

“Judge Not”

Upside Down Kingdom- #6

It is not just anyone who is expected to judge. Who does Paul call on to confront the fallen brother? What attitude does that person need to maintain in order to reach their ultimate goal?

4. Are You talking to Me Lord?

Time for a quick self-assessment. If you want to know if Jesus is speaking to you about judgement, ask yourself:

Do I size people up and write them off? If so, you need to repent of self-righteousness. The sins of others should lead you to weeping, not judgement.

Do I see those I care about sinning and walk away? Confronting people about their sin and brokenness is grace and love in action. It's not easy, but you should humbly reach out in love to restore them.

Have you refused to listen when confronted about your sin? You know deep down if something is not right. You need to listen, repent to be restored and forgiven.

Wrap Up

It is far too easy for us to pass judgement on others for the wrong reasons. We are not called to pass judgement so we can declare them wrong and ourselves right, or to ensure they get what's coming to them. If we judge others harshly, we ourselves will be harshly judged. Instead, when we see someone overcome by sin, we should long to extend God's love and grace and humbly lead them to the repentance which we ourselves have experienced first-hand.

Memory Verse

"Do not judge others, and you will not be judged..."
- Matthew 7:1-2 NLT

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members' needs. _____

Challenge- Have you seen someone you care about overcome by sin? First ask God what you need to repent of, then pray God gives you the courage and compassion to restore them.

INTRODUCTION

Even if they've never read the Bible, most people will tell you that somewhere Jesus said, "Don't Judge". And they would be right. In Matthew 7:1 Jesus said, "Do not judge others, ..." But that was only the start of the conversation. So, what did Jesus actually teach about judging? Not surprisingly it all comes down to the motives of our heart.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

Have you ever officiated as a judge in a contest or competition?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

1. Judging for the What Reasons

Matthew 7:1-2 NLT - 1 "Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. 2 For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.

It is easy to judge others. In fact, in this upside-down kingdom of the world it is so normal we do it without even thinking twice. But when we have been judged by someone it doesn't feel very good.

What are some things you have been judged for? How did it make you feel? Did those judgements cause you to make any changes in your life?

Consider the many reasons someone might pass judgement. When you examine the motivation for judgement, you'll probably find some of these.

Pride – You need to know that you're wrong and I'm right.

Jealousy – That sinner is getting away with something, and it's not fair. I want to see him in hell where he belongs.

Self-Righteousness - You ought to be holy - like me. I would never sin like that.

The phrase “Do not judge” in Matthew 7:1, is linked to “you will not be judged” by the word *hina* which means “so that”. In the very next verse Jesus is pointing out that we will be judged with the same measure we use to judge others, and that should cause us to pause and consider how we judge.

If you could describe how you'd choose to be judged, which words would you use? (strictly, thoroughly, mercifully, gently, thoughtfully, angrily) How would you say God has judged you? Does this describe the way you judge others?

2. Planks and specks

Matthew 7:3-5 NLT - 3 "And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own? 4 How can you think of saying to your friend, 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye? 5 Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

It's easy to see what's wrong with other people, but not so easy to see what's wrong with ourselves. Our sin clouds our vision.

After all, if we don't admit to our own sin, who are we fooling?

1 John 1:8 NLT - 8 If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth.

How does Jesus refer to those who don't deal with their own sin

Psalms 32:5 NLT - 5 Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the LORD." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.

Proverbs 28:13 NLT - 13 People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy.

1 Timothy 1:15 NLT - 15 This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"-- and I am the worst of them all.

before judging others (Mat 7:5)?

How would you describe the attitudes of the writers of these verses from Psalms, Proverbs and 1st Timothy? And what changes of the heart can you expect when you confess your sins and receive God's mercy and forgiveness?

3. Purpose for Judgement

The motive behind our judgement or correction of someone should always be to restore them to a relationship with Jesus. That is why it is so important that we deal with our own sin first. When we encounter God's grace, we ourselves will extend grace. If we have traveled the road to repentance, we will understand how to lead those who also need repentance.

What does Romans 2:4 tell us about how we are motivated to turn from sin?

Romans 2:4 NLT - 4 Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?

When we focus on how wrong someone is, we risk ceasing to see the person and instead see only their sin. If we find someone is obviously far from God and in sin, we should mercifully, carefully, and wisely engage them so that we get them to a point of restoration.

What do you think will be the response if we approach them with this attitude? "A good dose of guilt and shame will straighten them out."

Do you think most unbelievers are aware that what they are doing is considered sin by God? If so, what is the purpose of telling them they are sinners? Let's not forget John 3:17, Jesus came to save not judge.

John 3:17 NLT - 17 God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

In Galatians 6:1 Paul specifically addresses how we approach believers who are sinning.

Galatians 6:1 NLT - 1 Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself.