

God Is A Mean Old Judge – Urban Legends Series

Intro: Can you remember what it was like to be a kid? You were certain that your parents didn't want you to have any fun at all. (food, TV, friends – and then the teen years)

Many people feel the same way about God. Ask any of your non-churched friends what they think about God, religion, and Christianity. You may be surprised at their reaction. There is a great fear out there about Christians getting too much press, power, or too deeply into politics. Won't that make the US the non-fun nation?

I. And You're Not Helping

- A.** When Christians race to the microphones to denounce politicians or books or movies (usually unseen and unread), it can seem that the world is right: we are joyless, full of condemnation, and angry.
- B.** When churches only welcome those who think like they do...
- C.** Or when churches allow worship to become stiff and anchored in one time (including the current time).

II. But Here's The Problem...

- A.** The bomb went off in downtown Tel Aviv. Israeli police determined that the suicide bomber got distracted. He forgot he was wearing the dynamite.
 - 1.** Before we make too many guesses at this fellow's IQ level, let's remember something: we have all been caught by dynamite before.
 - 2.** And this dynamite was laying right there in the open for all to see.
- B.** Sex? My generation invented it! Burton Cummings told us that we would all share the land and live together. And we believed him. Then... boom!
 - 1.** AIDS, Chlamydia, genital warts, syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes, HIV, human papillomavirus, trichomoniasis...
 - 2.** Broken homes, broken hearts, lost dreams...
 - 3.** An explosion in abortions.

C. There is plenty of dynamite laying around. Materialism, power games, backstabbing, lying... but the bomb always goes off. And we always act surprised.

III. Why God Says No

- A. Proverbs 6:16-19; Galatians 5:19-21. These things are, according to Paul, obvious.
- B. Do we not know by now that drinking and driving is stupid, dangerous and potentially deadly?
 - 1. And yet... it continues.
 - 2. Why do we let stores sell cold beer?
 - 3. Why do bars have parking lots?
- C. We should have learned by now that free and promiscuous sex leads to dynamite going off, ruining lives. See any signs that we're getting smarter?
- D. What about jealousies, fighting, factionalism? We claim we hate partisanship but we keep electing partisans and showcasing them on TV.
- E. None of these things is prohibited by God because He is mean. They are prohibited because they are harmful to us. They are dangerous to us. They are dynamite, ready to go off. (and it always goes off)

IV. Why Your Parents Were Mean

- A. They made you go to bed, eat right, play outside, do your homework, and keep your commitments. Why? Was it because they were mean or because they loved you?
- B. If God wants you to be good, He will have to tell you to do some things and leave other things undone. Is it because He is mean and angry? Is it because He doesn't want you to be happy?
- C. Think of a life lived Jesus' way.
 - 1. You are faithful to your mate – cherishing them openly, loving them fiercely, come what may. Hmm. No dynamite there!
 - 2. You love your neighbor as yourself, searching for ways to serve them and show kindness to them. Hmm. No dynamite there.
 - 3. You worship with others on Sunday but also daily from house to house. You share your goods,

money, talents and time with people along the way. Hmm. No dynamite there.

4. You care for your family, putting them first. You care for those who have no family. In fact, you reach out to them and take them under your wing. Hmm. No dynamite there.

Remember your first taste of cauliflower? Green beans? Pick a food that is good for you that you don't like. Sometimes what is good for you doesn't seem pleasant.

Some people love to work out. Some don't. Some people love to save. Some don't. Some people love to play games with their kids. Some don't.

But doing what is right – even when it seems hard and difficult and uncomfortable – pays off in the long run.

Could it be that God's judgment is because He loves us and wants us to be happy?

So – how long are you going to hang on to that dynamite?