

Today is supposed to be a joyous day. Today, we are to celebrate being blessed by the Holy Spirit. Last week, we were baptized in fire. We were able to hear the words of others, and they were able to hear us. Today we celebrate the coming of the three gods. The three parts of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Not everybody celebrates that. Not everybody who watches our feed celebrates that, but we take an extra special day of the year to remember that. And that's today. We also take today to recognize our Fathers. Those who our fathers to children, to animals, to co-workers in some cases. Each year Father's Day has meant something different to me. When I was a kid, I loved it because it was the one time and I don't know why, but it was the one time my uncles didn't fight. We would all get together, and it would be the most peaceful holiday we had. As I got older, things changed. My perspective changed. We didn't have kids for a long time, but in the end, it worked for me. Everyone that I worked with ended up becoming our family. And so many of those kids I spent Father's Day with at work because they didn't spend time with their own parents if they had parents still. So it changed. My perspective changed again. And obviously Wednesday has completely changed my perspective in so many ways. I never thought it would happen.

And it's been great, And I love celebrating that. But today, I'm having a really hard time celebrating. I'm having a very hard time celebrating because we have forgotten so many things. We have forgotten what comes together to make us a family? It's really hard. In our readings today from Jeremiah, the first chapter he's talking about not being heard. He says he's a boy, but he's not. He's not a young man at all. He's just in a different position than what he used to be. He came from the tribe of Benjamin. So he's not a priest. So him talking to people, most of the time, they're not going to listen to him. We all feel like that sometimes, don't we? We have so much to say, we have so much experience, we have so many things that we can do, but they don't hear us because of who they think we are. And not because of who we really are. And we forget. We forget how important it is to identify ourselves. It doesn't matter what somebody else thinks of us. They're either going to hear us or they're not. But that shouldn't stop us from continuing what we're doing.

This week I got a message from a friend of mine, and he saw our post that we are feeding the kids on Wednesday. And he asked me, why do you still do this? And I asked him why not. He's like, what difference does it make? These aren't your kids. Is that what we need to do? We only help our own. I asked him that. He's like, you could be spending that money on so many different things; you could be using that money differently. You can be using that money to better fill the needs of your church. And I asked him how do you know these kids aren't in my church. He says. I've seen your videos. There's no way you're feeding that many kids from your church. Ok, fair enough. So, we talked about his church and what's going on there, and he said, oh, we're doing great things. We're doing great things. We keep giving more and more money, and he told me how much he gives to his church, which would be enough to cover my salary for a year. And I am like, so does that make you feel good? Does that make you feel good that you give that much money because you made the point of telling me how much it was? He said well, of course. Why is that important to you? He didn't have an answer.

He texted me last night, and he said that a friend of his was arrested. He was arrested at one of all of the rallies going on. And he asked me what to do. And I asked him why he's asking me. He's, like, well, I can't ask my minister. I am like, why not? You pay this much money into it. You should be able to go talk to them. You should be on a speed dial, right? Well, we don't agree on some things. I'm like, let me guess you don't agree on your friend. He's, like, yeah, I don't. Why was your friend arrested? He was in the wrong place at the wrong time. What does that mean? He was in the wrong place at the wrong time. His friend, for whatever reason, was getting groceries. As he walked in to get groceries, he got arrested because of how you looked.

Another friend of mine yesterday texted me. He was crossing the street and got hit by a car. He wasn't doing anything. He wasn't protesting anything. He was just walking across the street, and this woman yells at him scripture, and then ran him down. My friend's a pastor, and she's yelling scripture at

him to justify her hitting him with her car. That's why I have a hard time today, following and being joyful for what's going on.

The second part of today's scripture people used to justify those actions. They pay their money to the church. Therefore, they are protected in God's eyes because they have done that then yelled scripture when they run over people with a car. They're justified in God's eyes because you're using his words to do the wrong thing. Nowhere in the Bible does it ever say to hit somebody with a car. It doesn't. You can't justify that, but people think that if they do these things and quote scripture, then they're fine. They're protected, they are protected in God's house because they come to church every Sunday, and they sit there. They hear the words, but they don't understand the words. They justify their actions through words that they can't comprehend, because it's like they said to Jeremiah, he can share the words, but they're not going to listen to him.

I know all of you here are going to listen. All of you here do the right thing most of the time. We all do the right thing most of the time. It's the people that don't come here. The people that sit at home and say, I read the Bible once, I can justify my actions. This way I give to a church that I never step in.

Another Pastor friend of mine called me last week. He's having trouble with some of his parishioners because they want him to go out and make calls to other members of the church. And he says these people have never stepped foot since I've been here. The pastor's been there for 15 years. I'm, like, well, do they call your church their Church? He says. Yes, Do they live a righteous life? Yes. Then, what's the problem? Well, they don't give donations. Where does it say we have to give money to a church to go to heaven? Where does it say how much we donate in cash assures our spot? It doesn't. It's our actions. It's what we do, I told him, give him their number. I'll call them.

He justifies not helping these people because they don't pay his church. People justify that they can do wrong because they do pay the church. When are we going to stop justifying what we do and just do it? Just do the right thing. Like, I said, all of you, I know, do the right thing. And I know you try to do it as best as possible, and you talk to people. And people don't always hear you, but it doesn't mean you should stop saying it. Eventually they will hear.. They'll hear all of us because they can't help but hear us talk about how great God is and how we need to love one another instead of hating one another. If we keep doing that, and we do it all together, it will get through.

Every day I wake up, thinking I'm not doing enough, and I know I am. I know I'm doing too much, but I feel like I have to do that because there's so many people out there doing the opposite of what I'm doing, and I know that I have all of you to help me, even if I don't ask you that. Even if I don't say thank you, I know you're all doing it too. And I greatly appreciate that. And that's what today is about. Today is celebrating that God has put himself in us. He gave his son so that we can be together. He lived among us so he can see what it's like to be us. So he can understand us better. So that in our time, we will all come together. And he blessed us all with the Holy Spirit. It's all part of us. It's in our hearts on the Covenant that he's written with us so that we can better hear each other until we can speak to each other. And that we can be moved in ways we've never known. Let us pray.