

**The anti-Prodigal Home
Starts at Home
January 23, 2022**

Good morning church!! Welcome to FOB Bethel!!

Review:

Week 1—Joshua 24:15 as for me and my house

Week 2-- Bethel – the House of God!!! Genesis 28

Week 3—A family altar will alter a family

Today: The Anti-prodigal Home

First and foremost, there is no Prodigal-prevention-pill that you can give your children or grandchildren.

Before we get into the actual text of the Prodigal Son, let's fast forward to the very end and see an incredibly important part of the story...

Spoiler alert—the Prodigal Son comes home

BUT—I want us to hear something this morning.....

- NOT EVERY PRODIGAL RETURNS HOME!!!

But why did he leave?

- It had to be his environment growing up, right?

How many of us have heard stories of kids running from faith who have been raised in church

One story....

My best friend in TN is a truck driver. I've talked about him before. He studies the Word daily and challenges me with studying the Bible

But, based on his own testimony, he was raised in a Christian home by Christian parents who were at church every Sunday

And then, in High School, he said he raised Cain all the time and had no resemblance of Christianity in his life

Second story...

There is the opposite story of kids who have never even heard the name of Jesus and then, as adults, they are miraculously saved and living for Jesus the rest of their days

Literally, this past week, Bobby VanSweden introduced Amber to a guy on Thursday for business related things,

He told her that he was raised by 2 women in obviously sissified home.

Then, he meets this girl in College, she says to him, "You can't date me until I introduce you to somebody"

He says, "ok, who"? Thinking she meant her dad or grandfather. She says, "Jesus". He literally said to her.... WHO'S THAT?

The man grew up in the greatest state in the USA, in the greatest Co in the USA, in the greatest city in that County (St. Pete) and at 19 years old he hadn't heard of Jesus

Oh BUT GOD!!!

Now, this man not only loves Jesus, but his entire business is centered around Jesus and helping others

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- It's not just about environment

In this story in Luke 15, the younger son was raised in the same home by the same loving father with an older brother that gave him a great example of how to be obedient

But he still ran

SO what does this mean for our Homes in 2022?

If it's not about environment, do we just give up and take the "they'll turn out ok" plan

Of course not!

Prodigal-prevention is not only about the environment in the home, it's also about the heart

- We don't want our kids to not-be-prodigals just so we can look good to all of the other parents whose kids are defiant
- We don't want our kids not-to-be prodigals just so we can have less stress
- We don't want our kids not-to-be prodigals so we can get the prodigal-free award at the Sr. Adult meeting when we're 70
- LISTEN-- We want our kids to not-be-prodigals for the glory of Jesus Christ and His gospel!

FOLLOW
THE
PROCESS:

- Take a stand- Joshua 24:15
- Bethel- Make your home the "Place of the Lord"
- Prayer- a family altar will alter a family

Today....

3 Lessons from the Prodigal (1 from each character)....

**Create an atmosphere of Repentance
(From the Younger Son) v.11-19**

Context:

Give me the portion of goods that falls to me: In those days a father could either grant the inheritance before or after his death, but it was usually done *after*.

The younger son asked for a special exception, motivated by foolishness and greed.

- Repentance

What was the key to the younger sons return home?

REPENTANCE!!

What is repentance?

Repentance is accepting full responsibility for your sin and confessing it to the Lord--- THEN, turning away from it and walking in a different direction...

What repentance is NOT—

Blaming others

Looking for a way out

Making excuses, “well, it was actually her fault that I did that”

Or

“Well, my home life was actually really hard so I decided to take my inheritance now so I could get out and do my own thing”

NO!

Genuine repentance (godly repentance) is accepting your sin for what it is and turning away from it in the power of the Holy Spirit

There is nothing WOKE about repentance!

In his clear thinking he didn't think of how to improve conditions in the pigpen. He didn't blame his father, his brother, his friends, his boss, or the pigs. He recognized his misery without focusing on it, and instead focused on his **father**.

The grass isn't greener on the other side

Ultimately, he had to humble himself!!!

.....PAUSE.....

LAST NIGHT:

I had the privilege to go and speak to our High School students at our Retreat

Humility is hard to teach in today's society. We don't honor humble people in today's world

Humility and confessing sin go together

Repentance never comes with pride. If so, it's not repentance

Un-woke means that we don't look for fault in everyone else but we actually look in the mirror and say, "Dadgum, I'm a sinner"

Listen—your kids need to hear you say, "Dadgumit I'm a sinner"

Model repentance to your family and your family will model you!

**Create an atmosphere of Unconditional Love
(From the Father) v.19-24**

Context:

- i. "The depth of the son's repentance is matched only by the depth of the father's love." (Pate)

c. **Ran and fell on his neck and kissed him:** The intensity of the father's reception was indicated by the fact that he **ran** (unusual for grown men in those cultures)

d. **Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight:** The son began to recite his prepared speech; yet it seemed that the father didn't even hear it. Instead, he commanded that the prodigal youth be treated like a son, and not like a servant.

**Kill Bitterness at every turn
(From the Older Son) v.25-32**

Context:

- Who is the older son?

The older son was the anti-prodigal.

--Hard worker
--Responsible
--Dependable
--Obedient
--Faithful

Even when the party was going on for the younger brother, he was still out in the field cuttin' hay

But—he was also angry and bitter!

The older son was not happy that the brother was so joyfully received.

He complained and felt it was an insult to his own obedience and faithfulness.

Look at what he says:

v.29 "these many years I have served you"
"I never disobeyed your command"

SO the older son pleads his case and then he puts the onus back on the Father by saying:

v.29 “you never gave me a young goat”

The older son is so full of bitterness that he exaggerates his obedience to try and show that he is more worthy than the younger son

What the older son didn't realize was that he had this treasure his whole life!

He didn't need a party, he was with the Father all along!

.....PAUSE.....

Kill comparison in your home!

You've heard me say, “comparison is the thief of contentment”

- Instead of allowing our kids to focus on everything everyone else has, point them to Jesus and one day they will realize that he is all they need!!!

Jealousy and bitterness are like a disease!

They will kill you if you don't kill them!!

- “Bitterness is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die”

The older brother is the person who keeps a record of wrong

1 Corinthians 13:6 keeps no record of wrong

The older son is the person who elevates their own ideas and goals over what's best for the family

The older son focuses on his needs and totally misses the heart of the Father!! WOW

Interestingly enough...

The servants understand this truth and they celebrated the prodigals return while the older son is jealous and bitter

Walk Away

There is no anti-prodigal pill

- You cannot keep your children from becoming prodigals, but Jesus can!!

Point your kids to Jesus around every turn!

1. As for me and my house we will serve the Lord
2. This house is the place of the Lord
3. We will pray together and confess our need for God together
4. We will create an atmosphere of repentance, unconditional love, and we will kill bitterness and comparison around every turn!!!