

## Fathers and Sons – A Lesson

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Along time ago in August of 1955 to be exact—I survived my fraternity’s “Hell Week” initiation at the university I attended. Oh, what stories I could tell of that sleep-deprived and harrowing week, and of the month or two period of “pledging” that preceded it. But I won’t bore you with my youthful adventures. I’ve stayed close to one of my fraternity brothers from that pledge “class”, and periodically he or his wife send me interesting articles gleaned from the internet. I’ve shared some of them with you, my readers, in both the now extinct print version of The Times Examiner, and also now in the new digital format. This time they sent me what may be **one of the most intense and moving lessons I’ve ever read**. Perhaps you’ll feel the same way as I share it with you.

The original email seems to have originated from [snewbrough@atlanticbb.net](mailto:snewbrough@atlanticbb.net), and was sent from that site to my fraternity brother and then from him to me. I’ve changed it in minor ways, here and there, but the original story is not mine. It was titled:

### “TAKE MY SON”

***“And a voice from Heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased”  
Matthew 3:17***

**“A wealthy FATHER and his SON** loved to collect rare works of art. They had everything in their expensive collection, from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire the great works of art THE FATHER owned. When the Vietnam War broke out, THE SON left his FATHER and joined the military and went to war. He was very courageous, and died in battle while rescuing another soldier. THE FATHER was notified and grieved deeply over the death of his ONLY SON.

“About a month after THE SON’S death, just before Christmas, there was a knock at THE FATHER’S door. A young man stood outside with a large wrapped package in his hands. He said, “Sir, you don’t know me, but I am the soldier for whom YOUR SON gave his life! He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a Viet Cong bullet struck him in his heart, and killed him instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art” The young man held out the package he was carrying. “I know this isn’t much. I’m not really a great artist, but I think that your SON would have wanted you to have this.”

“THE FATHER opened the package. It was a portrait of his SON, painted by the young soldier that his SON had saved. He stared in awe at the way this young artist had captured the personality of his SON in the painting. THE FATHER was so drawn to his SON’S eyes in the painting that his own eyes filled up with tears. He thanked the young man profusely and offered to pay him for the picture. “Oh, no Sir—I could never repay what your SON did for me. It’s my gift to you.”

“THE FATHER hung this portrait—this **gift**—over his mantle. Every time that visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his BELOVED SON, before he showed them any of the other great works of art that he had collected. Sadly, THE FATHER died a few months after his SON’S death. It was announced far and wide that there was to be a great auction of his famous

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and expensive works of art. Many influential and wealthy people gathered at the auction site, excited over seeing these great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collections.  
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“On the platform sat the painting of THE SON. The auctioneer pounded his gavel. “We will start the bidding with this picture of THE SON. Who will bid for this picture?” There was silence in the room. Then a voice in the back shouted, “We want to buy the famous paintings, not one that has no value. Skip this one!” But the auctioneer persisted. “Will somebody bid for this painting of THE SON? Who will start the bidding? Do I hear \$100--\$200 for this painting of THE SON?”

“Another voice shouted angrily, “We didn’t come to see this painting that has no value. We came to bid on the Van Goghs and the Rembrandts. Get on with the bidding for art that has real value.” But still the auctioneer persisted in attempting to get bids for THE SON’S painting. “THE SON! THE SON! Who will take THE SON?” After a moment or two of silence, a voice came from the very back row of the room. It belonged to the long time gardener of THE FATHER and his SON. “I’ll bid \$10 for the painting of THE SON”, he exclaimed. Being a poor man, it was all he could afford.

“We have a bid of \$10”, shouted the auctioneer. “Who will bid \$20?” “Sell it to him for \$10”, shouted one of the wealthy art patrons near the front row. “We want to see the paintings by the masters and bid on them.” The crowd at the auction was becoming angry. They certainly didn’t want the picture of the deceased wealthy man’s SON, because it had no value to them. They wanted only the old famous paintings for their extensive collections of priceless art. The auctioneer pounded his gavel....”Going once, going twice—sold for \$10”!

“A collector on the second row in the room shouted, “Now let’s get on with bidding on this collection.”. But the auctioneer suddenly placed his gavel on the table and announced, “I’m sorry, but this auction is over.” Dumbfounded, many in the crowd cried out, “What about all of the expensive and rare paintings? Why can’t we bid on them?”

“I’m truly sorry”, replied the auctioneer. “When I was hired to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in THE FATHER’S will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. It is this: **ONLY the painting of THE SON would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including all of the expensive works of art you see displayed here. THE FATHER WILLED THAT WHOEVER BOUGHT THE PAINTING OF HIS**

**SON, WHICH HE VALUED FAR MORE THAN ALL THESE OTHER WORKS OF ART COMBINED, WOULD GET EVERYTHING! EVERYTHING,**” he again emphasized to that crowd of wealthy and incredulous art collectors, who in refusing to buy THE SON’s portrait, had received nothing at all, and who departed due to their lack of understanding of the extent of **THE FATHER’S LOVE FOR HIS SON**, never having considered that **THE PERSON WHO TOOK THE SON WOULD GET EVERYTHING!**”

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Over 2000 years ago **God the Father, the First Person of our Triune God**—manifested Himself as a newborn baby boy, born on Earth to a humble and poor Jewish family in a somewhat neglected outpost of the Roman Empire, called Judea (today's nation of Israel). **Jesus—God the Son-- The Second Person of our Triune God, came among mankind for one purpose: to die horribly and painfully on that Roman cross so that we—in a manner similar to the people at that auction—could have a chance to clear our record of all of our sinfulness, and “bid” on the greatest prize of all: God’s Gift of Eternal Life.** Just like that auctioneer, God’s message then and now, is: **THE SON, THE SON, WHO WILL ‘TAKE’ THE SON?** Because, you see, **WHOEVER TAKES THE SON GETS EVERYTHING!**

Unlike the auctioneer of our story, our Creator God already knows who will “take” THE SON into his/her heart and life as personal LORD AND SAVIOR, and confess that decision to all mankind. **But we, his faithful ones here on Earth, don’t know who will “take” THE SON, so our job is to continue to tell as many as we can of God’s freely offered, but extremely expensive, GIFT!**

At this blessed time when we have just celebrated God’s precious GIFT of His Son to the world, so that the “whosoever” of that world could accept Him as their personal LORD and Savior, much of that world still rejects God’s proffer of His most expensive gift of eternal life to those who “take” the SON. What about YOU? Will you be just as those wealthy art patrons were at the auction, refusing to consider taking into their collections something that they perceived to be “valueless”? Or will you accept the “auctioneer’s” admonition to “bid” your eternal future and “take the SON”, and having done so, receive EVERYTHING? Today—right now—is the time for you to accept God’s “knocking at the door of your heart”. Open that door to Him, and rejoice forever after!

***“For God so loveth the world that He hath given His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world that He should condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”***

***(John 3:16-17 1599 Geneva Bible)***