

MY FATHER'S HOUSE
Luke 2:49, John 2:16 & John 14:2

INTRODUCTION:

The band Audio Adrenalin recorded it in 1993 and our youth sang it just this morning. The song is "Big House". Just in case you forgot the lyrics...or didn't catch them all the first time through, let me read them for you.

Big house

*I don't know where you lay your head
Or where you call your home
I don't know where you eat your meals
Or where you talk on the phone
I don't know if you got a cook
A butler or a maid
I don't know if you got a yard
With a hammock in the shade*

*I don't know if you got some shelter
Say a place to hide
I don't know if you live with friends
In whom you can confide
I don't know if you got a family
Say a mom or dad
I don't know if you feel love at all
But I bet you wish you had*

*Pre-chorus
Come and go with me
To my fathers house
Come and go with me
To my fathers house*

*Chorus
It's a big big house
With lots and lots a room
A big big table
With lots and lots of food
A big big yard
Where we can play football
A big big house
Its my fathers house*

For the last few weeks, we've been looking at some very important three-word phrases from the Bible. We've considered phrases like

- Where Are You?
- Choose For Yourselves
- Here Am I
- and Come Lord Jesus

This morning, I want you to think about the phrase “My Father’s House.” Three different times in the Bible, Jesus is recorded as having said those three words. Once was when he was a youth, twelve years of age. Once was at the beginning of his public ministry and once was near the end of his life.

I. **LUKE 2:49**

If we draw near to Luke 2:49, we see a youthful, fresh-faced Jesus when he was twelve years old. His parents had taken him from his boyhood home of Nazareth to the capital city of Jerusalem. It is only about 65 miles, which doesn’t seem so very far in our time. That’s only about 45 minutes the way some of you drive.

But Jesus’ parents, Mary and Joseph, would have had to walk that 65 miles. An average walking speed is 2 – 3 miles per hour, depending on how much people are carrying and the terrain they are covering. That means that the trip from Nazareth to Jerusalem would have taken between 22 and 32 hours. It probably took them two or three days to walk from Nazareth to Jerusalem.

Luke tells us that Jesus’ parents took this same trip every year so they could celebrate the Feast of the Passover in Jerusalem. So this was a familiar journey for the family.

But when Jesus was twelve years old, something very unusual happened. *“After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it”* (Luke 2:43). Luke says that Mary and Joseph traveled for a full day before they realized Jesus wasn’t with them.

Now that may sound very careless but you need to know that there would have been a large group of people traveling together. There would have been extended family, friends and neighbors, all making the same trip. I’m sure that, when Mary and Joseph didn’t immediately see Jesus, they figured that he was with some of his friends. It probably wasn’t until they all began to make camp for the night that they realized he wasn’t with the group.

So they had to make another full day’s walk back to Jerusalem, without the company of the larger group of travelers, so they could find Jesus and bring him back home.

When they got to Jerusalem, it took them three days of searching before they found Jesus. And when they did, he was in the temple “sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.” Luke says, “Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers” (Luke 2:47). Jesus’ parents were naturally very upset and they kind of scolded him. “Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you,” his mother said. And Jesus replied, “Why were you searching for me. Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?”

“My Father’s house.” Jesus was not referring to Joseph’s home back in Nazareth. He was talking about the temple. And from what Jesus said, I think we can know that his Father’s house is a place for teaching and for learning. Keep that in mind, would you please? His Father’s house is a place for teaching and for learning.

II. JOHN 2:16

The second time we hear Jesus using this phrase, “my Father’s house” is in John 2:16. Jesus had just performed his first miracle, when he changed water into wine at a wedding feast. Shortly after that, when it was about time for the Jewish Passover Feast, Jesus again went back to Jerusalem...just like he had when he was a boy.

And just like he had when he was twelve, Jesus went back to the temple. What he saw when he got there made him furious. Instead of seeing people sitting with the teachers, listening, learning and asking questions; instead of seeing people reverently worshipping God; instead of seeing people reading the scriptures, he saw livestock. The temple was filled with pens that were filled with animals. The sound of trampling hooves and braying beasts assaulted his ears. The smell of manure assaulted his nose. And all of this was in the temple, for crying out loud!

The High Priest, it seems, had hit on a goldmine of an idea. Instead of people bringing animals from home that they could offer as sacrifices, he would put livestock in the temple and people could buy what they wanted and offer that as a sacrifice. The people wouldn’t have to bring animals all the way from home so they would appreciate the convenience. The local economy would benefit because the farmers and the shepherds around Jerusalem would have a ready market for their livestock. And the priests would benefit because they could make some money on every sale...there would, of course, be a markup in the price of each beast.

But Jesus saw it differently. He saw that the temple was not being used for its intended purpose. And he saw that the people were being taken advantage of by money-hungry unscrupulous priests. So he braided a

whip from some cords, swung it over his head and began to drive everybody out of the temple area. People must have thought he was a madman. He turned over tables with money on them, scattering coins all over the manure-covered floor. He opened the pens and drove the animals out of the temple. And to those who were selling doves, he said, "*Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!*" (John 2:16).

"My Father's house." There, he said it again. This time, Jesus was letting us know that his Father's house was not to be used for anything other than its intended purpose. And its intended purpose was to be a place where God is worshipped. I want to ask you to keep that in mind, too. His Father's house is to be a place for teaching and for learning AND his Father's house is not to be used for anything other than its intended purpose as a place where God is worshipped.

III. JOHN 14:2

By the time we get to John 14, we are into the last week of Jesus' life. Guess what: he is back in Jerusalem for the keeping of the Feast of the Passover. This was going to be the last Passover of his life. And he knew it. His disciples did not yet realize it. In fact nobody else had grasped the fact but Jesus knew that within 24 hours, he was going to be dead.

What do you say to your best friends when you know you only have a day left to live? Don't you think you would choose your words very carefully? I'm sure Jesus did.

He had many things to say to his disciples. He said so, himself. But one of the most powerful things he said to them was, "*Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.*"

"My Father's house." One more time, he said it. One last time, he said it. "In my Father's house are many rooms." It's kind of like Audio Adrenalin sang, "*It's a big, big house With lots and lots a room.*" And there is room enough for you! Keep that in mind, too. His Father's house is to be a place for teaching and for learning, his Father's house is not to be used for anything other than its intended purpose as a place where God is worshipped AND his Father's house has room for you.

CONCLUSION:

The first two times Jesus used the phrase, "my Father's house" he was talking about the temple. That temple was destroyed in 70 AD. But I figure that's OK because God was finished with it by then.

You see, Jesus said that the real temple is his body. That text in John 2 when Jesus drove the merchants and the livestock out of the temple, he went on to say "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." The people who heard him say that thought he was talking about the temple made of stone in Jerusalem. They pointed out that it had taken 46 years and an army of men to build that temple. There was no way he was going to be able to rebuild it by himself in a mere three days.

But John points out, "*But the temple he had spoken of was his body*" (John 2:21).

When Jesus was crucified, they destroyed his body, which he had called the temple. And sure enough, three days after they destroyed his temple, Jesus raised it up again when he came out of the tomb.

But here is another interesting thought. Jesus also said that the church is his body. Not the building. Not the board and the committees. Not the programs and the services but the church: the people. Us. We are the body of Christ. And that makes us his Father's house.

We've just learned that his Father's house is to be a place of teaching and learning and that is not to be used for anything other than its intended purpose as a place where God is worshipped. And we learned that his Father's house has plenty of room for you.

Do you want to be a part of a body of believers that places a high priority on teaching and learning? Do you want to be a part of a body of believers who want to be used by God for His intended purpose, for nothing else and for nothing less? Hey, there is room for you!

Audio Adrenalin urged you to come and go with me to my Father's house. I want to press the same appeal upon you this morning. The youth have invited you. I am imploring you. But most importantly, Jesus Christ, himself, is appealing to you to come and go with him to his Father's house. He's already prepared a place for you. Will you come and go with us?

INVITATION: *"I Wish We'd All Been Ready"*