

## Sermon for September 29, 2013

### Nineteenth Sunday of Pentecost, Luke 10:17-20

BLESSINGS TO YOU AND PEACE FROM GOD THE FATHER, OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

As you might have guessed by the children's sermon today and by the song we just heard played the idea of **'home'** has been on my mind this week as it has popped up in **many** conversations I have had. I have been thinking about what the **concept** of 'home' means to us as people **trying** to get by in the world today. In this song we heard by Phillip Phillips the lyrics say, "Hold on to me as we go as we roll down this unfamiliar road and although this wave is stringing us along—just know you're not alone—cause I'm gonna make this place your home. Settle down, it'll all be clear don't pay no mind to the demons they fill you with fear—the trouble it might drag you down—if you get lost, you can always be found—just know you're not alone—cause I'm gonna make this place your home."

**Home**--The dictionary defines it as: the place in which one's domestic affections are centered. The place or region where something is native or most common. Some of the synonyms for home are: *at ease, familiar, at rest, haven, sanctuary, base, a place of comfort, center, foundation, and security.*

In the movie 'The Wizard of Oz' we hear Dorothy say *'there's **no** place like home'* as she clicks together the heels of her **ruby** slippers so she can return to her

**beloved** home in Kansas. Many of us have heard the phrase *'home is where the heart is'* or *'home is where we hang our hat'* or when someone dies we might hear, *'they have gone "home" to be with the Lord'*. Since I have been here at Eden I have heard **many** people refer to this church as 'home' **even if** they have moved away from here and **not** been back for many years.

I would venture to say that **many** of us have been blessed with a home where we feel **comfort** like **no** other place in the world. A place that we **long for** when we are away from it. A place where **contentment and security** are a given.

Each month I see **many** people who are in need. One man in particular who comes into my office pretty regularly for a food card has **quite** a story to tell. First of all, he has to take **2 buses** to get to Eden to get his card. He lives in a rather **rough** part of San Bernardino where **crime** is a daily and nightly occurrence. Because of this he does **not** even go out of his apartment at night. As one of **12** children he has spent **much** of his life living in motels, **traveling** from one place to another, **in and out** of jail. The other day we were talking about what **'home'** means to him. He said, *"Reverend, home is important to me because for so much of my life I have not had one. I did not know where I would be from one day to the next. I do not take my home for granted because unless you have not had one you do not know what it means to have a place to lay your head every night."* He and I

talk about our **earthly** home in contrast to the **heavenly** home that God has promised us by virtue of our baptism.

There is **something** to be said for home, no matter **where** it is, no matter **what** it looks like, no matter **how big or small** it is. There is a **comfort** in being at home. I pray **your** home is a place where you can relax, be yourself, a place where your soul feels at rest, a place of solace and refuge, and a place where you feel a sense of comfort and peace you might not find any other place on this earth.

Home—*‘trouble it may drag you down if you get lost you can always be found. Just know you’re not alone—cause I’m gonna make this place your home.’*

In our **first** two readings for this morning we heard from the two apocalyptic books of the bible, Daniel and Revelation. In Daniel the angel Michael had come down to help Daniel *understand with further vision* what is to happen at the end of days—the people shall be delivered, many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life. The wise will shine like the brightness of the sky. Those who have their names written in the book will go **‘home’** to live with God forever.

In our Sunday morning **Song and Study** hour we have just finished the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation where it talks about those who were marked with the seal of God on their foreheads. Then we read about the great multitudes that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne

crying out in a loud voice. These were the ones who came out of the **great tribulation** to be ‘**home**’ in heaven. We read, “*Never again will they hunger, never again will they thirst, the sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat, for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, he will lead them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.*” What **great** words of hope for all of us. Today we heard **more** words of hope in Revelation 12 when we read about the **war** in heaven which will be **defeated** by the power and authority of the Messiah. *Rejoice then, you heavens and those who dwell in them.* Those who dwell in their heavenly home.

In our gospel reading for today we hear the **end** of the story of when Jesus sent out **70 disciples** 2 by 2. They went out with **nothing** but the clothes on their backs. They returned to Jesus filled with joy because they could do **all** sorts of **miraculous** things in His name. They had **wondrous** powers because of the **name** of Jesus. They had **authority, dominance** over the enemy, and **nothing** would hurt them. But here is the most important part when Jesus says, “*Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.*” That was the **important** part. Their names were **written** in heaven. They **received** the promise that they would go ‘**home**’ to be with Jesus.

You see there is **nothing** more important than that for us as Christians. This home of ours here on earth is **temporary**. It will not last. Oh, it may give us

comfort and security for today but will that comfort and security **last** forever? I think not!!!

As human beings we have something inside of us that **searches and longs** for a connection, a tie with a **community beyond ourselves**. To be connected to something which will **endure**, something that will **never fail** us, something that we can call our **true ‘home’**. We know the truth that **only God** can satisfy that longing. Knowing and trusting in God gives to us the opportunity to have comfort and security for all time. God **promises us** a home in heaven **unlike** anything we could ever imagine here on earth. How could **anything** we have here **ever** compare to what God has to offer us? Some of the **same** synonyms we have for home: *at ease, familiar, at rest, haven, sanctuary, base, a place of comfort, center, foundation, and security* most **certainly** would apply to our lives with God in our heavenly home.

All we have to do is **believe**. **Believe** in Him, **believe** that what he tells us is true that as **disciples** of Jesus we are to **rejoice** that our names are written in heaven because we have received the **promise** in our baptism—that we are marked with the sign of the cross forever. The idea of home—as **important** as it is for us **now** in this world—it is **nothing** compared to the importance of **‘home’** when it comes to being in heaven and living with God and Jesus for **all** eternity. As believers we **trust** in the blessing and the baptismal promise for us that when it is

**our** time to go ‘home’ we will be with God **forever**. As it said in the song, “*Settle down, it’ll all be clear, don’t pay no mind to the demons they fill you with fear—the trouble it might drag you down, if you get lost, you can always be found—just know you’re not alone—cause I’m gonna make this place your home.*” **AMEN.**