

Sunday School Lesson for the Month of September 2020

Living In A Haunted House

(Matthew 12:43-45)

(Sunday, September 6, 2020)

Jesus, in this passage of Scripture, told an interesting parable about a haunted house. The application of the parable focused on good and evil. If you want to reform, it is not enough to rid yourself of evil; you must also fill yourself with goodness. Otherwise, the evil will not only come back but will increase. Using the house metaphor, then, we see it is not enough to empty the house of evil, for then it will be haunted. We must pack the whole house with God. That is the way to destroy haunted houses. But how many of us are living in haunted houses even now?

Many of us are! It's a sad truth, but truth nonetheless. Our individual lives and our family lives are empty. So, let us take this parable of Jesus and apply it to ourselves and to our families. What exactly does it mean to live in a haunted house?

(Sunday, September 13, 2020)

I. You live in a Haunted House when you try to be neutral about religion!

- A. **There is no neutrality in life.** This parable teaches that there is no neutrality in life. The evil spirit was driven out, but nothing else was added. Empty houses never remain empty. Dust and cob webs gather in the corners and mice and rats move in.
- B. **Particularly, there is no neutrality about faith.** We sometimes hear about people who try to be neutral about religion. Parents who do not want to force their children to go to church. They do not want to influence them toward any particular expression of faith. Usually this is accompanied by a story of how they were forced to go to church when

they were young and how they reacted against it. Of course, this approach, they say, actually turns children against the church of God. The only thing that turns the children away from God is the undisciplined, godless life of the parents. There is no neutrality when it comes to faith: either one accepts and serves God or rejects and opposes God.

(Sunday, September 20, 2020)

II. You live in a haunted house when you are negative in spirit!

A. Some goodness is only a negative goodness. The house of which Jesus spoke was only negatively good. The evil spirit had been swept out, but nothing good had replaced it. Many people practice a negative goodness. It consists only of the command, “do not.” The Pharisees were “good,” but they were not doing anything positive to bring about goodness.

- Look for good in attitude. What has been said and done positively in your house this week? The one thing children need from their parents is love. Is love the overriding attitude towards your children? Parents, do you give your children enough to let them see your attitudes? Husbands and wives, is love the overriding attitude of your relationship?
- Look for good in the home. What has been emphasized in your home? Some homes emphasize only what a person is not and what that person has not done. How about putting a positive emphasis on what the person is and what he or she has done?

B. Much can be accomplished by a positive goodness. The positive goodness that gives a positive witness can accomplish much. In family living, we must be more positive than negative in spirit.

(Sunday, September 27, 2020)

III. You live in a haunted house when your life is empty!

- A. Houses, while filled, can still be empty.** The life Jesus mentioned in the parable was empty, terribly empty. A lot of houses that are filled with fine furniture, carpet floors, color-coordinated rooms, can be terribly empty. They can be empty of love, mutual concern, kindness, Christian teachings, acceptance, trust, and confidence. This is the worst kind of emptiness.
- B. A home, or a life without Christ is hopelessly empty.** Beauty, fame, fortune, social prestige, and everything else will not make a home. A life without Christ is empty, hopelessly empty. We must fill our lives with something positive. The ultimate positive element is Christ. We need to fill our houses with Christ and seek His will as a family.