

5th September 2021

Connect



News from Riverstone Community Church



Father's Day.

<p>Today Father's Day Speaker: Linc Marlow</p>	<p>12th September Open Worship Speaker: Oskars Stubis</p>	<p>If you've missed out on an earlier streamed service. They are still available on line. Select "Fit to Page" or "Shrink to Page" when printing this Connect.</p>
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Prayer, Praise & News.

- * Interstate Family –
Praise – That the court proceedings went very well.
A great relief for the mother and three children.
- * Ted Davis – Recovering from major spinal surgery.
Praise – For the continued progress.
- * Heather Davis – Now had her third round of chemotherapy.
Praise – That the tumour has stopped growing.
Pray – That the tumour will shrink.
- * Mike & Pauline's friends – Seriously ill from Covid-19.
Laneta (mother) has died with pneumonia. Isaako (the father) is in ICU.
There are three children, now without a mother.
Pray – That Isaako recovers.
Eric (Mike's school friend)
Pray – That he recovers from pneumonia and Covid-19.
- * HSC Students – Ben Gross, Amity Jackson, Elijah Marlow, Georgia Owen, and Chloe Boucher
Pray – That they can overcome the difficulties of lockdown.
- * Afghanistan –
Pray – For those in Afghanistan – Especially for Christians that they will be strengthened.
- * Australian Governments – Federal and State.
Pray – That they will be able to focus on the important issues.

Financials



BSB 062596 A/C 00903153

Birthdays this week

- Monday Patricia Gummerson
- Tuesday Ian Wallace
- Wednesday Faith Connell
- Thursday Josh Webb
- Friday Tara Waller
- Saturday Jacqueline Wood



Anniversary this week

- Thursday Wayne & Vivienne Speirs





The plight of the prodigal son is a familiar biblical story that has been repeated for the benefit of many young people throughout the ages and surely is repeated today. The primary message of this parable is, of course, that the prodigal “came to himself” — that is, repented of his sin and thus was restored in his relationship with his family. But what may have happened to this young prodigal if his father had not been waiting in the pathway as he made those last humbling steps toward home?

In Luke 15:20, just three of the phrases in this verse will provide sound wisdom for the man of God who desires to be an effective father. The first phrase is, “But while he was still far off.” This father, although loving his son enough to “let go,” never stopped praying for his son’s safe return. The father could have said to himself, “That unappreciative brat! He took my money and went; well, now he’s on his own. My responsibility is over.” Instead we see a father preparing for his son’s return as he waits for the Holy Spirit to touch the heart of the young prodigal.

What do you do when your children are “far off”? That can range from being away at college to not living up to your expectations, or to God’s expectations for them, to making home life chaotic because of their rebellion against authority, to growing up faster than necessary, to a lack of appreciation for all you do on their behalf. What do you do?

The advice we receive from this parable from Jesus is to “be there.” The prodigal’s father did not give up; he exercised patience; he was able to wait on the Lord. That can only happen if that father has a close and ongoing relationship with the Lord Himself.

In the parable, a pre-established relationship with God enabled the father to literally wait in the pathway until his son came to his senses through the power of God. This requires spiritual staying power. If you are going through that at this moment, then trust God and seek His face daily in prayer. Those who may one day be in the position of the prodigal father are wise if they establish a spiritual foundation while it is easier to do so.

Then beyond his ability to wait, our text tells us that the prodigal’s father was filled with compassion: his mercy was like the mercy of God. Imagine having your temper or need to get retribution so in check that you could only demonstrate mercy and compassion. One of the reasons why there are so many dysfunctional adults today is because they’ve never heard the words “I love you” or “You’re forgiven” from a compassionate Christian father. It happens because (1) a father abdicates by leaving a marriage or his role as a father; (2) it happens because a father has never experienced God’s forgiveness himself, therefore forgiving others, particularly his own children, becomes insurmountable; (3) it happens because the models he had growing up were negative or abusive.

Luke 15:20 tells us that included in this father’s forgiveness was a ready response. The text says, “He put his arms around him and kissed him.” The prodigal knew he was forgiven!



**The Parable
of the
Lost Son
and the
Forgiving Father**

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