

'Necessary Traumas – Self-Awareness'

Isaiah 6:1-8; Romans 3:21-26

Outline of Sermon for: January 14, 2024

Intro to Series

- Growing up just comes with bumps and scrapes
 - o There are things that you MUST LEARN in order to manage and then succeed at life on this side of eternity
 - And there are two types of learners
 - The listen to instructions
 - Have to find out for themselves
 - o Sadly, I fall into this category
 - o But I don't think I'm alone. Am I?
- Learning sometimes comes with difficulty, pains but if it doesn't happen?
 - o You stay stuck. You don't move forward. In fact, things suddenly start going in the other direction.
- So, this sermon series is going to force us into some potentially uncomfortable awareness. I apologize if I offend anyone in advance
 - o That is not my intent.
 - o But as Christians, we do need to talk honestly with each other.
 - o I mean, our whole faith systems depends on us having enough love to deal with. Each other in a truthful fashion, right?
- Okay, let's move forward.

I want to begin today by asking everyone to fill in the blank silently to this next question. It is highly important that you do NOT blurt out what you're thinking, just keep it to yourself.

- America is being dragged down because....
 - o Now look, I think

So, hold onto that answer while I tell you a story

- Underoos story – I've told it before because I think it's so highly instructive for me and for my life.
- I was convinced it was somebody else...it was me.

Dad – Every dumb SOB in the world is out tonight!

- It took me years to realize that statement was self-aware, that he himself was among that throng he so rudely named.

Read the Scripture

- **Romans 3:21-26** - *"But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in His divine forbearance He had passed over former sins. It was to show His righteousness at the present time, so that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus."*

Tell the Story of Paul on the Road to Damascus

- Who was Paul?
 - o **Philippians 3:4b-6** – *"If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ."*
- Now look, this moment of self-awareness, when it comes, it can be shocking

- Just look at what happened to Paul

Now let's come back to the issue.

The problem with America? – If I'm reading the Scriptures correctly, part of the problem isn't way over there. IT's right inside me.

Scrape away all of the posturing and preening, what we need to realize is that we're not always the good guys. And that we think we are...that's a major part of the problem.

Take for example all the grief generated by David Tepper a few weeks ago.

- An angry billionaire is good for news, keeps the pot stirred, right?
- I heard so many voices decrying the action and declaring the guy a spoiled brat. I mean, that fine, \$300k. To a man of Tepper's means, it's only about \$1.77. That's right, his fine was totally insignificant.
- But now wait?
 - Y'all want to run him out of town and think he's the worst guy in the world.
 - While it might not have been a drink thrown, wasn't there some kind of childish action you displayed.
 - I know I have!
 - And now maybe make it more real – have you ever done something really wrong and gotten the equivalent of a \$1.77 fine?
 - Of course you have.
 - So, are you better than David Tepper?

Church people talk about Prayer being lifted out of the school as being significant. It is. So just allow me to preach to the proverbial choir or a moment and share with you how that happens.

- A simple prayer to God acknowledges one key fact.
 - That you're not God which opens you up to one key awareness -you aren't perfect, you aren't sufficient and never will be. You are lacking.
 - But it's in the awareness of that lacking that makes all the difference in the world.
 - It makes you more compassionate
 - More loving
 - More generous
 - More giving

The Difference Between IQ and EQ

- IQ (Intelligence Quotient) is fixed – you got what God gave you.
- EQ (Emotional Quotient) is open – YOU CAN GROW.

What are the best ways to grow

- Be SELF-AWARE.
- Realize that much of the bad that comes your way is at least partially the result of your own manufacture.
 - This is the most important thing
 - Why? Because when change is needed, you unfortunately can't change tons of things believe it or not.
 - But you can always change yourself by the power of the Holy Spirit
- And we are called to
 - **Proverbs 20:5** – *“The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.”*
 - **Galatians 6:3** – *“For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.”*

How To Be a Person of Understanding

- Bible

- Not trivial knowledge, deep understanding
 - You get by reading it, then studying sections as they relate to your life
- Prayer – Form a relationship with God through prayer
- Counsel with Spiritual Guide
 - Anam Cara – Soul Friend
 - Do you have one?
 - I know your problems but I almost never know your struggles.
 - Difference between illness and sin
 - We all get sick
 - **BUT WE ARE ALL ALSO SINNERS**
 - Have you been listening to me for the last four years?
 - I'm NOT PERFECT

“Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines,
 the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food,
 the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls,
 yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.”