

Judge Not!

- *Matthew 7:1-5*

- **We will continue our study this week on the issue of forgiveness in a Christian's life.**
- **This has been a difficult study b/c it is personal, it is real, and it causes us to change the way we think about forgiveness as it pertains to our lives.**
 - Forgiving does not mean whitewashing the past, but it does mean refusing to live there.
 - Forgiveness breaks the awful chain of bitterness and the desire for revenge. As costly as it is to forgive, there is only one consolation—unforgiveness costs us far more.
- **I wonder how many of us have gotten in trouble because we gave in to our anger. Perhaps we have said things in a moment of tension that we later lived to regret.**
 - Confidence has been broken in a moment b/c we let our anger get out of control.
 - Our testimony has been marred b/c we did not think before we spoke.
 - Marriages have been broken, families broken, friendships ended, careers destroyed, and churches split because we lost our temper and said and things we later regretted.
- **In our passage tonight, Jesus addresses the subject of judging & the danger associated with it.**
- **READ SCRIPTURE**
- **One of the issues & setbacks of forgiveness in many people's lives is that we have to get past the fact of judging others & instead choosing to love them in order to offer forgiveness.**
- **This is why Jesus attacked this particular sin head on.**
 - If we are honest with ourselves tonight, I believe many (myself included) have judged others wrongfully based on appearance, language, background, etc.
 - In our rush to judgment, in our haste to make sure someone else takes the blame, in our zeal to find the guilty party, we have violated the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:1, "Judge not, that ye be not judged".
 - This verse has been translated in so many different ways in the church.
 - We have used it to condone our thoughts or feelings about our own sin.
 - We have used it as an excuse not to confront the sins of others.
 - Yet the words of Jesus are simple and clear.
 - If I could take the liberty to modernize this verse we would say, "Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, or criticize their faults - unless, you want the same treatment."
- **Jesus gives a comical example to us in chapter 7 as he explains the foolishness of us trying to help another brother with a speck in his eye while we have a beam in our own eye. But one of the first things we need to address is what Jesus meant by, "Judge not".**
 - Is it to mean that we are to just overlook the sins of others?
 - Is it meant that we are never to confront the sins or the wrong of others?
 - Does it mean that we should just rule out any type of judgment in our lives?
 - Do we think it is fare for our judge to rule a guilty verdict against the murderer?
 - Do we think it is fare to be evaluated for a promotion?
 - Is it fare for your kids to be judged & given an "A" if they work hard will others may fail?
 - Yet when confronted with their sins, many people will proclaim, "the Bible says not to judge, so you can't judge me." Is that a true statement?
 - You see, clearly when Jesus said, "Judge not", He never meant that we are never to make judgments. We make judgments every day of our lives.
 - What Jesus is warning against here is condemning others. That church is NEVER our place to do, only God's.
 - The word translated "judge" often means to condemn. It means to come to a negative conclusion about another person and then to condemn them.

1. What right do we have to condemn anyone. I am a sinner just like you. I have faults just like you. I have done things I am ashamed of just like you. So I have no right & no authority to cast judgment upon anyone.
2. We have no business judging the motives of others.
 - a. The Bible says, “Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart” ([1 Samuel 16:7](#)). We see only the outside. God alone sees the heart.
 - i. We can judge what people do; we cannot judge why they do it.
 - ii. We can judge what people say; we cannot judge why they say it.
 - b. Only God can judge the hidden secrets of the heart. Leave that judgment to him. You don’t even know your own heart, much less the heart of anyone else. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked:”
 - i. What about when your children get caught disobeying & when you asked them why they did it, they will say, “I don’t know.”
 - ii. Is that a lie? Before you answer that let me ask you something. Have you ever done something & then made the statement, “I don’t know why I did that?”
 - iii. All of us can remember times when we did or said something foolish, and looking back we can honestly say, “I don’t know why I did something stupid like that.” But if we can’t understand our own heart, how can we ever presume to understand anyone else’s?
 1. Paul said, “For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.” (Romans 7:19)
3. We are not to be faultfinders.
 - a. One that criticizes.
 - i. There are some people that believe that God placed them on this earth to look around, snoop into the business of others & critique everything that they do & find some fault in it all.
 - ii. The problem with that is that there is absolutely no where in scripture that supports that thought.
 1. One of the things that will drive a church to its grave is for its members to continually criticize one another.
 - a. Proverbs 11:12 – “He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.”
 - b. In other words, “It is foolish to belittle a neighbor; a person with good sense remains silent”.
 2. Faultfinding is the “venom of the soul.” It destroys our joy, drains our happiness, and prevents us from having close friendships. No one likes a faultfinder because no one likes being around a nit-picking critic. We criticize others in order to make ourselves look better.
 - b. One that tears down.
 - i. There is one thing that will not be tolerated at this church & that is those that criticize & attempt to tear down others.
 1. When I think about people that tear down others, I think about people who find joy in the failures of others.
 2. Not only is that heartless, that is unscriptural. When one falls, it affects us all. There is no glory in the failure or the sins of our fellow brother.

➤ **Jesus said, “Judge not!” There are so many ways in which we break this command. Here are a few examples:**

- Maximizing the sins of others.

- Coming to quick, hasty conclusions.
- Getting involved in situations where you should not be involved.
- Passing along critical stories to others.
- Being harsh even when speaking the truth.
- Telling too many people about what others have done to us.
- Telling the truth in order to hurt, not to help.
 - Some people use the truth as a club to beat others over the head.
- Minimizing your sins while magnifying the sins of others.

Here is a simple guide to help guide our speech. It's an acrostic based on the word NEED.

N—Is it necessary?

E—Will it encourage?

E—Will it edify?

D—Will it dignify the other person?

- **In dealing with the faults of others, our greatest need is clear vision. That's why Jesus said in verse 5, "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye." First, we must see clearly. And we cannot see clearly until we have removed the obstruction from our own eyes.**
- **OK, so what does this have to do with forgiveness? Actually it has everything to do with forgiveness. As we are confronting others, as we are forgiving others, we need to first look at our own lives & ask God's forgiveness for our sins before we can be concerned about anyone else.**
 - Psalm 139:23-24 – "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."
- **The order in which we do things is crucial. We are to judge ourselves first by asking God to show us our sins.**
 - We sit and wait and pray for the Holy Spirit to show us our weaknesses, our faults, our mistakes, our bad attitudes, our foolish words, our pride, our arrogance, our need to be in control, our desire to have our own way, our anger, our bitterness, our lack of mercy, our lack of love, our lack of compassion. Let me tell you something from personal experience, if you wait long enough, the Lord will always show it to you.
- **Did you notice what Jesus called the judgmental person in verse 5? He called him a hypocrite.**
 - That's what we are when we judge and condemn others without first judging ourselves. And once we have allowed the Holy Spirit to do his painful surgery within us, once we have confessed and repented and mourned over our own sin, then and only then are we ready to do surgery on someone else.
 - You say, Well Pastor, how will I know I'm there?" When your own sins will bother you a lot more than the sins of others, you have reached that point.
 - All of a sudden instead of being quick to judge & condemn, you will yourself experiencing:
 - Humility
 - Godly sorrow
 - Gentleness
 - Patience
 - I Corinthians 13:4-7 – "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."
 - That what true Christian love really is. There is a difference between someone who loves you and wants to help you and someone who puts you under a microscope only to find fault with all you do.