

**Read: Matthew 21:23-32**

Listen to the warning!

**Matthew 21:28-31**

[Jesus said] "What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.'

" 'I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

"Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go.

"Which of the two did what his father wanted?"

"The first," they answered.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Have you ever heard a tornado siren? It is a really loud siren that is used to warn people that a tornado has been sighted. When you hear it, you are supposed to seek shelter immediately to protect yourself from the danger of the tornado.

What do you think would happen if someone heard the tornado siren, started to head to their safe place, but then changed their mind? Instead of heading to safety, they went and washed the dishes or read a book. That would be bad! They didn't listen to the warning the siren gave them about the danger they were in. That would be like the *first* son in the story Jesus told today.

Or what if someone heard the siren and said, "I'm sure the tornado isn't near me," and was going to watch a movie on the TV, but then changed their mind and went to their shelter. That would be good—even though at first they didn't listen to the warning they were given. That would be like the *second* son in the story Jesus told today.

What's the point of Jesus' story? He is warning us about the danger of sin. He tells us that sin is really dangerous, and that it can lead to being separated from God and his love. So, God calls us to repent, that is, to tell God about our sin, and then turn away from our sin.

But what if we heard that warning about sin and how dangerous it was, but instead of repenting and turning away, just ignored the warning? What if we thought that it wasn't really that bad, or that God wouldn't actually do what he said? It would be bad! It would be even worse than hearing a tornado siren and ignoring it. God says that we will be separated from him and his love forever! Not good!

God wants us to not only hear warning about sin, but to repent because he has some really good news for us! Jesus came and did everything God wanted him to do. He perfectly obeyed all of God's commandments and rules. He died as the punishment for all the times we don't listen to or don't do what God tells us. God is eager to tell us that because of Jesus, all our sins are forgiven!

God's Word moves us to action! We hear the warning about sin and repent. We rejoice in the Good News that Jesus, our Savior, forgives us. We listen and live a life as a child of God because of all our God has done for us!

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- When was the last time you heard a siren? What was it warning you to do?
- When we hear God's warning about sin, what should we do? What does *God* do?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Why does God warn us about sin?
- What happens if we ignore the warning God gives us about our sin?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- Do you think we will be more aware or less aware of our sin as we grow in our faith? Why?
- What do we do when we become aware of sin in our lives? Why?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear God, thank you for warning me about the danger of sin, enabling me to repent of my sin, and telling me that my sin is forgiven. Help me now to listen to your Word in all that I say, think, and do. Amen.