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**Shelton First Baptist**  
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**Sign of Jonah**  
**Luke 11:29-36**

We're in week two of a three part series entitled 'Battle Scars' and today I want to speak to fathers. Luke 11. While you're turning there let me give you some information about fathers.

**"A good father is one of the most unsung, un-praised, un-noticed, and yet one of the most valuable assets in our society."**

-- Billy Graham

In 1998 The Wall Street Journal reported:

**'Boys raised outside of intact marriages are, on average, more than twice as likely as other boys to end up jailed... Each year spent without a dad in the home increases the odds of future incarceration by about five percent.'**

Statistics:

- There is an estimated 64.3 million father across the nation. 26.5 million of these fathers are a part of their families raising their children with their wives.
- Children who live absent their biological fathers are, on average, at least two to three times more likely to be poor, to use drugs, to experience educational, health, emotional and behavioral problems, to be victims of child abuse, and to engage in criminal behavior than their peers who live with their married, biological parents.
- Children with involved, loving fathers are significantly more likely to:
  - Do well in school
  - Have healthy self-esteem
  - Exhibit empathy and pro-social behavior
  - Avoid high-risk behaviors such as drug use, truancy, and criminal activity

Battle scars within the family. The message of the Bible is very simple: "**Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and receive it.**" The beauty of God's truth is that the same simple message is both shallow enough for a newborn Christian to wade in...and yet deep enough for some of us older Christians who've been around awhile...to drown. Whether you are a father new in the faith or have been following Jesus a long time...I want to encourage fathers this morning.

So as we look at today's passage in Luke 11 I want to speak two truths directly to fathers. A fathers importance to the family cannot be overstated. The Lord wants to encourage all fathers here today like he encouraged Abraham in Genesis 18: (Fathers Read – Insert personal name)

(OVERHEAD)

<sup>19</sup>*For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for \_\_\_\_\_ what he has promised him.”*

PRAY:

I want to encourage dads with two simple reminders this Father’s Day.

First:

(OVERHEAD)

I. Dads are Easily Distracted

Verse 29:

(OVERHEAD)

*As the crowds increased, Jesus said, **This is a wicked generation. It asks for a miraculous sign***

Let me bring context. Last week we saw Jesus drive out a mute demon in front of a crowd which Luke described as ‘**Amazed.**’ So we already have a crowd...but now it is **increasing.** Last week we saw in verse 16 how some were “**testing**” Jesus by **asking for a sign from heaven.**

Now I’ve tried to comprehend this dynamic. They just saw a guy healed...did they not? And in that culture they didn’t have a whole lot to compare it to. They couldn’t go home and Google – ‘Demonic Healing’ and watch a few comparison clips on ‘YouTube’. Dateline wasn’t gonna pick up the Story. I mean...aren’t we talking about a culture that that used to have tailgate parties around their fields...to watch the corn grow – Right – there just wasn’t anything else going on.

And yet they were like, “Come on...we’re going to need something a sign from heaven...”  
Better hurry, wheat crops getting ready to bloom.

If they were hard to impress...how much harder is it for you and me? I mean its ridiculous isn’t it? I get twenty email links a day with something we’ve never seen before.

- How many got the one about the WWII tank they found under water after 62 years and started right up?
- Got one just last week about a Sturgeon they caught in the Missouri River that was like 13 blocks long – IMPRESSED – Nope, saw one bigger on ‘River Monsters’ last month.

***A wicked generation asks for a miraculous sign, but:*** Jesus said verse 29:

(OVERHEAD)

***...none will be given it except the sign of Jonah. <sup>30</sup>For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation.***

Now the Ninevites knew two things about Jonah. **First**, Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days & three nights. We know Jesus was in the grave for three days & three nights. **Second**, the Ninevites heard a very simple message from God through Jonah, **“Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned.”** Verse 13:

**(OVERHEAD)**

***The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here.***

1 Kings 10:1...Solomon -- a wise and prosperous king -- His fame had spread abroad -- what a privilege to learn at his feet.

What faith on the part of the Queen of Sheba -- making a long and difficult journey from the southern tip of Arabia = the ends of the earth at that time spared no effort or expense to check out truth for herself. Jesus said: ***And now one greater than Solomon is here.*** Verse 32:

**(OVERHEAD)**

***<sup>32</sup>The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here.***

What was the result of that simple message from Jonah? The king of Nineveh covered himself in sackcloth and dropped in the dust in repentance. Then the king ordered all of Nineveh to do the same thing. If the Queen of the South and the Ninevites were willing to respond with partial revelation...Who are we to ignore full revelation?

Jesus said back in verse 29: ***A wicked generation asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.*** What’s that? Jesus! Guys, Jesus has given us the fullness of revelation in Christ and His word.

Guys, I want to encourage you this morning. One of the enemy’s greatest ploys is to distract you from the **wow** of Jesus.

If he can distract you then you will esteem something other than relationship with Jesus. You will worship something other than Jesus.

- Memorial Day Camp Out – Paper View Fight (Like moths to a light)

Men...we find a way to get distracted and there is so much out there.

**(OVERHEAD)**

**I. Dads are Easily Distracted**

**II. Dads are The Gate Keepers of the Family**

Verse 33:

**(OVERHEAD)**

*No one lights a lamp and puts it in a place where it will be hidden, or under a bowl. Instead he puts it on its stand, so that those who come in may see the light.*

Lamp stand = place of prominence in order to diffuse the light and maximize its usefulness.

The purpose of a lamp is to give light to those who are seeking to use it.

Light will only benefit those who choose to come to it. Fathers have the amazing privilege to set the tone of light within the home. Jesus' intention is for the light to be spread thru His words and works.

**(OVERHEAD)**

*<sup>34</sup>Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are good, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are bad, your body also is full of darkness. <sup>35</sup>See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. <sup>36</sup>Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be completely lighted, as when the light of a lamp shines on you."*

What Jesus is describing here is the heart. The condition of our heart determines how much of God's light can be received...to provide light first within, and then to those around us. It is a cause and effect relationship. When a father as gatekeeper of his home absorbs the fullness of light from Jesus Christ...he is setting the tone of his house, first by example, then through application and instruction.

How much light you as fathers are able to absorb within is an indication of the amount of light your family will see and experience.

Col.2:6 "As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him"