PREACHING & TEACHING

Father's Day Sermon

A Father's Day sermon framework built on the prodigal son's father rather than on advice to men, with the same pastoral care the Mother's Day page takes and one additional problem: for some people in the room, calling God Father is the obstacle rather than the comfort.

18 min preached · 5 segments

Five movements, eighteen minutes. Built to work for people whose fathers were good, absent, or dangerous, without pretending those are the same room.

BEFORE YOU RECORD

- The Father's Day trap is different from the Mother's Day one. Here the pull is towards instruction: be a better man, lead your family. It lands as a rebuke on the men who turned up and does nothing for the ones who did not.
- Name the God-as-Father problem out loud once. For someone whose father was frightening, the central metaphor of the faith is a locked door, and a preacher who says so is often the first person who ever has.
- Attendance is usually lower than Mother's Day and the men present are often there reluctantly. Preach to them as adults, not as a problem to be fixed.

01. The acknowledgement

3 min

[shorter than the Mother's Day one, and it must include the God-as-Father problem]

Some of you had a father who was present and kind, and today is easy. Some of you had one who was absent, or frightening, or who is dead, and today is not.

And for some of you there is a further problem, which is that the main thing this faith calls God is a word that already means something painful. I am not going to pretend that is easily solved. But I want to say that if the word father is a closed door for you, that is not a failure of faith, and you are not the only one in this room.

02. The text

4 min

[Luke 15 - and read to the end, including the older brother]

[read Luke 15:11-32 in full]

Note what the father does not do. He does not go after the younger son. He does not send a servant. He lets him go, with the money, knowing what will happen, and then he watches the road for a long time.

03. The turn: the undignified run

6 min

[the running is the scandal in that culture, and it is the claim]

When he sees him, he runs. A landowner of that age and standing did not run anywhere. He would have had to gather his robes to do it, in front of a village that knew exactly what the son had done.

He also interrupts the apology. The son has rehearsed a speech and gets about half of it out before the father talks over him and starts giving instructions about a robe.

[your material, 450 words - one illustration]

04. The older brother

3 min

[do not skip him - he is half the men in the room]

The story does not end with the party. It ends outside it, with a man who did everything right and is furious, and with a father who comes out to him too. That second going-out is the one most sermons leave in the field.

05. Honour, and close

2 min

[honour the fathers present plainly - no instructions]

Honour the men who turned up, briefly and without a list of what they should do better. Then close on the road, and the watching, and stop.

USAGE

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