

Father's Day 2024

June 30, 2024

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ online ministry. This week's message is titled Father's Day. Thank you to Ed, Dave, Diane, and Don for being part of the service. The scripture reading is Matthew 6, 9 to 13. Happy birthday this week to John and David.

Welcome, Announcements, Prayer

Good morning. Welcome everybody. It's good to be together and notice that our students have dispersed. The graduation took place on Friday. I had the opportunity to attend and it was really a tremendous celebration and the students have dispersed for the summer.

So as far as announcements go, Shirley is having a birthday this week and Tina and Earl are having an anniversary. Okay, how many? 35. [applause] Gloria and Jon are having their 60th anniversary this week. That's quite an accomplishment. They're not with us today. Maybe we can reach out to them. Okay, there's a Bible Day camp at the Tintern Church this summer and they're looking for volunteers. They're also looking for kids to participate. So you can pay attention to that if you have an interest. Okay, Lauri sends a thank you for prayers, love and support that she's received recently after she was released from hospital and she's regaining her strength at home.

This is an important function of the church that when people are in difficulty within the church that we rally around them and help them in any way that we can. I have been on the receiving end of some of that help since I had heart surgery about a month ago. Really felt the prayers of people and the concern that you've had for me and I would like to say I appreciate that and I love you for it and we love each other and care for each other because we are a group of people who are trying to honor God in our lives and support each other in that journey. Let's pray.

Our Father in Heaven, we are humbled to be in your presence today. We're in your presence every day but as a group today as we gather we pray that we might honor you with what we say and do and that we might be encouraging to each other and that we might honor you with our praise and our thanksgiving. We're thankful for this opportunity to be together and we pray your blessing on it this morning. We're thankful Father that your Son Jesus calls us to a different life, calls us to what a life that honors you and that honors your creation. We pray Father that today as we consider fathers that our attention to you, our Heavenly Father, is part of that, a big part of that and that as those of us who are fathers and have been fathers and had fathers that we might recognize how you work through these people and work through us to honor honor you and honor your will. To this end we give you thanks and praise in Jesus name, Amen.

Communion

The parallels in that story are profound and touching. It's been mentioned already, the class on Wednesday night on 1st John, there've been a couple of things that have impressed me in our readings and our dialogue.

The scripture at the end, 1st John 3 16, probably the best known of any scripture. John's letters are wonderfully explicit on how this works. Jesus is the focus, providing a true understanding, a full

and true understanding of God. Jesus shows us the mature workings of love, God's love. Two of the most difficult things we get straight in life, our understanding of God and our understanding of love. There are any number of people who want to make their own idea of God and make up their own style of love. More often than not, the mess we make of our lives can be traced to a failure or lack of understanding or meanness in one or both of these areas.

It's the basis of a Christian conviction that the two subjects, God and love, are intricately related. You cannot separate the two as you cannot separate the father from the son. God has given us the greatest gift of love, his only son, Jesus the Christ. And here with these emblems, we remember the gift from the father and respond with our own lives in living a life of love for others.

First John 3 16, parallels John 3 16, probably the same author saying it again. This is how we know what love is. Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. We ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. Anyone has material possessions, sees his brother in need, has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue, but with actions and in truth. And this is how we know we belong to the truth and how we have set our hearts at rest in his presence. Whenever our hearts condemn us, for God is greater than our hearts, he knows everything.

Holy Father, we do thank you for your word, for your son, for your great gift. May we appreciate and understand the gift more completely with our lives by our sacrifice as we remember the blood, the body and the blood of Christ at this time, empower us with your spirit in Christ's name. Amen.

Reading

Matthew 6:9-15

Good morning. The prayer that we often pray, I'd like you all to stand.

This is how you should pray. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done. On earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts. As we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Amen.

Sermon

Father's Day

Good morning, everyone. Good morning. Our attendance is a lot lower because people have graduated and moved on. But we're so thankful that you're with us today. And we look forward to a summer of worship. It's the Father's Day. Sometimes, I guess you can call it Dad's Day. And most dads like to laugh. And so I was thinking about this fairly often and thought, maybe there's some humorous things that we can talk about on Father's Day. And it's interesting what comments came in.

Here are the top 10 things that you'll probably never hear a dad say. Number 10. Well, how about that? I'm completely lost. Looks like we'll have to stop the car and ask someone for directions.

Number 9. You know, honey, you're 13 years old. So you should be ready for unshaperone car dates. Not going to hear that. Number 8. I notice that all your friends have a certain hostile attitude and you're being influenced by them. I really like that. Something that you'll never hear a father say. Here's my credit card and the keys to my new car. Go have fun. Something that dads won't say. What do you mean you don't want to play hockey? Figure skating isn't good enough for you, son. No? Number 5. Your mother and I are going to go away for the weekend. So you may want to consider throwing a party. My dad never said that. Number 4. Well, I don't know what's wrong with your car, dad say. Probably one of those do-hickey thingies, you know, that makes it run or something. Just have a toe to a mechanic and pay whatever he asks. Not going to hear that. No son of mine will live under my roof without his ears and nose pierced. You're not going to hear that. Number 2. What do you mean you want to get a job? I make plenty of money for you to spend. Here's \$100, so please go to the mall. My dad never said that to me. And then lastly, what do I want for an office day? Certainly nothing to do with golf or fishing or going to a movie or an afternoon. No, nothing like that. I'd rather go to a store and pick out curtains. My father never said that.

It's interesting looking at Father's Day over the years. There's a wonderful woman who wrote several books that I really appreciated. Name was Reverend Janice Goucher. She was the family pastor of the Sindal Baptist Church in Melbourne, Australia. And here's what she wrote. Some of you have sad memories of a father who mistreated you, even rejected you. Some of you dads are hurting because you know that there will be no contact today with a child that you've loved and do love. My dad was an unhappy man with a violent temper. He whipped his belt out frequently to use on one or all of us six children. But I recall in my first year in high school winning the prize for mathematics and going up on stage to receive it. As I turned, I glanced at my parents and saw on my father's face the most amazing beam of pride. That beam carried me through many traumas that lay ahead.

Unfortunately, I always felt I had to earn my father's love, always trying to earn it, but so often failing. And I read from the Psalms, God as our loving father who loves us more than we can put into words. And these words, "Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me." And if you ever doubt that God doesn't love his child, remember the promise of God. I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. I am always with you. I am the God who takes you by the hand and say to you, do not be afraid. I am always helping you. And there are times in our life when we really wonder if God is there. But when we stop and think about it, we realize God has always been there. He's always been our father.

One particular father said, "When I came to know my Heavenly Father at the age of 15, I was overwhelmed by his love for me. He led me to the Apostle Paul's words. I have learned in whatever state I am to be content. And I began to see my physical father as God's gift to me, the one chosen to provide for me. I wrote to my dad, and I apologize for any pain I may have caused him, this contributing to his frustration. He wrote back, and for the first time, he apologized to me for stating that night that I was being baptized. He'd never need come home again because of that baptism. But he changed his mind. Shortly after my father went missing, he was never found. My brothers and sisters had a memorial service. And I remember saying, in spite of everything, he did love us, didn't he? And each child answered affirmantly. And each one told stories with the father when they were with each other.

In Romans chapter 8, he says, "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. And by him we call out Abba, father. The Spirit himself testifies with our own spirit that we are God's children. And now if we are God's children, then we are heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ. If indeed we share in his sufferings, we also share in his glory."

So where did Father's Day come from? It originated in the United States through the tireless efforts of Sonora Louise Smarte Dodd of Spokane, Washington. In 1909, Dodd got the idea of Father's Day at church one day while listening to a Mother's Day sermon. Her purpose was to honor her father, Jackson Smarte, a Civil War veteran. Smarte had been forced to raise his children by himself after his wife died in labor with their sixth child. Dodd realized the strength and courage her father had shown by raising six children, including a newborn on a farm by himself. So she drafted a petition which recommended the adoption of National Father's Day. The initiative was backed up by the Young Men's Christian Association and Spokane Ministerial Association. Through her persistence, Spokane celebrated the first ever Father's Day, June 19, 1910. At around the same time in various towns and cities across the US, other people were starting to celebrate a kind of Father's Day as well. And soon after that, organizations and states began lobbying Congress to declare Father's Day a national annual event. In 1916, US President Woodrow Wilson approved the idea. But it wasn't until 1926 that President Calvin Coolidge recognized it as a national annual event. In a speech, Coolidge stated Father's Day would establish more between fathers and their children and impress upon fathers the full measure of a father's obligation. Since then, Father's Day has been celebrated by families every third Sunday in June. The actual presidential proclamation of the holiday occurred in 1966 by US President Lyndon Johnson. The rose is the official flower for Father's Day. And traditionally, red roses were worn to honor a living father and white ones worn if a father had passed. Father's Day has been adopted by Canada, Europe, many other countries has become a day as well to honor good old dad, stepfathers, uncles, grandfathers, and adult male friends.

And maybe just a touch of humor. I found this recently and wanted to share it with you. It's called the creation of a father, one of God's greatest. When the good Lord was creating fathers, he started with a tall frame. And a female angel nearby said, what kind of father is that? If you're going to make children so close to the ground, why have you put fathers up so high? He won't be able to shoot marbles without kneeling, tuck a bed in child without bending, or even kiss a child with a lot of stooping. And God smiled and said, yes. But if I make him child size, who would children have to look up to? And when God made a father's hands, they were large and sinewy. And the angel shook her head sadly and said, do you know what you're doing? Large hands are clumsy. They can't manage diaper pins, small buttons, rubber bands, or ponytails, or even remove splinters caused by baseball bats. God smiled and said, I know. But they're large enough to hold everything a small boy empties from his pockets at the end of the day, yet small enough to cup a child's face in his hands. And then God molded long, slim legs and broad shoulders. And the angel nearly had a heart attack. Boy, this is the end of the week, all right. She chuckled. Do you realize you just made a father without a lap? How is he going to pull his child close to him without the kid falling between his legs? God smiled and said, a mother needs a lap. Father needs strong shoulders to pull a sled, balance a boy on a bicycle, or hold a sleepy head on the way home from the circus. God was in the middle of creating two of the largest feet anyone had ever seen when the angel could contain herself no longer. That's not fair. Do you honestly think those big boats, these feet,

are going to dig out early in the morning when the baby cries or walk through a birthday party without crushing at least three of the guests? God smiled and said, they'll work. You'll see. They'll support a small child who wants to ride a horse to Banbury Cost or scare off mice at the cottage or display anything else. Finally, almost as an afterthought, he added tears. Then he turned to the angel and said, now are you satisfied that a father can love as much as the mother? and the angel shutteth up.

Fathers are mentioned so many times in scripture. In Exodus, honor your father and mother. Leviticus, do not dishonor your father. Deuteronomy, the Lord carried you as a father carries his son. And I just have to stop there.

Some of the memories that I had and maybe many fathers have had, one of the blessings was putting our sons to bed. Young. Sons and daughters. But because it's Father's Day, we'll talk about sons. Dad, I just want to stay up. It's the third period. I just want to see the Leafs try to win a game. And then I see him nodding off, nodding off. And so you pick up your boy and you bring him into the room. See, there was that hug. Even if the sons didn't like the hug when it was tired, you just picked them up and carried them. You brought them into the room and put them in the bed and covered them up and gave them a kiss. See, that's what God does for us. We're never alone. And if things are very difficult in your life, remember that God is always carrying you. And if you'll feel lonely as you put your head on the cover, feel the kiss of God.

He is your father. And throughout scripture, it's beautiful what scripture tells a wise son brings joy to his father. He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father. And then Jesus said, "The world must know that I love the father, and I do what my father has asked me to do." And way back in Psalm, Chapter 2, "You are my son, and today I have become your father." And then Philipians 2, "Every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the father." We all have human fathers who disciplined us, and we respected them for us. How much more should we submit to our father, Hebrews, Chapter 12?

And then lastly, in 1 John 1, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at, and our hands have touched, this we proclaim concerning the word of life. The life appeared. We have seen it and testified to it and proclaimed to you the eternal life, which was with the father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you that we have seen and heard, so that you may also have fellowship with us and fellowship with the father and his son, Jesus Christ."

I came across this, and I'll conclude with this, called God, our loving father and my child. Here are various scriptures. "You may not know me, but I do everything about you," Psalm 139. The father says, "I know when you sit down and when you rise up." The father says, "I am familiar with all your ways. Even the very hairs on your head are numbered, for you were made in my image. It may you live and move and have your very being, for you are my offspring." This is for all of us, and this is eternal. "You are not a mistake, for all your days are written in my book, even before one of them came to be. I determine the exact time of your birth and when you would live. You're fearfully and wonderfully made. You're knit together in your mother's womb.

I have been misrepresented by those who do not know me," Jesus said. "But I'm not distant and angry, and I am the complete expression of love. For I am the father, and every good and perfect

gift that comes to you comes from me. I love you with an everlasting love, and I rejoice over you with singing. I'll never stop doing good to you. I desire to establish you with all my heart and all my soul." This is God speaking to us. "If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me. I am always here for you. I'm able to do more than you could possibly imagine, for I am your greatest encourager. And when you're brokenhearted, I'm close to you. As a shepherd carries a lamb, I've carried you close to my heart." How many of us parents remember taking a sleeping child, wrapping your arms around them, bringing them to the bedroom, putting them on the bed, and you hear a (Sigh) fast asleep? "I am your father, and I love you, and I will take pain. For in Jesus, my love for you is revealed. I gave up everything I loved that I might gain your love. If you receive the gift of my son Jesus, you receive me, and nothing will ever separate you from my love again." Then he concludes, "I have always been father, and always will be father. My question is, will you be my child? I am waiting for you. Love your dad, almighty God. Amen."

Closing

I have to admit to you that as a father, I realized early on that I really didn't know what I was doing. I think before I was a father, I thought I knew all about it, but I can still remember profoundly holding my first child and saying, "Now what?"

And so fathers, even though they're a blessing in our lives, we all have to admit as fathers that we have probably done some things that we shouldn't have done, said some things that we shouldn't have said, but we also tried to impart to our children important things that they needed to live their lives and to become spiritual beings. So as we see, our Heavenly Father wants the best for us. He wants us to believe. He wants us to act in a way that honors Him, but we fail sometimes to do that. And isn't it wonderful that we're forgiven? Let's pray.

Our Father in Heaven, we are grateful for your love and mercy. We're grateful for Jesus that points us and gives us a way to know you and to follow you and to feel forgiven. We're thankful, Father, for the ways that you have impacted our lives and the lives of our families and the lives of people in our community. And we pray, Father, that we might be wise in how we honor you in our families and in our community. As we depart today, we pray that you might bless us to this extent. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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