

Sunday, May 28, 2023 | Everyday Disciple

Week 7 | Luke 6:37-42 | "Judging Biblically"

We've been making our way through the so-called 'Sermon on the Plain,' and we've covered several topics so far.

With our discussion of the beatitudes and woes (cf. Lu. 6:20-26), we learned that, **depending on our values, God will call us blessed or cursed.** Should we value His Kingdom and his principles, we'll live in a state of blessedness. However, should we value this kingdom over God's, we are cursed, no matter how "good" our life may seem.

Last week, we studied Jesus' most challenging commandment: *love your enemies* (cf. Lu. 6:27-36). And, as with the beatitudes and woes, this commandment shows us that God's values are different from the world's values. Admittedly, this may seem insane at first glance. Bad guys are supposed to be hated, not loved! But, for the Christian, this commandment ought to make perfect sense. After all, if God did not love the sinner, where would that leave us? So, since we have been adopted into the household of God, he will expect his children to love others as he has loved them, even if that means loving the unlovable. **Children of God return virtue for vice.**

Today, we'll study one of Jesus' most misunderstood sayings: *judge not, and you will not be judged*. Because many who tout this verse do not understand the context from which it is given, they (*wrongly*) assume that Jesus is saying that we should never make any moral judgment. Sadly, some may even quote it in defense of whatever sin they're committing. As such, this wonderful verse has been twisted and misused. Rather than being a call for us to humbly correct one another, it has become, as theologian Mark Denver put it, "a shield for sin."

Scripturally, Christians have an *obligation* to judge rightly (cf. Lev. 19:15; Prov. 31:9; Zech. 8:16-17; Lu. 11:42-44; 12:54-59; 20:46-47; Jn. 7:24, 50-51; Rom. 14:1-12; 1 Cor. 2:15; 5:5, 1-13; 6:2; Gal. 1:8-9; 6:1-2; Ja. 6:19-20; 1 Jn. 4:1). This world is in desperate need of people who, in the spirit of meekness and truth, are trying to help their neighbors in whatever way they can, be it by providing for their needs, forgiving them, seeking justice on their behalf, and, yes, even by lovingly correcting their sin. As we'll see, the sort of judgment that Jesus is *not* prohibiting is the kind that is genuine and wholesome. The type he is banning is the kind that is disingenuous and vindictive.

Jesus teaches us two things:

i. God will use the same judgment we use (vs. 37-38).

READ: Luke 6:37-38 (ESV)

³⁷ "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

In a fantastic turn of events, God uses the same metric we use. Should we be overly harsh and unmerciful with others, God will be ruthless and unmerciful. But should we be quick to forgive and generous, God will be quick to forgive and helpful.

To be sure, this does not apply to questions of salvation. Remember, Jesus is addressing his disciples--i.e., individuals who've already put their trust in the Lord and have been the recipients of God's grace. As such, they ought to be some of the planet's most forgiving, merciful, and loving individuals. After all, a forgiven person is a forgiving person.

Jesus is giving believers a benchmark on how to act now that they've been saved. "Mercy and generosity to others is a declaration to God that such is the coinage we wish to have used in his dealings with us as well."¹ Now, this does not mean if I overlook the sins of others, God will ignore my own sins.²

ii. Judgment blinded by hypocrisy hurts everyone and helps no one (vs. 39-42).

READ: Luke 6:39-42 (ESV)

³⁹ He also told them a parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? ⁴⁰ A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone, when he is fully trained, will be like his teacher.

⁴¹ Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴² How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.

¹ Nolland, John, *Luke 1:1-9:20*, The Word Bible Commentary, Volume 35A, (Grand Rapids, MI; Zondervan, 2000), p. 301.

² Garland, David E., *Luke*, The Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids, MI; Zondervan, 2011), p. 283.

Jesus is preaching against the idea that "do as I say, not as I do" is good advice. He would rather us say, "Do as I say *and* as I do." Far from giving us a commandment against all judgment, the type of judgment the Lord is forbidding is the type that is hypocritical and haughty (cf. Rom. 2:1-11; 1 Cor. 4:1-7); it is the kind that slanders, defames, and vilifies (cf. Jam. 2:13; 4:11-12). The Son of God condemns the type of judgment that seeks to destroy, not build and edify. What would be the result of the blind leading the blind? Both fall into a pit. What would be the result of a man with a beam sticking out of his eye trying to help someone with a speck? Both would be worse by the end. Jesus' point is that you cannot lead others in a direction you yourself have not gone. You cannot teach others what you yourself do not know. Did you notice how that Jesus used the term 'brother' four times?³ This is a family affair. How can we help our brothers when we have not sought to better ourselves?

So, what's the takeaway?

Self-esteem and hypocrisy are the parents of bad advice.

Self-examination and humility are the parents of good advice.

When we try to address someone's faults without first taking care of our own faults, we do more harm than good. The point that Jesus was trying to make is this: we are supposed to judge, but only after we've taken care of the sin in our own life (cf. 1 Cor. 11:31-32). This passage is an indictment against pride and self-esteem, leading to *hypocrisy*. And one of the best passages that illustrate the difference between good and bad judgment is found in the Gospel of John.

READ: John 8:2-11 (ESV)

²Early in the morning, he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. ³The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst ⁴they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. ⁵Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" ⁶This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground.

⁷And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." ⁸And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. ⁹But when they heard it, they went away one by one,

³ Garland (2011), p. 285.

beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰ Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" ¹¹ She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more."

Regarding judgment, we are called to be fault bearers, not fault police. Our success is dependent on how well we treat our wounded. Should we ostracize and excommunicate them from the herd, we weaken ourselves and strengthen the enemy. We ought to gather around and collectively bare their burden.

If you see a friend with an issue, go to them humbly and openly. Be honest with your own struggles before addressing theirs (cf. Jam. 5:16). Transparency leads to intimacy. To speak into someone's life, they must believe you're talking **to them** rather than **at them**.

Video Description

Everyday Disciple | Week 7 | “Judging Biblically”

TEXT: Luke 6:37-42

Today, we'll study one of Jesus' most misunderstood sayings: *judge not, and you will not be judged*. Because many who tout this verse do not understand the context from which it is given, they (*wrongly*) assume that Jesus is saying that we should never make any moral judgment. But, scripturally, Christians have an *obligation* to judge rightly (cf. Lev. 19:15; Prov. 31:9; Zech. 8:16-17; Lu. 11:42-44; 12:54-59; 20:46-47; Jn. 7:24, 50-51; Rom. 14:1-12; 1 Cor. 2:15; 5:5, 1-13; 6:2; Gal. 1:8-9; 6:1-2; Ja. 6:19-20; 1 Jn. 4:1).

This world is in desperate need of people who, in the spirit of meekness and truth, are trying to help their neighbors in whatever way they can, be it by providing for their needs, forgiving them, seeking justice on their behalf, and, yes, even by lovingly correcting their sin.

As we'll see, the sort of judgment that Jesus is *not* prohibiting is the kind that is genuine and wholesome. The type he is banning is the kind that is disingenuous and vindictive.

Pastor's manuscript can be found here: