

FINDING A GOOD HOME

Over these past two months, I oversaw the collecting and pricing of items for our church garage sale. I have done garage sales on a smaller scale before, but never one with so many items and tables like the one we have at our church. When items were dropped off to our church, my first task was to place a price tag on it which I found could be challenging at times. Sometimes I had no idea what the item actually was, so I had no clue what price to put on it. Other times I realized that the item held much sentimental value to that person who donated it so I did not want to price it so low that it would offend them.

My goal when it came to pricing each item was trying to figure out the right price to place on it so that it would be purchased by somebody and not be left unsold at the end. There were hundreds of items for me to price prior to the sale and often it just required me to place one of the stickers on it that can be found at the Dollar Store for garage sales. When I came home from the church after spending an hour or more pricing, I would sometimes find some of these stickers still in my pocket and even some attached to my wallet.

While determining a price for each item and finding the right place to display it posed some challenges at times, what I found truly satisfying about the whole experience was seeing some of the items find a good home at the end. I did not expect to have this reaction when we started organizing the garage sale. As items were purchased, I found myself saying so many times to people buying it, **“I am so happy to see it find a good home.”**

One instance in which I said this, was when a collection of china horses was purchased. I knew the collection held a lot of sentimental value to the person who donated them. When I discovered the collection was purchased by someone, so that they could give it to a person who actually raises horses, I could not think of a better place for them to go. I felt the same way when I saw one of the kid's toys that was donated be purchased near the end of the sale. It was a grandfather who purchased the item, and he was so excited to be able to take it home to have his grandchildren play with it. I knew that item was going to a good home. What touched me most was a hard cover book that was donated to the sale. I went over to a man looking through the books to see if lowering the price might help him buy a few more books. While I was standing there, he suddenly found a book that he had been trying to find for the past 30 years. He was thrilled when he saw it. He told me the story of how long he had been looking for it, and the reason why and then said, **“This is a happy day for me.”** I was thrilled to see his reaction, hear his story, and know the book

found a good home. A lot of work went into organizing the garage sale, but it was worth it experiencing the joy seeing these items find good homes.

In the days that followed the garage sale I began to wonder if this is how God feels when we discover we have found a good home being in a relationship with Him. As I pondered upon this, I found myself reflecting upon the familiar story of the “Lost Prodigal Son” found in **Luke 15**. The younger son in this story felt he might be able to find the right home for himself by taking his portion of the inheritance and leaving his father’s home. He packed up all of his things and moved to a distant land thinking it would be the perfect home for him being able to live recklessly there. When his money ran out and a famine came over that area, he had to work for a local farmer feeding his pigs. After hitting rock bottom emotionally and financially, this young man came to his senses realizing the perfect home for him all along was being with his father. This younger son was apprehensive at first about what kind of reception he would receive from his father upon his return, but he was surprised to have his father embrace him and welcome him back.

Many different lessons can be found in this familiar story but one of them is understanding how excited our Father in Heaven is when we realize we have found a good home with Him. Hopefully we have all come to experience this in our own lives and are appreciative of all the blessings we experience being in a relationship with our Heavenly Father. Perhaps some of us reading this might be in the position of the young son who walked away. Maybe others reading this feel like items at the garage sale and desire to be accepted into a good home where we will be valued and appreciated. If we are currently placing ourselves in either of these two scenarios, then let’s make this the time to return to a more blessed home being in a relationship with our Father. Just as Jesus shared in His telling of the story of the “prodigal son”, we will be welcomed, accepted, valued, and loved.

Now that the garage sale is over, my task this week is to find a good home for the items that did not sell at our sale. On Monday we delivered the leftover furniture to the Habitat for Humanity Restore. The staff in the warehouse were so thankful to receive these items. Once again it felt so good knowing those items will eventually find a good home. It also served as another reminder to me how blessed it is to be at home being in a close relationship with my Heavenly Father each day.

Keep safe and God bless

Pastor Dean