TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Don Taylor /Opening Prayer by: Ken Coleman

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#869 We're Marching to Zion

#867 To Canaan's Land

Scripture Reading by: Parker Balch

#578 We Will Glorify

#180 Jesus Is Lord

Lord's Supper and Contribution

#882 No Tears in Heaven

Sermon: "A Great Day"
Acts 10:30-33

#947 Jesus Is Tenderly Calling

#851 I'll Fly Away

Closing Prayer by: Andre Jones

We will not be having evening service tonight.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 6:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 10:00am — Ladies Bible Class, 7:00pm — Bible Study Classes

Oct. 27, 2019

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

Homecoming

The most famous story Jesus ever told is about a homecoming. We find it in **Luke 15**. One day, a young man went to his father and demanded his share of the inheritance. Then he left home and traveled to a distant land, wasting all of his money in wild living. When hard times hit, with no other recourse, he hired himself out to a farmer who had him feed pigs.

Jesus could not paint a more dramatic picture of someone abandoning godly living. Family was the ultimate commitment for a Jew; this boy had not only turned his back on his, he had effectively wished his father was dead. He squandered his funds in debauchery, defiling himself and violating the Law of Moses. In traveling to *a far country* **(Lk 15:13)**, he entered Gentile territory, which meant he lowered himself to work for a pagan; in the depths of degradation, he slopped hogs, animals that were unclean for Jews. He was in such a low condition, so destitute and hungry, that he actually longed to eat the stuff he was feeding the pigs!

At rock bottom, he came to himself: he realized his only hope was to go home. A typical Jewish father would have ceremonially disowned his son, but perhaps he could beg to work as a slave. At least then he wouldn't starve to death.

But the father had never stopped hoping the boy would come home—he never stopped watching for him, in fact. Because one day, weeks or months or years after he had left, the father saw him far in the distance, and he ran out to meet him. The young man had carefully rehearsed a speech, repenting of his sin and pleading for an opportunity to be a servant. He started to make his case, but he never got a chance to finish. Not only had the old man never disowned the boy, he treated him as an honored guest. He shouted for a servant to bring *the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet* **(Lk 15:22**). He commanded the fattened calf to be killed, and they had a great feast in honor of his returning son.

Like most of Jesus' parables with multiple characters, we can learn a lesson from the perspective of each one of them. We usually refer to this as the parable of the Prodigal Son. From him, we learn that repentance is always possible for those who want to return to God. In the context of the chapter, he corresponds to *the tax collectors and sinners* who *were all drawing near to hear him* **(Lk 15:1).** Throughout human history, there have been prodigals like this boy. Maybe you had one in your own family; maybe you have been one yourself. No matter the situation, forgiveness is always possible if we turn to God in repentance and come home.

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Gwen Pettit, Gary Nielsen, Harold & Geri Cryer, Steve Ward, Jackie David, Frank & Tina Garcia, Eric Davis, Dayla Hale, Minny Owen, Doris Trahan, Joe Edd Stifflemire, J. P. Williams

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Dr. Ronald Davis, Larry Hicks, Mark Wilcox, Bill Lunceford

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Mwanza, Africa, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Plastic Bags

The Food Bank is in need of plastic grocery bags. A barrel is in the foyer.

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister Monday, Oct.28th at 7:00pm

Homecoming today. We will be having a meal in the family life center after morning service. We need to provide drinks, dessert and bread.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, Nov. 5th at 9:00am.

Primetimers will be having a Mexican night on out Tuesday, Nov. 12th at 6:00pm in the fellowship room. There will be Mexican food, desserts, games and fun.

New Address

Please add Candice Dryden and her daughter Lucy to your directory. Their address is: 10182 Hwy 146 N., Liberty, TX 77575. Cell #409-277-3418

Jerry Mast has a new email address: Handymasty@yahoo.com .

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Website: libertycofc.org Facebook page: Liberty Church of Christ

Privilege to Serve

Sunday, Oct. 27th

Communion Preparation: Nancy Hempel
Nursery Attendants: Tania Balch, Pat Hobbs

Communion Preparation for Sunday, Nov. 3rd: Pat Hobbs
Nursery Attendants for Sunday, Nov 3rd: Jane Tinkle, Rita Upton

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There is a second son, an older brother we sometimes forget about—and, thus, a second point. Instead of rejoicing like his father, he gets angry, complaining that he has slaved away without any party. He even distances himself from his brother, calling him *this son of yours* **(Lk 15:30).** In context, he represents the Pharisees and scribes grumbling, *This man receives sinners and eats with them* **(Lk 15:2).** As Christians, we need to ask how much of that attitude remains in us. Do we look at those who repent with a smug sense of self-righteousness? We must not begrudge forgiveness to even the greatest sinners.

But the most important character in the story is actually the father. It is not difficult for us to think about real life parallels to both sons. But no earthly father, no matter how great, corresponds to the father in the parable. He pictures our Heavenly Father to us in his longing for a relationship with his wayward children. He yearns for us to live in his house. He eagerly receives us, running to us and embracing us when we come home. That feast depicts the joy in Heaven when a sinner repents. Nor is he any less caring with the stubborn and selfish older brother, who deserves to be rebuked for his attitude. Our Heavenly Father instead pleads with us tenderly to come in and receive sinners as he does.

Today is our annual Homecoming. If you are reading this, it may be that you are a former member here who has fallen away, and it has been a long time since you attended. No matter if it has been weeks or months or years since you left, the Father is waiting to welcome you back home. Or maybe you are a guest this morning who has never come to the Lord; you have been in the far country living in sin. This story reminds us that whoever you are or whatever you have done, the Father is keenly watching for you. He will throw his arms around you if you will only turn to him. Maybe you are one of our regular members casting sidelong glances at some of those others here this morning. God is calling us to break down our barriers and give them a lavish welcome.

Ultimately, we are all called to imitate Christ. He reflected the love of the Father: forgiving both the overtly rebellious prodigal and the covertly, but equally, sinful older brother. May we learn the lessons that emerge from each character in this tale.

Bryant Perkins