

Wednesday Word      8/6/2025

Matthew 7:2- “For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.”

My mother was raised in Fresno, California and moved to Washington State in 1977 when she married my dad. Growing up, we would make annual trips to visit my grandparents in mom’s hometown and spend at least a week at their home each summer. Once I turned 18 and started working steady I didn’t take those summer trips anymore. When Naomi and I got married, it had been at least 5 years since I had paid my grandparents a visit. We decided to take a road trip to go down and see them.

While Naomi and I were down there we decided to take a day trip to Six Flags theme park. My grandfather, who was 77 years old at the time, decided he wanted to come with us. He told us on the drive over that he would ride one rollercoaster with us and then just spend the day visiting with us between rides. The weather was beautiful and, since it was a weekday, the lines were short.

The first ride we decided to go on was called the Medusa. Medusa is a Greek mythological figure that had twisting and turning snakes for hair. This rollercoaster was a long track of twisting and turning pivots and upside-down corkscrew maneuver that changed position every few seconds. My grandfather decided this was the ride he wanted to go on. While this was going to be a great ride for Naomi and me in our early twenties, I wasn’t sure how my 77-year-old grandpa would do on this ride. I tried to convince him not to join us, but his mind was made up and we all got on together. The ride lasted about 90 seconds, and the position of the roller car changed position and direction every 3 seconds. If you can imagine a plate full of spaghetti noodles, the track was shaped just like twisting pasta strings.

The entire time we were on the ride, I couldn’t help but be very concerned about the health of my grandpa. To take my concern even further, I was honestly terrified that he might not survive the ride due to the “Herky-Jerky” motion. Once the ride came to a stop, I quickly turned around to check on him. His face was very stoic and his eyes rather wide. He got off the cart, walked slowly over to the bench and sat down. I was panicking because I thought that I had put him in a dangerous situation. As I began to ask him about how he felt he exclaimed that he very much enjoyed his time but didn’t need to experience that again. I was relieved. We spent the rest of the day enjoying the park and spending time together, but my grandpa did not ride anymore.

I look back on this memory and realize that I completely misjudged my grandfather. I thought I needed to talk him out of that rollercoaster because I felt I knew better than he did about what fun a man his age should be having.

I learned a valuable lesson that while I may think I know what's best for a person, it turns out in the end I am completely wrong. To take it a step further, many times we pass judgment on someone without even understanding their circumstances or the reason behind their behavior. Judging someone gives us a certain feeling of virtue and false righteousness due to our opinion about their behavior or what we perceive their heart to be.

Though my judgment about my grandfather's well-being was honest and justified, many times our opinions and perspectives about the lives and situations of others are anything but. We need to be careful that we don't investigate the lives of other people-with little to no context and make assumptions. This is not healthy for anyone and may do damage to our relationships.

Let's make a conscious effort to look at one another with truth and grace and see one another how God sees us. This way, we will be more ready to love and serve others.

I love you and God loves you!

Pastor Eric Lundberg