

Making a list...
Crossroads Church 12/5/21

Intro: Kicking off a new series called Making a list – where basically in life there are all kinds of list that we make – grocery list, to do list, ex... Today I want to kick off with the creepiest list of the season. It's the Santa is making a list checking it twice going to find out who is naughty or nice! Creepy because the thought of an overweight white bearded man knowing everything I do and writing it on a list and basically based on that is what I'm getting for Christmas – it was a no-win situation. It's unfortunate but that idea of someone keeping a list and waiting for the opportunity to punish you is brought into our relationship with our creator God. You will hear people use the term "Karma" and even among believers. However, unlike the Hindu / Buddhist concept of Karma – the Christian Faith is something completely different. Now there is the basic principal of "reaping what you have sown" meaning when you do dumb things you tend to get dumb rewards – but here is the big difference – something called "Grace"! If we all got what we deserved very few of us would be here today. I know I would not be on this platform!

I wish I could paint you a picture of what Grace looks like... or maybe someone else has already done that? Name a famous artist? Rembrandt – here is considered his best and most famous work – anyone know what this picture is about? It is the portrayal of the Prodigal Son and it is the ultimate picture of our heavenly father who is full of Grace!

Luke 15:11-12 Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

This parable paints the picture of God as the loving Father who has granted free-will to his sons. The younger son wanted his share of the estate – as the younger son in Jewish culture he would only be getting 1/3 and the older brother 2/3. However, you would only get that after the death of the father. However, as a good loving father (probably against his own desire) gives the younger son his portion of the estate. This also means that the older brother knows exactly what happened.

Luke 15:13-16 “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

The younger son packs it up and goes outside of the boundary of his country and people – a foreign land. He goes “ham” and lives like a crazy person. “Wild Living”

Heb. 11:25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the **pleasures of sin** for a short time.

The scripture doesn't shy away from the fact that sin (anything in opposition to God's moral law) is pleasurable. However, that pleasure will eventually come with a cost... The main reason God is opposed to sin is because of the harm it brings to you!

However, after he has spent everything and there is a famine in the land – he takes the only job he can find and that is as a servant feeding pigs! Jewish culture saw pigs as the lowest life form and basically this puts him at the absolute bottom of life – not only that he is longing to eat what the pigs are eating! But he was getting absolutely no charity!

Luke 15:17 - 20 “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.’ 20 So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

When he came to his senses! Coming to your senses is when you begin to realize that you have made an absolute mess of your life and desperately need the love of a Father to help you out. My Father treats his servants better than I'm being treated – I will go back to my father and let him know that I have sinned against heaven & Him and that I'm no longer worthy to be his son but make me like one of your servants!

So he got up!

But while he was a long way off – his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him and he ran to his son – threw his arms around him and kissed him!!!

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to **seek and to save** what was lost.”

2Pet. 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Luke 15:21 - 24 “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ :22 “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

The son begins to repent and before he can finish the father cuts him off and starts giving orders for his acceptance. A robe for relationship, acceptance, position; A ring which is the symbol for authority; sandals for his feet – a sign of being a free man.

He was dead but he is now alive – he was lost but now is found! This is the case for every human ever to walk planet earth. If you are not in right relationship with your heavenly father you are a part of the walking dead – you are spiritually lost! Dead man coming to life is absolutely worth celebrating!!!

Luke 15:25-27 “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 27 ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

The older brother is out faithfully doing his work in the field and has no clue about what the party is about. As a matter of fact when he finds out he is not very happy about it.

Luke 15:28 – 30 “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 29 But he answered

his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

The older brother is so mad he doesn’t even want to go in! So the consistent nature of the Father – he goes out to him and pleads with him to come in and celebrate. The older brother is a free man but he feels like what he has been doing is slaving for the father by being faithful to him. It doesn’t seem fair that this “son of yours” (not my brother) who has been unfaithful gets the celebration when he comes back.

Luke 15:31-32 “ ‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

The father lets him know that everything he has belongs to him – but we had to celebrate that your brother who was dead is alive again and he was lost and is now found!

Illustration: I was a freshmen in High School...
“You carry my name...and I love you!”

You see this is the most incredible picture painted of a creator God who loves each and everyone of us. Everyone listening to me this morning is in this story!

- 1) You are either in the place of the heavenly father that you are actively looking for the lost!
- 2) You could be in the place of the older brother – you are in the family but self-absorbed and missing the point of sonship!
- 3) Or you are the prodigal who has taken what God has blessed you with and have decided to go your own direction – but today you are coming to your senses!

