

# Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

*You Must be Born Again!*

[www.sermonaudio.com/crc](http://www.sermonaudio.com/crc)

[www.unholycharade.com](http://www.unholycharade.com)

[www.lightfordarktimes.com](http://www.lightfordarktimes.com)

Christ Reformation Church – YouTube Channel

## *Train Up a Child – Raising our Children as the Lord Raises His*

*09 – David, Absalom, & Adonijah*

*September 26, 2021*

**Sermon Text:** Assorted

**Scripture Reading:** 2 Samuel 13

Pro 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

Last time we looked at the parable of the prodigal son (“Prodigal” means a person who recklessly wastes resources), and we made some applications of principles we can apply to situations today when a son or daughter goes the way that young man did. And this morning I would like us to think some more about this subject and in particular look at a very common mistake that is so easy to make not only when confronted with a prodigal child, but at any time someone we know

chooses to go the way of the world and ends up in the pig pen.

To begin, I want us to consider this:

Luk 15:22-24 But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. (23) And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. (24) For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

I mentioned last time that one of the hardest and most painful aspects of having a child like this prodigal is to realize that the little boy or girl we knew in their early years no longer exists. This is the cruelty of the devil when he is successful in his wicked, tempting machinations of evil. He seeks to destroy. To kill. To oppose all our efforts to lead our children to Christ.

And you see it here in the father’s words – “this my son was dead.” As if to say, “my son was lost to me. He left our home. He left our God. The boy I

knew was no more.” The devil takes great delight in all of this destruction and loss.

But we also need to note that, even though very few prodigals come to their senses, repent, confess their sin and return to the Lord (remember, the father here represents God), some do and I think that any parent who is going through what this father did can take hope in knowing that *even though that little boy or girl you loved and still love no longer exists, Christ is able to make a prodigal rise from the dead and restore him to Himself and to you.* That change, if it happens however, is going to take place in the pig pen, out in the world among the devil’s people. One of the things you can pray for is that the prodigal *will cease to be able to pay anything to the worldlings he has chosen to live among. That all his resources, whatever they might be, run out and the world will drop him like a hot rock.*

Now, I want to talk about this very common trap we are tempted by when someone we know chooses the way of the prodigal. When they choose the world, rebel against God. Some turn out to be full blown sociopaths with no conscience, or a self-consumed narcissist who insists that they are the center of the universe and demand you worship them.

Let’s begin here – and let me say that I am largely showing you these scriptures for your consideration. I think that they give us some real wisdom on this subject, but I don’t pretend to be expert on every nuance of it. Those of you who have suffered the experiences of losing someone to the world will probably have some insights I do not have.

2Sa 13:39 And the spirit of the king longed to go out to Absalom, because he was comforted about Amnon, since he was dead.

2Sa 14:24-26 And the king said, “Let him dwell apart in his own house; he is not to come into my presence.” So Absalom lived apart in his own house and did not come into the king's presence. (25) Now in all Israel there was no one so much to be praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom. From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. (26) And when he cut the hair of his head (for at the end of every year he used to cut it; when it was heavy on him, he cut it), he weighed the hair of his head, two hundred shekels by the king's weight.

2Sa 14:33 Then Joab went to the king and told him, and he summoned Absalom. So he came to the king and bowed himself on his face to the ground

before the king, and the king kissed Absalom.

2Sa 15:1-14 After this Absalom got himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him. (2) And Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way of the gate. And when any man had a dispute to come before the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And when he said, "Your servant is of such and such a tribe in Israel," (3) Absalom would say to him, "See, your claims are good and right, but there is no man designated by the king to hear you." (4) Then Absalom would say, "Oh that I were judge in the land! Then every man with a dispute or cause might come to me, and I would give him justice." (5) And whenever a man came near to pay homage to him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him. (6) Thus Absalom did to all of Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. (7) And at the end of four years Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed to the LORD, in Hebron. (8) For your servant vowed a vow while I lived at Geshur in Aram, saying, 'If the LORD will indeed bring me back to Jerusalem, then I will offer worship to the LORD.'" (9) The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he arose and went to Hebron. (10) But Absalom

sent secret messengers throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then say, 'Absalom is king at Hebron!'" (11) With Absalom went two hundred men from Jerusalem who were invited guests, and they went in their innocence and knew nothing. (12) And while Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh. And the conspiracy grew strong, and the people with Absalom kept increasing. (13) And a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom." (14) Then David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Arise, and let us flee, or else there will be no escape for us from Absalom. Go quickly, lest he overtake us quickly and bring down ruin on us and strike the city with the edge of the sword."

2Sa 16:20-22 Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give your counsel. What shall we do?" (21) Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the house, and all Israel will hear that you have made yourself a stench to your father, and the hands of all who are with you will be strengthened." (22) So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof. And Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all

Israel.

2Sa 18:5 And the king ordered Joab and Abishai and Ittai, “Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom.” And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all the commanders about Absalom.

2Sa 18:31-33 And behold, the Cushite came, and the Cushite said, “Good news for my lord the king! For the LORD has delivered you this day from the hand of all who rose up against you.” (32) The king said to the Cushite, “Is it well with the young man Absalom?” And the Cushite answered, “May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up against you for evil be like that young man.” (33) And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And as he went, he said, “O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!”

2Sa 19:1-7 It was told Joab, “Behold, the king is weeping and mourning for Absalom.” (2) So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the people, for the people heard that day, “The king is grieving for his son.” (3) And the people stole into the city that day as people steal in who are ashamed when they flee in battle. (4) The king covered his face, and the king cried

with a loud voice, “O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!” (5) Then Joab came into the house to the king and said, “You have today covered with shame the faces of all your servants, who have this day saved your life and the lives of your sons and your daughters and the lives of your wives and your concubines, (6) because you love those who hate you and hate those who love you. For you have made it clear today that commanders and servants are nothing to you, for today I know that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead today, then you would be pleased. (7) Now therefore arise, go out and speak kindly to your servants, for I swear by the LORD, if you do not go, not a man will stay with you this night, and this will be worse for you than all the evil that has come upon you from your youth until now.”

Now, I suggest that we are seeing in these scriptures a flaw in David’s character when it came to his children – and specifically when it came to his evil children like Absalom. Consider this as well:

1Ki 1:1-6 Now King David was old and advanced in years. And although they covered him with clothes, he could not get warm. (2) Therefore his servants said to him, “Let a young woman be sought for my lord the king,

and let her wait on the king and be in his service. Let her lie in your arms, that my lord the king may be warm.” (3) So they sought for a beautiful young woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. (4) The young woman was very beautiful, and she was of service to the king and attended to him, but the king knew her not. (5) Now Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, “I will be king.” And he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. (6) His father had never at any time displeased him by asking, “Why have you done thus and so?” He was also a very handsome man, and he was born next after Absalom.

*His father had never at any time displeased him.* David spoiled him rotten and most likely had done so with Absalom. “Look at those boys! Those are real men! My sons!” And I think that if we go back in David’s history, we perhaps see the roots of where he learned this very destructive thinking:

1Sa 8:1-5 When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. (2) The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. (3) Yet his sons did not walk in his ways but

turned aside after gain. They took bribes and perverted justice. (4) Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah (5) and said to him, “Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations.”

1Sa 2:12 Now the sons of Eli were worthless men. They did not know the LORD.

1Sa 2:22-26 Now Eli was very old, and he kept hearing all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who were serving at the entrance to the tent of meeting. (23) And he said to them, “Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all these people. (24) No, my sons; it is no good report that I hear the people of the LORD spreading abroad. (25) If someone sins against a man, God will mediate for him, but if someone sins against the LORD, who can intercede for him?” But they would not listen to the voice of their father, for it was the will of the LORD to put them to death. (26) Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the LORD and also with man.

For all of his godly qualities, as a man after God’s own heart, David had his grievous sins as we know. But what I



would suggest here is that there is another flaw and sin in him – *David was not a good father*. One of his chief sins in this respect was that he favored and was partial to his handsome sons. He spoiled them. He did not correct them. And *both of them turned on him and would have killed him to take his crown*. Even in all of this, and this is the primary point I want us to think about, is that *David gave his attention and energies to his wicked sons while neglecting his good sons and daughters*.

Here is a principle that I would like you to think about carefully. I have seen it play itself out over and over and over in the family I grew up in, and in many other families I have seen over the years. Also in church families where an evil counterfeit Christian is causing great harm:

*When a person we know and even love chooses to walk in sin, refuses to repent, chooses the world, and their sin causes great harm to themselves (the pig pen) and to others, there is a bent, a tendency in us to focus our energies and attention upon them and to neglect the righteous, the good children, the real Christians. This neglect, if left unchecked, produces great hurt and resentment in those who deserve our energy and attention.*

This was David's sin and it is what Joab confronted him on.

The thing is ironic. Here is an evil person, a prodigal son or daughter or some prodigal church member you might call them, whose life is a disaster as a result of their own willful sin. They are a grief to their mother or father. Or they are a grief to the rest of the church family. In fact, they despise their mother and father. They despise their church family. *And yet it is to them that so typically our energies and attention are given!*

I don't recall the name of the book, but some years back Craig showed Mack and I a book that talked about the mistake of spending inordinate amounts of time on the wrong people, which inevitably means we are neglecting the right people.

I mentioned that I saw this dynamic play itself out in the family I grew up in. My parents focused their energies and resources in their later years on the adult child who brought incredible grief and damage into their home. As a result, they failed to build relationships with their children and grandchildren who were godly and who genuinely loved them. Toward the end of their lives they complained that the good kids didn't come to see them. But in fact they had alienated the good kids by

neglecting them and making the wicked one their focal point.

Why is this? Why did David spoil and focus upon Absalom and Adonijah – two sons who would try to kill him and steal his crown? Why does a parent of a prodigal do this? Is it because we cannot bear to accept the truth that our own child hates us? After all, that is a pretty hard pill to swallow isn't it? Nevertheless:

Pro 15:20 A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish man despises his mother.

Pro 30:17 The eye that mocks a father and scorns to obey a mother will be picked out by the ravens of the valley and eaten by the vultures.

Do you see the pattern? It is ironic. Unless we are wise, this trap will consume us and we will do great damage. On top of that, we will not be providing the prodigal with what they really need. It is ironic because we will end up pouring ourselves into the one who hates us, and neglecting the ones who love us.

One of the very common tactics of evil is that it works to consume us. Evil people often want us to feel sorry for them. They consume us with their

constant drama of their own sinful making. And typically they are so successful at this ploy that we can become entirely focused upon them in our thinking and emotions and resources. What happens then? We neglect those who really love us and who really want to walk with the Lord.

I think that Mack and Craig will agree, as will most of you because you have lived it yourself, that over the years in this church – even though we are often accused of being too “harsh” – we have devoted waaaaaay too much time and energy to people who caused all kinds of trouble and division and who had no intention of repenting. They despised us. And they despised God. I have no doubt that it would have been better to put them out from among us much sooner than we did – and in later years I think we have learned to do this.

We all need to give our attention and energies to people, whether they be our children or people who claim to be Christians...to people who genuinely desire to follow Christ. And we need to stop being sucked dry by the black hole people who drain us and cause us to neglect the people who truly love us and who love the Lord.

Rom 16:17-19 I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who **cause divisions** and create obstacles

contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; **avoid them.** (18) For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. (19) For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil.

Avoid them. Don't give yourself to them. Be wise. In doing this, you will be giving yourself to people who you really can help, and handing the prodigal over to the only One who can help them.