

# Keeping Your Own Vineyard

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## I. Introduction.

- A. Whatever pastor I get is the pastor I deserve. (Ephesians 1:8)
- B. Academic study can dry up one's relationship with God.
- C. Vineyards (our lives) need pruning, nourishing, protecting and to bear fruit. (Song of Solomon 1:6)

## II. Whatever goes first under pressure may be what needs the most protection.

## III. To protect your life...

- A. Recognize we need protection. (1 Corinthians 10:12; 9)
- B. Be careful of the Devil's deception. (Isaiah 5:2; Colossians 2:8; 2 Corinthians 11:14)
- C. Watch the little things. (Romans 13:14)
- D. Protect your attitudes. (Hebrews 12:14; Proverbs 14:30)
- E. Keep your priorities straight.
  - 1. Worship God.
  - 2. Serve God.
- F. Guard against self-seeking. (Jeremiah 45:45)
- G. Be ruthless with yourself. (John 12:24; Luke 9:23; Romans 8:13; 1 Peter 2:11; 4:17)
- H. Be utterly dependent upon God. (Psalm 127:1; 91:11; 34:7; 25:21)
- I. Take heed to the Word of God. (2 Peter 1:19; 1 Peter 2:2-3)
- J. Be honest with God in prayer.

## IV. To determine the difference between pruning and chastening, get with God for twenty-four hours and try to determine whether God is trying to get your attention. God prunes so that we might bear more fruit.

- A. We must respond appropriately.
- B. We must learn from it. (Deuteronomy 4:9)
- C. We must be willing to die to ourselves.

**Application questions:**

1. What tends to go first in your life when you face pressure?

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2. Which principle for protecting your life do you think is most helpful? Explain.

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3. What does pruning look like in the Christian life? What is its purpose?

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