

June 18 2017

**Reading from the Bible** *Psalm 89: 20-37*  
*Ephesians 2: 1-10*

**Sermon** *Our Fathers*

Happy Father's Day. How did the celebration of Father's Day start? A few facts from today's Spokesman-Review. While listening to an eloquent church sermon on Mother's Day, 28 year-old Sonora Smart Dodd thought about her father and wondered why there wasn't a special day for fathers. Her mother had passed away when she was a child and her father was left to raise six children. She wrote, I remember everything about my father. He was both a father and mother to me and to my brothers.

So along with Mark Wheeler and George Forbes, Dodd submitted an official petition for the establishment of Father's Day. It was positively received. The first observation was in Spokane in June 19, 1910. The mayor issued a proclamation declaring Father's Day and the governor made the official observation state wide. As years went on, Dodd pursued the effort even further. In 1916 President Woodrow Wilson came to Spokane for Father's Day. In 1924 President Calvin Coolidge recommended that Father's Day be celebrated in all the states. In 1937, Congress was asked to make the third Sunday in June the official Father's Day. President Richard Nixon in 1972 declared the third Sunday in June as Father's Day every year.

I had a different beginning to the message today but decided after seeing the paper this morning, to give you a history lesson on how Father's Day was started. There are all kinds of fathers, short ones, tall ones, skinny ones, and not so skinny ones. There are fathers who have a lot of hair and the ones who used to have a lot of hair, there are athletic fathers and fathers who are more comfortable in front of a computer. There are the fathers who can fix anything and the fathers that can't quite do that.

Most fathers are the best, there to love you and help you with whatever you need help with as you grow and even when you are an adult. They are our example of how we want to be when we become fathers. Sadly, there are fathers who aren't there to love you or help you, or even if they are there they may not love you or know how to show it. In those cases, hopefully there is a grandpa or an uncle who can fill the shoes the father is lacking.

The good news is that no matter what type of father we each have, there is one Father, who has the best of all the attributes that we can give a Father. That Father is God. Even though He knows all about everything on this earth because He created it, He is there for us no matter what. He is a good Father, he is not too busy

for each of us. When we talk to Him, we know that He hears and when we pray, we know that He listens. Even better, He knows what is best for us. He provides our needs and shapes us and disciplines, like a good father would his children.

He wasn't forced to take us in. There was nothing we could have done to earn it. He didn't take us in because we were born into a certain family or country or bloodline or spoke some magical words. He did it because even before the foundation of the world, God chose to adopt us in Christ.

His plan was to give his unique Son, Jesus Christ, to take our place and to pay the debt that we owed. Our sin has earned us nothing but death and hell. But Jesus took our death and all the wrath of hell upon himself, and at the cross, he conquered it all so that we wouldn't get what we deserve, but would receive grace upon grace. He took what we deserved so that we would have what he deserved. The truth that God would give his own Son that he might make us his sons and daughters should produce awe and wonder and amazement in us. What better father could we ever have. We must remember that he is our Father and there for us, through whatever trials and tribulations life may be throwing our way. Matthew 18: 12-14 says, "What do you think? If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety nine on the mountains and go in search for the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost."

Each and every one of us is important to Him no matter how far we stray, no matter the times we question if He is really there for us, no matter what. In the scripture that Ann read for us from Psalm 89, it says, "my children forsake my law and do not walk according to my ordinances, if they violate my statutes and do not keep my commandments, that I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with scourges but I will not remove them from my steadfast love or be false to my faithfulness. We may have to be disciplined but His love never goes away. He is there through it all, the good and the bad and even the ugly.

So remember this from John 14: 1-2 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you."

Our room is waiting for us.

Happy Father's Day