:1,2,11-32

Questions for Discussion

What was it like when you first left home? And if you are a parent when your first child left home?

This is a story about a father and 2 sons. How would you describe the relationship between

- (a) The father and the elder son
- (b) The father and the younger son
- (c) Between the 2 sons

What does this story teach us about repentance and forgiveness

Why did the elder son not rejoice?

This story is one of the 3 told by Jesus. The introduction in v.1, 2 applies to all 3 stories This story is told against the Pharisees and the teachers of the law (the Scribes). What warnings are there for us not to be like the Pharisees and Scribes?

Should this story be called the story of the “Fathers love” rather than the “Prodigal Son” or the”Two Sons” ?

Main points of the sermon

Over this weekend a lot of young people are leaving home for the first time to go to college. I have experienced both ends of this as a parent and a higher education chaplain. It’s an important moment in a person’s life and can be an opportunity for growth and development, but also the new freedom can lead to disaster.

Today’s reading is the story of the father and 2 sons. It tells us a lot about their relationships but also the disastrous journey of the younger son. He squanders his inheritance and ends up in poverty doing menial tasks. He decides to go home, penitent, and pleading for forgiveness.

The father goes out of his way to welcome his errant son back home, and lays on a great feast for him

The elder son, who is the heir to the estate, is furious when he hears of the welcome given to his errant younger brother. He had never experienced a welcome like this and refused to join in.

This story is one of three that Jesus told when “the tax collectors and sinners were all gathered round to hear him. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered “this man welcomes sinners and eats with them” (v. 1, 2). The story is a warning to all religious people not to be like the elder son who is unable to welcome his errant but repentant younger brother.

This story is usually known as the story of the prodigal son or the story of the 2 sons. It’s also the story of a father’s love which reflects God’s love for us all who turn to him.

John Kirkby