

YOUTH SUNDAY WITNESS

by

Kayla Moody

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(Second Sunday of Lent)



ST. PAUL'S

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

5501 Main Street

Houston, Texas 77004-6917

713-528-0527

www.stpaulshouston.org

Lectionary Texts:

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17-4:1; and Luke 13:31-35

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, “Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.”

²But Abram said, “O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?”

³And Abram said, “You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.”

⁴But the word of the Lord came to him, “This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.”

⁵He brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.”

Then he said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”

⁶And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

⁷Then he said to him, “I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess.”

⁸But he said, “O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?”

⁹He said to him, “Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.”

¹⁰He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. ¹¹And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

¹²As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

¹⁷When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. ¹⁸On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates,

Philippians 3:17-4:1

¹⁷Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. ¹⁹Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. ²⁰But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

Luke 13:31-35

³¹At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.”

³²He said to them, “Go and tell that fox for me, ‘Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. ³³Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.’ ³⁴Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁵See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

Lent is a time when we as Christians remember our weakness as humans and give an honest attempt to position our lives to live through God.

Reading the scripture Philippians with the thought of Lent, the lesson becomes more evident. Paul basically says,

Hey listen, let's step back from our lives and take a look at what society does, but keep in mind that WE are a part of OUR society. Many

people do not believe in Jesus Christ. Yet they will die, their god is their want, and their glory is in their mistakes, and they live just for materialistic items.

BUT we will live to the fullest in heaven, and there we will be with Jesus Christ. He will change our bodies on earth full of flaws to spirits of his glory and passion and only he has the ability to do this. And that is why you, the people who I love and care for, my happiness and pride, should stand up for what you believe in, believe in the Lord my God and my love.

Paul has a great idea. I am a senior at Memorial High School and a Markette social officer. As hectic as life is with school, drill team, family, friends, and balancing everything, some days I forget to add God to the mix. Sometimes we need to step back from everything that we are doing and focus on what is important: God. When we die, all of our earthly positions will no longer matter, but what will matter is how we spent our time on earth. Did we love enough, accept others, laugh enough? Did we spend our time living through the grace of God or did we selfishly live for ourselves?

This season of Lent we are reminded to step back from our daily schedules and remember that God is our savior. God will make us happy and will reward us for our passionate love for him. God constantly shows his love for us. He shows it in the beautiful sunny breezy days, the new flowers sprouting from the ground, and the pitter-patter of rain on a tin roof lulling us to sleep on a cold winter night. God does all of this to show his love for us. Is it too much to ask that in return we love him, and praise him?

In the first lesson, Abram is worried about producing an heir for his possessions. God replies to him “‘Look toward heaven and count the starts, if you are able to count them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’”

No one can truly count all of the stars in the night sky. Well, maybe in Houston with the smog and the city lights in the way, but not in a desert when the night sky shines with stars that blanket the black sky. However God was right in saying

Abram would have as many descendents as the stars in the sky. Abram went on to have descendents and his children had children, and the pattern continued. The lesson continued that “ [Abram] believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.”

That is an amazing idea, to believe in the Lord our God, and he will take care of us, no matter what!

I am a Heath Occupational Student of America, and as a HOSA student I get to shadow health care professionals at the hospital twice a week for an hour. On one of my rounds I was shadowing a Physical Therapist. I went into the rounds knowing that Physical Therapists were mistreated because they were the “bad guys” who made you move and exert energy after surgery. However my prior knowledge did not prepare me for the mal-treatment that I witnessed that day.

The Physical Therapist was dealing with a stubborn patient who wanted to do things his way. The patient was aggravated that after years of freedom he was now confined to a hospital bed hooked up to monitors. The patient was anxious to get to his feet, but the lady had to work according to guidelines established by the hospital. He then lost his patience and began verbally abusing her. The woman did not once act out against the man for his rude behavior, but kept a cheerful and calm disposition.

Once given the opportunity, the man attempted to “hop” onto the floor. As his feet touched the ground it was evident that he would not be able to stand on his own. Before the patient could crash on the ground the Physical Therapist caught him and saved him from a dreadful fall.

Even though the patient had been against her assistance every step of the way, she still helped him. She knew that he was not ready to stand on his own, and she knew that no matter how many times she told him he shouldn't over exert himself, he would only learn if he experienced it on his own. She did not let his rude words and harsh tone affect her from protecting him from his own doings.

Jesus went through a similar situation when in Jerusalem. Jesus arrived in Jerusalem to “cast out demons and perform cures.” Yet the people resisted because

they believed that Jesus was wrong. Jesus knew what was best for the people in Jerusalem because God has told him what to do, and God knows what is best for us. We should not question his reasons, but instead trust in him to keep us safe. Like the patient, we all fall every once and a while, but good news, God is there to catch us before we land on the floor.