

- S1
- Comment on picture from the Sea of Galilee overlooking where tradition says Jesus spoke today's scripture.
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- The world is quick to judge.
  - Fashion police judge movie stars for what they wear to award ceremonies (picking on women)
  - Politicians judge the other party
  - A disaster happens and people will immediately assume who is at fault without the facts!
  - We are quick to judge our family, children, parents, and spouse
  - Christians have a reputation on being judgmental
- *pause*
- S2
- Class assignment – ask a non-Christian of their impression of your church (Christianity) and then listen non-judgmentally.
  - Sue's story – grew up Christian, judgmental mother, no longer a Christian
  - Nathaniel – Buddhist - Christians are judgmental.
  - Ask a non-Christian some times.
- Even within the church we are quick to judge fellow Christians:
  - We think that our fellow church members act poorly
  - We think that Session/committees are inconsiderate or make wrong decisions
  - We think that we are lied to or treated poorly
  - And we possibly
    - Get upset
    - Jump to conclusions
    - Talk about others behind their backs - gossip
    - Cut back in our involvement/giving
    - Leave the church
- S3
- Doesn't the bible say "God created man and woman. God said go forth and judge your fellow human beings, discern their flaws and commit character assassination behind their backs?"
- *pause*
- What does the bible say about this?
  - S5
  - Luke 6:37 "**Do not judge, and you will not be judged;** do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven;"

- Context begins in Luke 6:17 – 49 (32 verses)
  - Our verses today are one component of a block of sayings about how we (believers and interested parties) should behave. Just like us in the sanctuary today.
- What is “to judge?”
  - S6
  - Per BDAG, a widely used Greek Lexicon, κρίνω is:
    - ① to make a selection,
    - ② to pass judgment upon (and thereby seek to influence) the lives and actions of other people
    - As part of a judicial process
      - ③ to make a judgment based on taking various factors into account,
      - ④ to come to a conclusion after a cognitive process,
      - ⑤ to engage in a judicial process,
- *pause*
- S7
- First - What is the opposite of judging? Talking about everyday type judging.
  - Love your enemies - Luke 6:27, the passage before ours ends with:
  - “<sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is **merciful**. <sup>37</sup> **Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.**”
  - Luke has made a sandwich with mercy, judgment, and forgiveness.
- How do we do this in the church? Let’s go back over these definitions.
  - S8
  - For the first definition of to judge - ① to make a selection, *select, prefer*
    - S9
    - Often we make a selection to **not associate** with folks.
    - What does this mean coming after “love your enemies?” At times you have to select for safety’s sake. I’m not talking about that, but more everyday selection.
    - S10
    - Instead: Choose to associate with everyone in the community.
    - Do we select whom we like around church for superficial reasons?
      - We limit what God may want us to see
      - We limit where God may call us to act
      - We do not show the love of Christ
      - We destroy the community which is God’s church here on the corner
      - Do we want God to pretend that he doesn’t know us?

- My experience is there are interesting and compelling stories behind everyone here. It is usually a pleasure to get to know folks who I at first thought that I didn't want to associate with.
- *pause*
  - S11
  - ② to pass judgment upon (and thereby seek to influence) the lives and actions of other people
    - ③ *judge, pass judgment upon, express an opinion about*
    - ④ esp. *pass an unfavorable judgment upon, criticize, find fault with, condemn*
    - Don't we do all of this in the church or at home or work? We think that someone has lied or done something wrong?
    - When we judge in our families we might:
      - rebuke people verbally
      - withhold affection or our presence
      - actively punish them
    - Judgement often results in conflict. I like the 3 Cs of the Duncum Center for Conflict Resolution (<http://www.mediate.com/ccr/pg41.cfm>).
      - S12
      - **Communication** - sharing of information. (Almost all agree that communication from any subset is preferable to the absence of communication.)
      - **Conversation** is enhanced communication.
        - Friends usually give each other the benefit of the doubt. They accept what's presented at face value. In other words, until they learn differently, they don't pick at the other person's perspective regarding what has happened or what needs to be done.
        - In conversation, friends can most often arrive at agreement. But, at the very least, friends can come to an understanding of the other's perspective and determine how that will affect their relationship.
      - Commitment to **COMMUNITY**.
- *pause*
  - Whenever you are tempted to judge someone negatively:
    - S13
    - Follow Jesus' example. Don't judge. John 8:15: "<sup>15</sup> **You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one.**" (Jesus responding to the Pharisees). Jesus didn't judge anyone. He removed stumbling blocks:
    - S14

- We will be judged on judging other people. Rom 14:13  
<sup>13</sup> Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any **stumbling block** or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.” Your negative judgment may cause a stumbling block to the other person?
  - Instead
    - S15
    - Colossians 3:13–14: <sup>13</sup> **Bear with each other and forgive one another** if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. <sup>14</sup> And over all these virtues **put on love**, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” In other words, honor community.
- *pause*
  - S16
  - **Communicate** Doug Gips for example – finance question - what account should we use to pay for expenses. Doug wanted to do it differently than we have always done.
    - *Ask for clarification* - **Conversation** I could see his point. In many ways he was right.
    - Respect **Community**
  - People complaining about the book keeper → it was someone actually else’s fault.
  - *pause*
  - Most of the time there will be no fault. But what if there is a fault?
    - S17
    - We know the verse about rebuking people - but we forget the second part of it.
    - Luke 17:3–4 “**If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them.** <sup>4</sup> Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying **‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.**”
  - We also judge ourselves. Everything that is written about judging others applies to judging ourselves. We need to love and forgive ourselves as God does.
- I hope you see the pattern: Love.
- S18-19
- 1 Corinthians 13:4–7 <sup>4</sup> Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup> It does **not dishonor others**, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. <sup>6</sup> Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup> It always protects, **always trusts**, always hopes, always perseveres. “ We should trust/believe in the good intentions of others until we know otherwise.

- *pause*
- S20
- If we are offended and feel the need to judge, we must not. Instead we must act contrary to the world which seeks to judge.
- We need to have mercy. We need to extend the grace of love, forgiveness, and community to those around us and to ourselves. The second part of today's verse applies to this:
  - S21
  - Luke 6:38: “<sup>38</sup> Give, [grace] and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”
  - Let me demonstrate this verse. Picture that God is measuring out grace to you. In this case grace looks like corn flakes. Pour it in, shake it, smash it, and overfill it. That is the portion that God offers.
- S22
- Give Mercy (forgive first), Have patience (Take time to learn the facts and engage in conversation), Give grace (honor members of the community extravagantly).
  - That is what you want done for yourself. This is what God will do for you.

## Prayer

Have mercy on us. Let us not judge but give mercy instead. Let us build up those around us. If we are wronged, let us forgive 7 times in a day and not keep track of the times we forgive. Let us be known as a person and a church that does not judge, but instead as someone who loves and freely gives grace. We can do this because of your grace. Your grace is enough.

**οἰκτιρμός, οὐ, ὁ** - display of concern over another's misfortune, *pity, mercy, compassion*

**χάρις, ιτος, ἡ** -

- ① a winning quality or attractiveness that invites a favorable reaction, *graciousness, attractiveness, charm, winsomeness*
- ② a beneficent disposition toward someone, *favor, grace, gracious care/help, goodwill*
- ③ practical application of goodwill, *(a sign of) favor, gracious deed/gift, benefaction*
- ④ exceptional effect produced by generosity, *favor*
- ⑤ response to generosity or beneficence, *thanks, gratitude*