

September 30, 2018

Luke 18:9-14

Welcome Home – our “re-boot” as family  
Jesus Christ, our guide; our “under, between,  
above, around us” – making us family  
Serving neighbor and one another and the  
church is what binds us together

This week we look at a “family dynamic”

### **Family Divisions**

There is so much that can divide

- money, first and foremost
- imbalanced power
- jealousy
- abuse
- politics

Every family deals with divisions – nuclear,  
faith, or greater community family – all  
have, to greater or lesser extent, divisions

Sermon meant as lead-in to Building Bridges  
conversations

Divide in our town, state, nation, and world  
fear-inducing and debilitating

Where is the hope?

How do we build bridges?

Just like world peace, it begins with “me”, you  
and me; with us

For one and a half years I have been struggling  
with this divide

And my own divisive feelings

What I am beginning to see is how my own  
self-righteousness gets in the way

While I may not be as self-righteous as the  
Pharisee in Jesus’ story, my pride, my  
certainty kept me from hearing and seeing  
my neighbor, the one whose politics are so  
deplorable.

And, while I do not see myself as the tax  
collector, it will only be as I recognize how  
far short I fall that my ears, eyes, and heart  
will begin to open myself and hear, see, and  
truly listen to my neighbor on the other side  
of the divide

If we are going to begin to heal our divisions,  
we must begin with humility

Some see humility as subservience,  
submission, defeat

or worse, self-promotion – reverse psychology  
We must lower ourselves, if we are to see our  
neighbor

Not because we are higher, but because our  
lack of humility has placed us above them

This is true of white privilege (if you think you  
don't have it, it is the sign that you do)

Holds true when seeking to “see” the  
homeless, welfare recipient,

Surely, humility is helpful in your own family

It is definitely true, when reaching across the  
political divide.

Which is what we are trying to do the next 4  
Tuesday evenings at the Library

I encourage you to attend for a variety of  
reasons

- good listening practice
- good learning experience
- doors might open to your neighbor

If we do not begin to listen and speak to one  
another with humility, the divide deepens  
and we imperil not only ourselves, but the  
future for all of us, especially our children

But, if you humble yourself and listen you  
stand a chance to experience Jesus' promise:  
“if you're content to be simply yourself, you  
will become more than yourself.”

Let us strengthen our faith family by seeking,  
humbly, to build bridges wherever we  
experience a divide.

May God bless us with the humility we need to  
open our ears, eyes, and heart.

Amen.