

"Time After Time"

"It's Time For Self- Acceptance...

Begin Where You Are!"

Joshua 5: 9-12, Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32, Sirach 4:20,

Romans 13:11, 2 Corinthians 6:2

March 6, 2016 Fourth Sunday of Lent

After Joshua:

Finally, after 40 years in the desert led by Moses, now with Joshua, they finally make it. And still they weren't free "inside themselves" to live in the Promised Land...

still acting in old ways, enslaved to the way it use to be and God says: I release you...roll it away.....the part of the past that's holding you down and blocking your way...release yourselves!

You have to...release yourself from the shame of your past and accept a new life....live in the present and live and enjoy the fruits of your own efforts in your new life,

no longer dependent upon food provided in the wilderness time. You made it.....open your eyes wide and see and live!

Before Luke:

And some of the most wilderness of times happen in families.

Can we in families reattach ourselves to our lives, our stories, accepting ourselves, forgiving ourselves and each other and be in a new life with a new perspective and understanding....

stop spinning our wheels and come to a new home within ourselves? Listen anew:

A Visitor From Beyond The Pearly Gates: Who's In Heaven? Prodigals!

I was shocked, confused, bewildered As I entered Heaven's door, Not by the beauty of it all, Nor the lights or its decor. But it was the folks in Heaven Who made me sputter and gasp--

The thieves, the liars, the sinners, the addicts and humans of every sort, from every class. There stood the kid from seventh grade Who swiped my lunch money twice. Next to him was my old neighbor

Who never said anything nice.
Herb, who I always thought
Was rotting away in hell,
Was sitting pretty on cloud nine,
Looking incredibly well.

I nudged Jesus, 'What's the deal? I would love to hear Your take. How'd all these sinners get up here? God must've made a mistake.

'And why is everyone so quiet,
So somber - give me a clue.'

'Hush, child,' He said, 'they're all in shock.
No one thought they'd be seeing you.'

JUDGE NOT!!

Remember... Just going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in your garage makes you a car.

Every saint has a PAST... Every sinner has a FUTURE! Now it's your turn...prodigal one....

What time is it? It's time for....

Time's been good to me
Running out of time
Timing
Time for a change
Time for a break
What time do you have Do you have time
The present time
Timing is everything
I'm timing you
Wrap around time
Time for a good time
Tummy time
Time for a change
Time is up
Time is going by
Time is going slowly
Time is going quickly
Now is not the time
Make time
Spend time with me
All the time
None of the time
For a long time
Another time
A second time
Time of need
Just in time
Time is running

Time after time, all times, every time an acceptable time... for God....let's make that... for you to be saved!

Salvation moment to moment: not an end of time, not a one-time happening.

A perpetual process! Usually a process of awareness and courage that saves us...from ourselves!
A second change is indeed offered!

We have the power to make this very moment the opportune time!
Even the hard moments, especially the hardest moments!

Remind yourself your track record for getting through bad days so far is 100%...and that's pretty good!

Lent: Jesus tells us this is the acceptable, opportune time... to bring to an end your old life stopping ways and start choosing more life giving ways of being....and not only for your own good, but for the common good.
For it is within what's good for all that we find what is indeed good/best for us!

And in today's wisdom teachings...

After that skit, think on it: Who are you? Where are you? What's your truest identity?

Like the people of Joshua....it's time at last to shed the old identity...them as a slave people. You as?

We are not to forget our ancestors (in fact, we are to know our story! And use it for good! Remember Jesus in the wilderness.) nor are we forget to thank God..... be sure not to give ourselves all the credit for our blessings.
This story in Joshua is to help us realize today, like those folk there and then...and the prodigal father, older and younger prodigal sons (and prodigal daughters), we too should be aware not to fail to roll the shame of the past away.

...to shed former identities, turn off old voices in our head, embrace new ways of seeing and doing and being a deep kind of self-acceptance of how it really is and really isn't!

...awareness with courage, living second chances as we accept our truth.....not let ourselves be defined by it!

Whatever toxic circles led the younger brother, whatever led him to shame his father and demand his inheritance as if the old man was already dead,

whatever led the father to acquiesce to the request,

whatever resentment and restrained fury the older brother harbored in his heart...

all of these souvenirs of the past will have to be relinquished if a new family is to be forged.

Accepting the truth about one's self and forgiving one's self is the only way a new identity can be formed, a new view on self and life it the way!
It's time!

Problems don't go away when they're ignored.
And we are not who we use to be!

And overthinking exaggerates feelings in ways that glue us in the past, lock us in time!
As if there is not time and no way life could ever be different.

So, then, how do we accept what is true about ourselves make this a new moment and create the new times of our life? Are you just tolerating yourself? Or, maybe placating yourself....justifying being where you are and doing what you're doing?

Sorta' like the older prodigal son? What's the difference between tolerating and accepting? There is a huge difference!

One means I allow you to stay, to be here but you're wrong and I'm right. Even spoke to parts of our selves!
Tolerance of self: I'm stuck and I can justify it!

The other...acceptance....means: don't change anything about yourself...I appreciate you just the way you are and want to know you better... know myself better which will change everything.... we'll go from there.

Whine and complain as we may about our lives...maybe rightfully so, the point is not what we don't have, not our mistakes, our shortcomings, misjudgments, past identifiers, being on the short end....

the point is we are known by the Holy, loved, accepted (Belong!) and that makes all things possible....if we will accept ourselves willing to live into that second chance. God has rolled away from you the disgrace of your Egypt, manna from God no longer needed as you eat the fruits of your own labors of love! Right now...just as you are...you are a new creation!

So, your life? So...get over it! Grow up...again...in God! You are re-created! Come home. God accepts you. Accept yourself. Belong! Move yourself forward in time...move! We may be rebellious prodigals who have to find their way home, or judgmental elder siblings who have forgotten what a blessing it is to be home, but the goal of Christian life is not to become a better son/daughter.

The goal is to become part of a new holy family that sees clearly and chooses...life, joy, belonging! And soon father (our actual and Jesus with us) will be gone and our family will be up to us! We are not to remain a child, but to grow up for we are the ancestors of those to be born. Their inheritance is determined by us!

To grow up, you have to be willing to come holy home... begin to reconcile your ways with your words, your faith with your facts... talk the walk and walk the talk....begin to make conscious, aware choices. Do yourself over!

The passage from Luke begins with Jesus eating with tax collectors and sinners. He goes on to talk about two sons who both sin. The point of Jesus' story is how much God cares and who God cares about: everyone! You! And still, we're left to our own devices... our own timing and choices. We create our families... superseding how the world and circumstances and our families have tried to create us! Think about yourself and the little and big choices you are making and who it is you are hanging out with or not. Jesus hangs out with sinner...those who knew they were and accepted that...to change, they must begin where they are!

Accepting that, they were free to begin to live into the second chances offered with awareness and courage. God's ways are not our ways...thank God! Who else graciously and joyfully welcomes us back from our most devastating screw ups? Who else loves you when you are unlovable, gladly giving you affection... when we put yourself down, stand still in time, let yourself be defined by your past? Who else is with us all the time? Makes time for us? Prodigal means extravagantly wasteful. Prodigal love means loving God's way...over the top and against all instinct and logic. You can leave your usual point of view, human perspective behind. You no longer HAVE to think about life the way you have been thinking about it.

Justify yourself the way you've been trying to justify yourself.

All that the father has is already yours....
You can become new. Jesus tells us so.

Prodigal love is being able to welcome all of who you are and all others without counting the cost or getting hung up on pride or ego ...seeing from a new perspective, taking your place in time, in new times...

allowing each one to be exactly where they are in time and not holding them back or pushing them forward but rather trusting in time and with support, they will get it and live!

And with a sense of momentum!

To be able to love in this way, you have to look lovingly at yourself first...to accept your truths and love you just the same.

To show prodigal love, you have to stay in the moment...
with God....and keep peeling the onion of life, of truth and acceptance. No blame. No shame.

The story is told of a man in Italy whose son was estranged from him after a big fight. Just like in your family.

A few months passed without word.

Finally, the father posted a notice all around Rome.

It said, "Palo, I forgive you. I'm sorry. I love you. Please meet me at the square, Saturday at 3pm."

That Saturday, 800 young men named Palo appeared at the square at 3pm.

....we all want to come home...

we all want the love of our parent...

and so often we need a reality nudge in order to be able to take that first step, to take time to...

Be awareness and

Courageously love and take that second chance offered....

All you have to do is see this is indeed
the opportune time.

It's time...

seize the moment...

accept self...

Time after time...