

Walking Straight in a Crooked World

Ps. 128

Guided Growth at CBC with Pastor Keith Father's Day June 19th

Reflection: God is relational! He made us in his image. (Gen. 1:26)

The Hebrew word for Image is (Selem: resemblance, *representative!*)

In Mt 6:9 Jesus introduced us to God as *"our Father which art in heaven"* The NT uses this image 266 times! His very nature is Love! (1 Jn. 4:16) Relationships are difficult because they involve specific responsibilities and place "demands" on us. We tend to think others in our relationships *owe us* something. In reality, God brings us into relationships in order to **"GROW US!"** "The Heavenly Father" has charged Human Fathers to accurately represent Him to their children. Ps 127:3; Dt. 6:5-7 He's called Fathers to become:

➤ *"The Goodman of the house"* Pr 7:19, Mt 20:11; 24:43; Mk 14:14; Lk 12:39; 22:11

OT ('ish) Man, Champion NT (oikodespotēs) Head, master

➤ *"The Strongman of the house"* Mt 12:29; Mk 3:27 ischyros': forceful, mighty, able (OT: Gibbor)

Speaking of Satan's intention to *"steal, kill, and destroy"* (from Jn 10:10) Jesus warned in Mk 3:27:

"No one can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil (diarpazo: Plunder) his house." Strong men are becoming "bound men!"

Ps 12:1 *"Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men."*

Direction: Psalm 128 is known as the Marriage Psalm. It's one of the 15 "Songs of Degrees" sung by pilgrims en route to Jerusalem for the three annual feasts. "Degrees" means a journey of priority, elevation. Ps. 126: The need for Patience curing crisis. Ps. 127: Our need of God's Providential care...for our families. Ps. 128: Focuses on the need for solid families led by godly men. **Biblical "masculinity" is under attack; and Men are Retreating! God calls men in every generation to be: "the sons of God... in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life"** Phil. 2:15,16 We can't "stay straight" and "Shine" in a crooked and dark world without "holding the word of life." (checking the "plumb" of our beliefs and behaviors)

Ps. 128 provide several principles to help us to stay "straight" in a crooked world!

Walking Straight in a Crooked World Requires the right:

1. **FEAR.** (Motivation!) 128:1 *"Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord"*

A. **"Blessed"** אֲשֶׁר: 'esh'er (upremely content) Comes from 'āshar': meaning to be **straight**

1) It's God's nature to bless His children! Lk 12:30-32 *"But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."*

a) Seeking God comes before "giving us the kingdom."

b) Most are too busy seeking / building their own "Kingdom!"

2) God's "blessing" is related to our **"walk"**. vs 1 *"that walketh (shaqad': remains) in His ways"*

a) God's word (Plumb line) reveals where Priorities are "misaligned". Ps 119:9-10

b) Little "misalignments" can eventually produce major "messes". (Pr. 3:5,6; 4:26,27)

B. **"Blessed is everyone that Feareth The Lord."** יָרֵא Yareh (awe / revere / respect)

This (Blessing) is related to our:

1) Awareness of our Accountability to God! 2Cor 5:9-11, 14-20

2) Worship of "The LORD" "Fear" literally means to be in awe of and therefore to revere.

The Title "The LORD" (Self Existing one → I AM) is used 6519 times to describe God. Ex. 3:2

C. **Giving God Preeminence in our lives is the rational response!** (Col. 1:18; Mt. 6:33; Pr. 3:5,6)

Pr. 9:10 *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."* (See also Luke 6:46; 1 Kings 18:21; Mt 6:33)

Walking Straight in a Crooked World Requires the right:

2. **FOCUS** (Concentration) *“that walketh in His ways.”* (Begin with an End In View!)

A. **God Has Certain Paths That He Can Bless.** Ps. 16:11 *“Thou wilt show me the path of life...”*
Ps 119:105; Pr 4:18; Pr. 22:6

B. **Satan Seeks To Pull Us Off these Paths** Jms 1:14 *“man is tempted when he’s drawn away...”*
Pr. 4:14-15 *“Enter not into the path of the wicked, go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.”* (See also Ps. 119:104)

C. **The Right Worship Leads To The Right Walk.**

- 1) Worship involves giving God the “worth” He’s due. Rev. 4:11 *“Thou art worthy...”*
- 2) Obedience is the natural result of a genuine fear (honor) of the Lord. See Ecc. 12:13,14

D. **The basis of our Authority is our obedience to our Heavenly Father.**

- 1) If you’re not willing to honor & submit to God, why should others to do so to you? (1Cor 11:1-3; Mt. 8:9,10)
Remember Gal. 6:7

3. **FAMILY** Relationships (Expectation) 2 *“thou shalt eat the labor of thy hands”*

A. **Husband comes from “Husbandman”.**

- 1) Norse (Noun) (husbondi) “Master of the house”
- 2) Old (1290) English Verb from Husbandry: To “Manage” (care for) a household (instead of crops)

B. **Notice The Gardening References Vs 3**

- 1) *“Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine”* (Jewish symbol of prosperity and abundance.)
 - a) She’s to be Fruitful (practical), *Not just beautiful!* (For decoration) Gen. 2:18
 - b) The vine is a pliable and tender plant, and needs to be supported and protected. (Eph. 5:29; 1 Pt 3:7)
- 2) *“Thy Children as olive plants...”*
 - a) Olive Plants Had Great Value because they provided fruit and income for many generations.
 - b) This Implies Investing / reproducing a godly influence generationally! (Mal. 2:15; Is. 58:12)
 - c) **Olive Plants Required Pruning in order to be Productive!**
Pr. 22:6 *“train up a child in the way he should go...”* חָנַק: ḥānak: to dedicate or narrow. (limit)
Jesus said: “My father is the husbandman.” (Jn 15) That’s every father’s job description!

CONCLUSION:

Did you notice the last verses of this Psalm. The nation will be blessed in direct proportion to the number of godly fathers that will influence their families. (Ps. 78:5-7)

APPLICATION:

The word used in Pr. 22:6 for *“Train up a child”* (ḥānak) comes from the name “Enoch”. (Gen. 5)

Gen 5:22 *“And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah”*

It appears that becoming a father changed Enoch! He began to “see things” differently. Heb 11:5

“Enoch was translated that he should not see death; ...he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”

meta: To accompany (aka: he “walked with God”) tithemi: to transfer, exchange, change sides!

After the birth of his son, he began to take God seriously. He literally **“Changed Sides!”**

He began to “exchange” his societies values for God’s. Eventually there was more of His heart in heaven than on Earth. Mt. 6:20 *“Lay up treasures in heaven...for where your treasure is, your heart shall be.”*

Heb 11:5 *“for He had this testimony, that he pleased God.”* euaresteo: to gratify entirely.

Is God “pleased” with our Worship, Walk, and the Worth (*investment/commitment*)

We’re placing in and to our Families?