



Pastor Hanke's Blog

March 31, 2019

The Party

Bible Reference: Luke 15:1–3, 11–32

Some stories we know by heart and can tell them over and over again. We may be so familiar with them that we think we know every detail, but the truth is some details stick with us while others get lost. That is how the story of the prodigal son was for me. I felt like I had heard this story so much that I knew every detail. Recently, though, I revisited it and saw it through fresh eyes. Believe it or not, parties are a huge part of the prodigal son story!

While on earth, Jesus told a story of a younger brother who wanted to leave home and find the parties of life. However, since the brother didn't have enough money to leave, he asked his father for his part of the family inheritance early. Essentially, this was like asking for his dad to die. This is a huge deal! The whole community would have been angry with the younger brother for basically saying that his father was dead to him.

Later in the story when that same brother came crawling back home, dad threw a party for him, even after all he had done. This party was also a huge deal! It showed the father's great love for his son and how he accepted his son back into his life despite the son's actions. The party had its drama though, as the older brother showed up to make a scene about his brother's welcome home.

There are times when the church has a reason to party and celebrate with one another. What a great opportunity to invite the community in to celebrate with us! Jesus did this all the time when He sat and ate with people. Why is it, then, that we often struggle with it? As we continue our focus on transforming this community, parties are indeed an opportunity to invite people in and make them one of us.

This weekend we take a closer look at the details that make up this well-known story of the prodigal son. We'll revisit the ways that parties impact this story, and ask ourselves what it teaches us about loving our community and making people feel like they are a part of us. I hope to see you Sunday.

God's Peace,

Pastor Will