

The 3rd Sunday of Advent ~ Sunday, December 15, 2019

“He Shall Be Called...Everlasting Father”

Isaiah 9:6; Luke 15:11-24

Jesus came into the world to clear up all the _____ about who God is and to set things straight. Jesus spent His entire ministry teaching about _____. Everything Jesus said and did—His preaching and teaching; His signs and wonders—were an attempt to show people the true _____ of God.

However, instead of using the words that the people of Israel were used to using to describe God—words He chose the image of _____. often referring to God with the Hebrew word ‘Abba’—similar to our English word _____.

The good news of the gospel is that Jesus Christ came to help us to _____ God, as our everlasting Father. One who will never leave us or _____ us; One who is always there for us; One who provides for, and protects us.

everlasting = *ad* =

• **His _____ is everlasting.**

“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.” (Psalm 90:2)

• **His _____ is everlasting.**

“...but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you, says the Lord, your Redeemer.” (Isaiah 54:8)

“I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.” (Jeremiah 31:3)

• **His _____ is everlasting.**

“I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will bless them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary among them forevermore. My dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” (Ezekiel 37:26-27)

• **His _____ is everlasting.**

God came to earth in the person of Jesus to establish a _____ with us. However, this could only be done once we had been delivered from _____. The good news is, when Jesus saves us, He saves us _____.

“But Israel is saved by the Lord with everlasting salvation; you shall not be put to shame or confounded to all eternity.” (Isaiah 45:17)

“Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life.” (John 6:47)

It’s the distinctive _____ and distinguishing mark of a Christian to know God as everlasting Father. This is at the _____ of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. If we have entered into relationship with our everlasting God, through Jesus’ finished work on the Cross, by _____ completely in, and giving our life, to Him; we can be _____ of our heavenly Father’s everlasting love, everlasting covenant, and everlasting salvation.

“Lord, show us the father and we will be satisfied.” (John 14:8)

“I have been with you all this time, Phillip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’” (Jn 14:9)

If we want to know what God is like, we needn’t look any further than _____. As Jesus tells Phillip, the Father is _____ like the Son. And everything we can say about God the Father—His omnipotence; _____, omnipresence—we can say about the Son. And everything that we can say about Son—His wonderful words; His wonderful works—we can say about the Father.

“I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does.” (John 5:19)

However, It’s not just the things Jesus did that make Him like the Father; it’s who He is. His _____, which was loving, caring, compassionate, and merciful, was the Father’s heart.

“He is the reflection of God’s glory; the exact imprint of God’s very being.” (Hebrews 1:3)

“He is the image of the invisible God...” (Colossians 1:15)

Jesus came to _____ the true nature of God—He came to reveal the Father’s _____.

“God is love and those who abide in love, abide in God and God abides in them.” (1 John 4:16)

“The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me...so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” (John 17:22-23)

Faith isn’t about duty, performance, guilt or fear. It’s about _____—an intimate relationship with our everlasting Father who loves us with an everlasting love.

prodigal =

THE FATHER HEART OF GOD

#1. Father's heart _____ our _____.

“A certain man had two sons, the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them.” (Luke 15:11)

The father must have been _____ by his son's request and publically humiliated by his lack of respect; however, instead of the law the father gives him _____ –he grants his request, divides his wealth, and gives it to the son.

No matter what we do, we can't sever our relationship with God; however, we can break _____ with Him.

The whole time the son was away, he was still a son, but he had left the presence and favour of his father and the _____ of his father's house. If we were honest with ourselves, we could see that there have been times in our life when we've been like the son in our relationship with God—where our faith was more about what we could _____ from Him, rather than relationship with Him.

#2. The Father's heart _____ when we _____.

“A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living.” (Luke 15:13)

Pigpen = The son's descent to total _____; his rock bottom. This is the reality of life outside the father's house, outside the _____ covering of his love. This wasn't the father's fault, but the direct _____ of the young man's choices.

Jesus tells us the young man eventually came to his _____ and realized that a _____ in his father's house had it better than he did. So, he swallowed something more tasteless than the pig food that he was eating—he swallowed his _____ –and planned his long journey home.

A homecoming can only begin once we've hit _____ –once we find ourselves in the pigpen of _____ and despair, so to speak, and remember what a loving and _____ Father God we have. If we learn anything from the son, it's not to _____ until we've hit rock bottom to realize how much we need God; not to waste our lives flopping around in a spiritual pigpen, when we could be living like a son in God's house.

“While he was still a long way off, his father saw him...He was filled with compassion and he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.” (20)

The father felt _____ for the son, not anger, and embraced him before the son could say anything. His actions show that his son was far more important than customs, rules, _____, or even what the neighbours thought—it shows how much he _____ him. This is definitely not what the wayward son deserved.

God is a loving Father who _____ for us to return when we stray; and who runs to meet us when we return to Him. The compassion of God is followed by swift movements. He's _____ to anger, but He's quick to _____.

#3. The Father's heart _____ us when we _____.

“But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe--the best one--and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.” (Luke 15:22-23)

The son obviously didn't _____ his father. To think that it was even an option to be a servant in his father's home suggests that he still didn't fully understand his father's _____ –even now. Similarly, we don't get God's love—we see him as angry or judgmental, and don't trust that He's loving and forgiving.

This was a time for _____, not retribution—restoration to the father's house and restoration of _____, symbolized by the gifts that were presented to him.

robe =

ring =

sandals =

fatted calf =

The father could simply have spoken restoration, but the son probably wouldn't have _____ it or received it, he needed it _____ to him.

Jesus came to show us that God isn't _____ with us—He is our everlasting Father. Through His finished work on the cross, Jesus _____ the gap between a sinful people and a holy God; and bring us into a relationship with God, who offers us not judgement or condemnation, but _____ grace.

“Return to me, and I will return to you.” (Zechariah 3:1)

“Draw near to God and he will draw near to you.” (James 4:8)

Every journey begins with a first step. The Father's waiting.

Will you return to Him?