

Homeless

by Ingimar De Ridder

Jesus' homelessness teaches us the importance of hospitality, welcoming the Son of God in our lives, and dedicating our homes and hearts to God.

Scripture: Matthew 7:24, Luke 9:58, John 1:11, 2 Corinthians 8:9, Hebrews 13:2

Topics: "Christian Hospitality", "Spiritual Homelessness"

Description

Ingimar De Ridder preaches about the homelessness of Jesus, emphasizing how He identified with the lost and rejected by being born in a stable, seeking shelter as a refugee, and sleeping under the canopy of heaven. Through Christ's homelessness, we learn the importance of hospitality, love, and recognizing that this world is not our permanent home but a pilgrimage towards eternity. The sermon highlights the significance of dedicating our homes to God, welcoming Jesus in, and building a solid foundation of faith to avoid being spiritually homeless.

Transcript

He was Homeless. It is hard for most of us to imagine being homeless. The idea of being homeless never crosses our minds, until we see that person living in a cardboard box, or that family living in a station wagon, or those people under an overpass warming themselves by a fire. When we see them we might have pity or we might think of them "losers." Rather than a "loser," I believe Jesus would rather we see them as "lost." If anyone in life has ever lost, it is he who has lost his home. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. Some people live in castles, some find rest among the catacombs, but even there some find comfort and protection from the harsh elements of the world. Jesus said, "the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have their nest, but the Son of Man has no where to lay His head." The writer of Hebrews says that He was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." Few know what it is to feel the infirmity of being "homeless." Most of us have some door to close at night. Most have a hearth. Most have a place to go. Almost as if to teach us that this world is not our home, the Lord Jesus was (at least for three and a half years) homeless. Many people are homeless in this world. Jesus identified with them. And no more than He knew, that this world is not our home..

He was born in a stable. He and His parents were refugees in Egypt. He was an itinerant preacher that slept under the canopy of heaven, when He didn't have a home to go to. There are lessons even in this "homelessness" of our Lord.

Jesus went where He was welcome. Once again His homelessness was a test for us more than it was a trial for Him. From the first foolish innkeeper at Bethlehem, to doorman at the church at Laodicea, woe to the person or group that has no room for Jesus. That the Son of God should have to sleep in our streets is an indictment against us. And that a whole generation missed Him when he stood on their doorstep is a shameful breach of law of love and kindness. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

The next time we turn the key to our well constructed homes (which, by the way, would make Herod the Great green with jealousy) let us think of the Homeless Son of God who was not welcome in this world. Isaiah called Him "rejected."

"Where dwellest thou?" Asked two of John's disciples. Jesus answered "Come and see." Think of what "hospitality" is to the homeless. Generally, today our hospitality is to those who need it least. There was a time when there were no such things as hotels. Travelers found "hostels" or inns where they could take shelter and maybe find a bite to eat. Such a place is described in the story of the Good Samaritan. In that parable, the religious crowd (priest and Levite) were of no help to the wounded soul on the Jericho road. They either ignored him or gave him a wide berth. The Samaritan did what he could and brought him to shelter. A homeless person needs shelter. While the church still has "homeless shelters," few are involved in this messy ministry. Even fewer would even think to open up their own home to a stranger. The homeless also need love. They need to see our love, but more than that, they need to know God's love.

The second thing we might learn from Christ's self-imposed homelessness (as an traveling minister) was that life is a pilgrimage. We are all on our way to eternity. We are just passing through this world unto a "world to come" (Lk. 18:30). We all need stopping off places along the way. We sometimes think of Christ as "that homeless stranger." It might be better to say that He was "houseless." When the Lord Jesus spoke of home, He spoke of the Father's house. It is one thing to be houseless and another to be homeless. The Christian can never be homeless, even if he finds himself far from home. Some have found themselves houseless, because of war, or fire, or earthquakes, floods, tornados and hurricanes. Under such circumstances, the believer remembers that "this world is not my home, I just-a-passing through," as the song goes. If you have never been "houseless" praise God, but look around at the many not as fortunate and remember the Good Samaritan.

If you are not "houseless" or "homeless" should not that house be dedicated to God. Joshua said "as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." Consider how blessed a home might be if it is dedicated to God. Think of how blessed it might become when the Lord Jesus is welcomed in. The New Testament is filled with homes that held precious memories of being visited by such a Special Guest. If He were not "homeless," perhaps He would not have gone into so many homes, or sat at so many tables. He was homeless in order to give us an opportunity to welcome Him. Consider that happy home in Cana where He changed the water into wine. Consider the home in Bethany where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were blessed by His presence. Consider what would have happened (or not happened) on the road to Emmaus if those disciples had not "constrained him, saying, Abide with us" (Lk. 24:29). In Hebrews 2:9 we learn that some have "entertained angels unaware." The Lord instructed his disciples to look for the spirit of holy hospitality as they ministered (Lk. 10:5). Hospitality is a spiritual gift. The gift of hospitality is not so much the ability to "entertain," but the ability to make someone "feel welcome."

A house is not a home. When the Lord spoke about the house in Mat. 7:24 He was not speaking about curtains or parquet floors. He was talking about a small community of faith that was founded on the solid foundation of God's word. Too many are "homeless" because they did not heed the Builder's advice.

Instead, they built on the sand of emotions, feelings, superstitions, or self-will only to have everything washed away in some great storm of life. The Lord Jesus came into our world as a poor traveling stranger. He was also homeless. He became "poor" in order that we might become something "rich." (2 Cor. 8:9) On His way to the cross, His "poverty" left us many lessons. Because He was also "sinless," this single death offers salvation to all and no one needs to be God-less.

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