

What Do You Meme Part 3 | Prune It! | Father's Day 2023

Father's Day

Psalm 1

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.
3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.
4 The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the
wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the
righteous;⁶ for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the
wicked will perish

It's Father's Day and man do I love being a dad!

Funny quotes from my kids:

I felt led by the Spirit to open up the sermon with Psalm 1...

The Blessed man is LIKE a tree.

"The tree is planted by a river a water, yielding fruit in it's season whose leaves do no
whither..."

Men did you know that God wants you and your family to prosper? He wants to bless you!

Men, do you want to prosper? Do you want to be blessed?

Do you want your kids to follow after Jesus and serve Him?

Men, do you want to see God bless your efforts - all you do? Of course!

Our career in particular is something men take pride in or at least identity in.
Simply providing for our families is a calling on us as men and we take it very seriously.

It's how God wired us. This is proven when unlike women, when men lose their job it can be
absolutely devastating to them. Sure it can rattle a woman when she loses her job but
historically speaking when a man loses his job it can really shake him to his core and devastate
him.

Men I want you to know that we HONOR YOU TODAY - we honor you for working hard and for
providing for your wife and kids and grandkids! We know you've done a lot of things you didn't
want to do and you sacrificed convenience in order to serve and we HONOR YOU for that role
- that incredibly important role you play in our lives.

Do you realize how important it is for a dad to be in the life of a young person - to be present
and encouraging?

New research shows that it's over 85% of all prison inmates did not have a Father in their life.

Dads are called to
Provide
Protect
& Pray for their wife and kids.

Men are called upon in God's Word to lead in God's church - to set the example and to lead and set the tone for what it means to serve God.

Today we're talking about prospering where YOU are and not falling into the trap of COMPARISON!

Men the trap of comparison and tribalism is as old as the sun.

WE LOVE OUR TRIBES

Philosophically speaking we love our tribes.

The problem is tribalism can be harmful the kingdom and even against the Kingdom - hindering our unity.

On the other hand...

In a sense, having a tribe can be GREAT. It's very life-giving to find people of like-minded values and hobbies. When I meet other worship leaders who are songwriters and love to flow in the Spirit, that's a TRIBE that I love to be in. I love to talk with them about music and worship and the Spirit's move in the midst of music - the Spirit's power that flows along a melody ... In that sense a Tribe is healthy and life-giving and I even believe a gift from God.

Acts 18 and 1 Corinthians we find a tribalism that's unhealthy.

What's my point in this introduction?
Don't worry about other men! Don't

Yes, there's a time and a place for a gentle rebuke or even a hard rebuke behind closed doors in the privacy of honor. Inviting your brother in Christ to step back into integrity or into honor and godliness. Sure there is. I did that with two men last week. Once in person and one guy I don't know well at all but he's very influential and he was doing the tribal thing - mocking another ministers title of his online course and I'm just like "bro, come on. Mt 7:12 right - you wouldn't want him to mock the title of your book or online course so why would you do that to him? Plus, does that division bring honor to Christ? No. It actually does opposite. John 17 teaches us to value unity best we can! To do all that we can to preserve unity in the family of God - never at the expense of compromise of course.

But I find that some people men AND women - tend to find their identity in pointing out the flaws of others instead of finding joy in the common ground - in the common faith in Christ.

Psalm 1 teaches us to delight in the law of the Lord.

You can't delight in the law of the Lord and delight in being better than someone else at the same time. Your mind can only focus on one thing at a time. Choose to DELIGHT in the law of the Lord - the ways of God! THAT is the blessed man! That is the blessed life!

DELIGHT in the ways and wisdom of the Lord and don't focus on the faults of others. THAT is the blessed life!

Psalm 22:17-18

"Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise and apply your mind to my knowledge. For it will be pleasant if you keep them within you, that they may be ready on your lips."

Matthew 7:1 says "Do not judge or you will be judged." We're going to talk about that a bit today - the power of focusing on YOU and how God is growing YOU as opposed to focusing on other people and the problems that presents.

- Does anybody in the room garden?
- Many plants need to be pruned in order to reach their full potential.
- When a plant is not pruned, it may continue to grow, like a tomato plant, but it will not produce fruit because it's spreading its energy out in too many places resulting in poor plant health. But when the plant is pruned, the nutrients are able to get in full quantity to where it needs to go to produce ripe tomatoes.

Imagine being like a plant before it's pruned...but you know the concepts of it, so you see another plant needing pruned and are quick to point it out...forgetting, that you need pruning yourself.

// I need to set my standards straight

Wisdom is humbly looking at yourself and focusing more on what God is teaching YOU than what someone else needs to learn or change. Many marriages suffer because each party is too focused on what other person needs to do to change or improve.


As men we all want to be wise - we want God's wisdom - wisdom to lead us so we can lead others.

Wisdom is revealed in God's creation and true wisdom is only possible when someone comes into a new relationship with the Creator through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ became wisdom for us according to 1 Cor. 1:30, obedience to His commands and purposes for His church should be the priority for all his followers, especially us guys.

Wisdom gives us a framework within which to work when making decisions. Scripture does not provide answers to every situation that one faces each day,

but does provide enough information to allow the believer to make good choices.

Let's remember, we need to look at the full picture here when Jesus tells us not to judge:

 **Matthew 7:1-4** “Do not judge, so that you won't be judged. For you will be judged by the same standard with which you judge others, and you will be measured by the same measure you use. Why do you look at the splinter in your brother's eye but don't notice the beam of wood in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the splinter out of your eye,' and look, there's a beam of wood in your own eye?



So how can we say, let's set our standards straight when scripture says right here that we will be judged by the same standard we judge with?

It's simple - set standards that do not permit you to judge!

Let's set our standards so straight that we apply what Jesus is saying here in this scripture - we view this portion of scripture so easily as a threat sometimes, but what if it's the opposite? What if the standard that we set for judgment is to not hold judgment over others? What would that then look like reflected back on us?

Scripture says that we will be measured by the standard we use - don't set your standards low, set them so high that you cannot judge others.

The point here is that we need to focus LESS on other people's errors and more on our own. **Romans 14 - the entire chapter - is perfect for this concept.**

Romans 14 has a lot of wisdom on how to navigate personal convictions. Here's what the chapter in essence says ... There are things you will be convicted about that other Christians are not. Be careful not to assume the Holy Spirit has also convicted them in that same way. Sometimes He's teaching you something and you gotta give people the space and the grace to also hear from the Spirit but ALSO know that others will simply not agree with you about certain convictions you have and THAT IS OK. It doesn't make them reprobate! Lol Unless the sin is explicitly condemned in the Bible, let the Spirit teach them. If it IS explicitly listed in the Bible and the offense is obvious - then go to them in humility and privacy and point it out asking for clarification with a heart of love and goal of renewal.

// I need to take notice of where I need to grow.

Matthew 7:1–6 (CSB)

■ “Do not judge, so that you won’t be judged. ² For you will be judged by the same standard with which you judge others, and you will be measured by the same measure you use. ³ Why do you look at the splinter in your brother’s eye but don’t notice the beam of wood in your own eye? ⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the splinter out of your eye,’ and look, there’s a beam of wood in your own eye? ⁵ Hypocrite! First take the beam of wood out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to take the splinter out of your brother’s eye. ⁶ Don’t give what is holy to dogs or toss your pearls before pigs, or they will trample them under their feet, turn, and tear you to pieces.

You know what’s hard? Taking wood out of your eye!

There’s no more clear and direct way to word this than how Warren Wiersbe puts it:

The purpose of self-judgment is to prepare us to serve others. Christians are obligated to help each other grow in grace. When we do not judge ourselves, we not only hurt ourselves, but we also hurt those to whom we could minister. The Pharisees judged and criticized others to make themselves look good (Luke 18:9–14). But Christians should judge themselves so that they can help others look good. There is a difference!

You are a tree planted beside the waters God has given to nourish you. Let God grow you! Let God prune you! SO THAT you produce more fruit!

 Prune it!

The Bible often refers to this as pruning. • **John 15:1-5 CSB JESUS SAYS...**

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. Every branch in me that does not produce fruit he removes, and he prunes every branch that produces fruit so that it will produce more fruit. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I in you. Just as a branch is unable to produce fruit by itself unless it remains on the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me.

- Those habits in your life that you know Jesus wants you to stop: prune it!
- Turning to the bottle instead of Jesus when life gets chaotic: prune it!

- Grabbing a needle instead of spending time in the word: prune it!
- Gossiping to your friends instead of petitioning in prayer: prune it!
- Choosing to scroll through social media for an hour or two: prune it!
- Choosing to watch something that doesn't honor God: prune it!
- Comparing yourself to others - how much they make - how they do certain things not like you - not as good as you - prune that attitude - cut it back.

When we are pruned well - meaning we are growing in Christ and producing the fruit of the spirit, we are able to serve others in a way we never have been able to before.

- *Share an example of how you have been able to help other Christian's because you are growing fruit in your life, if you can include something you pruned out of your life too that really helps.*

▪

// I need to still use discernment

4 of 5 We must still be able to discern as followers of Christ what is good and bad and make decisions about it!

- As followers of Jesus, we have access to things that are holy and precious before the Lord - we choose what to do with these gifts that the Lord has trusted us with.
 - This is why we look at situations to determine if this is good for our children.
 - This is why the recovering alcoholic stays away from bars
- ● We are to guard the things of God including our lives and our children's lives against the things that are not of him! We have to be careful about what our kids are being exposed to and taught - what are they hearing and learning and seeing on social media or at school - is it what GOD wants them to believe is true?

DISCERNMENT:

- Luke 23:9

- Acts 13:44-49
- ● Voicing discernment doesn't mean arguing pointlessly or yelling and holding non-Christians to God's standard.
 - ○ It means being intentional with your time, words, and actions when you discern that a situation is not building your faith.
 - ○ That's hard though isn't it?
 - ○ It's easy to relax, but hard to pause, breathe, and count to 10 before we respond.
 - ○ If we are quick, we react. If we use intention, we respond with discernment.
 - ○ I don't know about you, but I want to grow my muscle of discernment and minimize my own reaction, despite the craziness of the world around us.
- ● The way we respond with discernment should still be a representation of Christ and his work in our lives.

// Conclusion

- Altar Call:
 - I need to repent and learn to use discernment wisely. To see what areas of my life GOD wants me to GROW and PRODUCE FRUIT!
- I AM A TREE PLANTED by the LORD HIMSELF!

So what if INSTEAD of focusing on other people's problems and short-comings, we were to simply evaluate our own need for growth - our own need for wisdom and our own ...

only Psalms 1; 32; 34; 37; 49; 112; 128 as wisdom