

Stand Alone | June 6th 2021

Sharpen the Saw

Sabbath
Sabbatical
Summer

What do we DO this summer?

“Sharpen the Saw”

ILL. Playmakers

- One day off a week to sharpen the saw

ILL. Sharpen the saw story

There is a guy walking down a road and sees another man trying to saw down a tree. The second man is working really hard and not making much headway.

- First man: “Hey why don’t you sharpen the saw?”
- Second man: “I can’t, I can’t stop, I don’t have the time.”

Abe Lincoln Quote

Ecclesiastes 10:10

If the ax is dull and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed, but skill will bring success.

Ecclesiastes 10:10 NLT

Using a dull ax requires great strength, **so sharpen the blade**. That’s the value of wisdom; it helps you succeed.

Three Kinds of People: (people in three kinds of states)

- **Swingers** - no contentment (anxiously chasing the next thing)
 - Octopus on roller skates
- **Sitters** - complacency (security → stagnation)
- **Sharpeners** - continuous improvement (with God)

Sharpeners = Stewards

Philippians 3:12-14

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

CHALLENGE: Dare to Sharpen & Grow...for the first time or AGAIN

Swingers

Sitters

Sharpeners

Quitters

Campers

Climbers

ILL. Edmund Hillary - Climbing Mount Everest Quote

- He Failed once but Succeeded second time -
- Gave a speech and this quote after failure first time

Mount Everest, you beat me the first time, but I'll beat you the next time, because you're as big as you're ever going to be... but I'm still growing! - Edmund Hillary speaking to Mount Everest

7 Habits of Highly Effective people (not a Christian book)

- **Habit 7 Sharpen the Saw**
- **4 areas:**
 - Physical
 - Mental
 - Spiritual
 - Social/Emotional

Add a spiritual dimension into this and there is much to learn...

- Jesus was the greatest example of a sharpener

Luke 2:52

And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and [in favor with] man.

Without sharpening:

- The body becomes weak
- The mind becomes mechanical
- The spirit becomes insensitive
- The emotions become raw

How did Jesus grow?

How do we grow?

What does Sharpening the Saw look like?

1. Sharpening is about willingly losing something so you can gain something greater

1 John 5:3 NKJV

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

- **ILL. Sharpening removes & creates**
 - Sharpening actually removes steel
 - Sharpening actually allows the blade to gain “sharpness” which allows it to be more purposeful and effective in the Master’s hand.
- Sin, Attachments, Comforts → Intimacy, Purpose, Power
- We give up things we love to gain things we love even more

2. Sharpening is about staying near the sharpener.

- **Sharpening is about**
 - availability
 - willingness
 - submission to the Master (the One sharpening)

Climbing Companions

Matthew 5:1-2 MSG

When Jesus saw his ministry drawing huge crowds, he climbed a hillside. Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed, climbed with him. Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his climbing companions.

- Huge Crowds = Anxious (searching)
- Climbed a Hillside/Active = Not Sitting (complacency)
- Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his companions
 - Then gave the beatitudes
 - There is climbing
 - There is sitting in quiet places
- Q: How do we know **when** to do what?
- **“Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed,**
 - climbed with him...
 - arriving at a quiet place, sat down and Jesus taught his climbing companions
 - **Committed to being apprenticed by Him**

Sharpening = Staying with the Spirit

- **Luke 3:21-22**

- When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

- **Jesus prays THEN Holy Spirit descends**

- God’s Will was not obvious to Jesus
- He prays to discern
- How much more do we need to?

- **The Book of Genesis**

- In the garden = prayer without problems, for personal intimacy

- What did Adam & Eve talk to God about?
 - They had no children (no problems)
 - They had no sickness
 - They had no financial needs
 - They had no stress
 - They had no neighbors to forgive
 - They had no dilemmas/problems
 - What did Adam & Eve talk to God about?
 - “Prayer in its original form had nothing to do with problems... it was more about connecting with God than anything else.” - J. Franklin
- “In the cool of the day” = pleasant, refreshing

Jesus never moved in pressure (a hurry), always moved in purpose.

- **Beatitudes - Climbing Companions (committed)**

- **Sharpening is about searching and staying, at the appropriate times according to the sharpener**

Galatians 5:18-25

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.
25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

ILL. Beautiful & Useful (Garbage Can, Lily, Moldable Clay)

That is the law of surrender. A more beautiful and biblical description is the story of the potter and the clay, which illustrates the law of surrender further. The potter has soft, yielding clay, but if the clay does not surrender, the potter cannot do a thing with it. If there are burnt places, hard places or unsurrendered places in the clay, though the potter be a genius in making vessels, the artist still could not make anything useful and beautiful out of an unyielding blob of clay. It is possible for an object to be useful but not beautiful, like a garbage can. It is also entirely possible to be beautiful and not useful, like the lily. The lily has no utilitarian place in the world. It is possible to have a vessel that is useful without being beautiful. The old cream crocks in our spring house on the farm were useful all right. You could pour the milk in them, wait for the cream to rise and skim it off. They were not beautiful, but they were quite useful. Everybody has in their home beautiful little knickknacks. They are utterly useless, simply to be enjoyed for their beauty. But God wants His vessels to be both useful and beautiful. If God is going to make those kinds of

vessels out of us, however, we are going to have to yield to the law of surrender.

- Q: Are you committed to be a companion? (available, willing, submitted?)

3. Sharp tools are used for great purposes, get expectant

Zechariah 4:6

...“This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ saith the Lord of hosts.

Isaiah 41:10

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10 MSG

Don't panic. I'm with you. There's no need to fear for I'm your God. I'll give you strength. I'll help you. I'll hold you steady, keep a firm grip on you.

I will not fear, for you are with me. I will not be anxious or dismayed for you are my God. You will strengthen me and help me. You will uphold me with your righteous right hand.

Psalms 18:29

With your help I can advance against a troop; with my God I can scale a wall.

Sharp tools are used for great purposes, get expectant

- **ILL. Flashlights vs. Lasers**
 - Flashlights help you get to the bathroom during camping
 - Sharpened/Focused light, laser: can cut through steel
- **Q: What is possible in your life if you are continually sharpened?**

As we head into the summer - Let's stay close to the sharpener and expect Him to do beautiful things in us and through us.

Sharpen the Saw - Dashboard/PRAYER

- Mental
- Physical
- Spiritual
- Social/Emotional