

**“THE AUCTION”**  
**Hebrews 12: 1-11**  
**Holiday Island Presbyterian Church**  
**June 18, 2017**

**INTRODUCTION:**

**Let me begin this morning,  
with Paul Harvey's definition of a father...**

**"A father is a thing that is forced to endure childbirth without an anesthetic...  
A father never feels worthy of the worship in a child's eyes.  
He's never quite the hero his daughter thinks,  
never quite the man his son believes him to be,  
and this worries him, sometimes.**

**So he works too hard to try and smooth out the rough places  
in the road for those of his own who will follow him....**

**Fathers are what give daughters away  
to other men who aren't nearly good enough,  
so they can have grandchildren who are smarter than anybody's.**

**Fathers make bets with insurance companies  
about who'll live the longest.  
One day they lose and the bet's paid off  
to the part of them they leave behind."**

**It is Father's Day . . .  
. . . a day we set aside to honor fathers  
- not just biological fathers  
- but those who served as father-figures to us**

**And here is an amazing thought:  
If you were blessed to have a wonderful father  
- this is a good time to be thankful for that**

**If your father was like most of our fathers  
just an ordinary man who did his best with what he had  
- this is a good time to remember he had a lot to do**

with how we turned out;  
the kind of person we have become.

If your father was not there for you . . .  
. . . if you think hard enough  
you'll realize that God put someone in your life  
to serve as the father you didn't have.

And even more amazing . . .  
You still have the opportunity  
to be a father figure to someone else!

Just think of the collected experience and wisdom  
of Orvey Eklund and Bob Houston.  
They could teach each one of us how to grow old gracefully.

Three men - other than my father -  
had an enormous influence on my life.

Glen Moats - had a lake house next to ours.  
He taught me how to fish when my father was too busy.

Ishmael Bustinza - a college professor  
from whom I never had a class  
taught me how to think  
and opened for me a world in literature I never knew existed.

And Dr. Charles Kemp -  
- who spent countless hours with me  
teaching me how to be an effective pastor from his experience.

Each of you have your own stories - and memories -  
- of your fathers and those who served as father-figures.

But I want to share with you a story about a father  
that I ran across a few years ago.  
If you have heard this story, it bears repeating.

There once was a wealthy man

**who live alone with his son.**

**They spent a lot of time together  
and one of their favorite activities  
was to collect rare works of art.**

**They took long trips together all over the world  
to find and purchase art to add to their collection -  
- they had everything in their collection,  
from Picasso to Raphael.**

**Often they would stroll the halls of their magnificent home  
and admire the great works of art.  
But mostly to remember the time they shared  
as they collected each one.**

**In the dining hall, they hung their favorite painting  
so they could look at it each evening as they shared a meal.**

**One day, the son approached the father  
with a very serious matter on his mind.  
War had broken out and the son felt he was needed.  
The father reluctantly consented and sent his son off to war.**

**Well, not long after that,  
the father received notice that his son had died -  
- a very courageous death while saving others.  
And the father grieved deeply over the son's death.**

**The father stopped walking the halls,  
and stopped having meals in the dining hall.  
He stopped receiving visitors  
and mostly kept to himself.**

**About a month later, just before Christmas,  
A visitor arrived at the father's home.**

**It was a young man with a large package in his hands.  
He said, 'Sir, you don't know me,**

but I am a soldier for whom your son gave his life.  
He saved many lives that day,  
and he was carrying me to safety when he died.  
He often talked about you, and your love for art.'

The young man held out this package.  
'I know this isn't much.  
I'm not really an accomplished artist,  
but I think your son would have wanted you to have this.'

The father opened the package.  
It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man.  
It wasn't very good; certainly not a master quality painting.  
But if you squinted your eyes a little  
it seemed to capture the personality of the son perfectly.

He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture.  
'Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me.  
It's a gift.'

The father hung the portrait over his mantle.  
And he began having dinner in the dining hall once again.  
He even opened his home to visitors to come see his art.

Every time visitors came to his home  
he would give them a tour of his collection  
always ending in the dining hall with the portrait of his son.

It was not long after that,  
the man passed away peacefully in his sleep.

Since his son was his only heir,  
there was to be a great auction to disperse his estate  
including the collection of his paintings.

The entire art world was excited!  
Many rich and influential people gathered,  
excited over seeing the great paintings  
and having an opportunity to purchase one for themselves.

At the appointed hour, the auctioneer took his place.  
The first item up for bid was the painting of the son.

It was a little tawdry compared to the masters,  
but the auctioneer pounded his gavel and said,  
'We will start the bidding with this picture of the son.  
What am I bid for this picture?'

There was silence. . .

Then a voice in the back of the room shouted,  
'We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one.'

But the auctioneer persisted.  
'Will somebody bid for this painting?  
Who will start the bidding?  
Do I hear \$500, \$200, perhaps \$100?'

Another bidder yelled  
'We didn't come to see *this* . . . this . . . painting.  
Move along to the Van Gogh's, the Rembrandts.  
But still the auctioneer continued.  
The terms of the will dictate  
that the painting of the son must be auctioned first.  
Who'll take the son?'

Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room.  
It was the longtime gardener of the man and his son.  
He had squinted his eyes just right  
and had seen the value and beauty of the picture.

He quickly checked his pockets and counted his money.  
'I'll give \$14 for the painting. . . '  
Being a poor man, it was all he had.  
The crowd shouted:  
'Give it to him for \$14.  
Let's move on to the masters.'

They didn't want the picture of the son.  
They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections.

**The auctioneer pounded the gavel . . .  
'Going once, twice, SOLD for \$14!'**

**Then the auctioneer announced,  
"Thank you for coming today.  
This concludes the auction."**

**The crowd went crazy!  
'What about the *real* paintings?'  
"What about the masters we came to purchase?"**

**The auctioneer responded,  
'I am sorry.  
When I was called to conduct this auction,  
I was told of a secret stipulation in the will . . .  
one I was not a liberty to announce until this time.**

**Only the painting of the son would be auctioned.  
Whoever takes the son,  
would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings.  
The man who takes the son gets everything!**

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**God gave His son over 2,000 years ago to die on the Cross.  
Much like the auctioneer,  
God's message today is:  
His message today is: whoever takes the Son gets everything!**