

Judged by the Measure You Use

Text: Luke 6:37–42

Main Idea: Jesus calls us to live not with condemnation, but with compassion, charity, and Christlike discernment — because the measure we use with others is the measure God will use with us.

Introduction: The Only Verse Every Pagan Knows

“Judge not!”

If there’s one Bible verse that every unbeliever seems to know by heart, it’s this one. You’ve heard it quoted a thousand times. Someone posts online about sin, and before the pixels dry, someone comments, *“You’re not supposed to judge!”*

Even people who’ve never opened a Bible know this verse.

It’s what I like to call **“the only verse every pagan knows.”**

Now, they may not know **John 3:16**, they may not know the Ten Commandments, but they sure know this one. And often, they use it as a shield: “You can’t say that’s wrong! Jesus said don’t judge!”

But friends, let’s slow down.

What **did** Jesus actually mean?

Was He saying, “Don’t ever call sin, sin”?

Was He telling us to stop discerning between good and evil?

Was He commanding us to switch off our moral compass and float through life with blind tolerance?

Not at all.

So today, let’s step back to that hillside, and let’s listen again to the **voice of Jesus**.

Let’s hear not a sound bite, but a **Sermon**.

And let’s discover what Jesus meant when He said:

“Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven.”

(READ TEXT)

Point 1: Jesus Is Not Forbidding Discernment — He's Warning Against Condemnation

The first thing we must understand is this:

Jesus is not forbidding **discernment**. He is forbidding **condemnation**.

You see, there's a **righteous judgment** and an **unrighteous judgment**.

The Bible calls us to discern between right and wrong. Hebrews 5:14 says that mature believers have their senses trained to **discern good and evil**.

Jesus Himself said in John 7:24,

"Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

So, when Jesus says "Judge not," He's not saying,

"Close your eyes to evil."

He's saying,

"Close your heart to condemnation."

We are called to evaluate actions, not to **elevate ourselves** as judges of people's souls.

Illustration: Think of a referee in a basketball game. The ref calls fouls to keep the game fair, but he's not there to humiliate the players. His role is discernment, not condemnation.

In the same way, God calls us to judge actions rightly but never to condemn people self-righteously.

Application: Before you speak about someone's sin, ask yourself:

- What's the end goal here – what is my motivation? What do I want to see happen as I speak to this? Am I seeking **restoration** or **ruin**?
- Concerning the person - Do I want to see them **healed** or **humiliated**? What is the motivation of my heart here?

Because the difference between discernment and condemnation is not in the eyes — it's in the **heart**.

Point 2: Use the Judgment of Charity, Not the Judgment of Condemnation

Jesus calls us to a better way — the **judgment of charity**.
That means, when possible, **give others the benefit of the doubt**.
When the evidence isn't clear, assume the best, not the worst.

But here's our problem:

We often reserve the "best-case analysis" for ourselves...
...and give everyone else the "worst-case verdict."

Isn't that true?

We judge ourselves by our **intentions**, but others by their **actions**.

We say, *"Well, I didn't mean it that way."*

But when someone else hurts us, we say, *"They knew exactly what they were doing!"*

Friends, that's not mercy. That's hypocrisy.

Jesus says,

"With the measure you use, it will be measured back to you."

If we measure others with suspicion, stinginess, or cynicism,
we invite God to measure us the same way.

Illustration: Imagine a builder using a crooked ruler. Every wall he builds will be off. If your ruler is warped with pride or bitterness, every judgment you make will be crooked.

Application:

Before you speak a word of criticism, pause and pray:

"Lord, help me see this person the way You do."

Ask yourself,

"What story might I not know? What pain might they carry? What pressures might they face?"

That's the judgment of charity.

Point 3: Be Generous and Forgiving — Because God Is

Jesus continues:

“Forgive, and you will be forgiven.

Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over...”

He paints a vivid picture from the marketplace.

A vendor fills your basket with grain — not lightly, not halfway, but packed tight, pressed down, shaken to make room for more, until it overflows.

That’s how **God gives**. That’s how **grace works**.

You can’t outgive God.

And you can’t out-forgive Him either.

When you forgive generously, He pours mercy back into your life.

When you give abundantly, He multiplies His blessings to you.

When you treat others with grace, you walk in step with the **heart of God**.

Personal Story Prompt:

Think of a time someone forgave you more than you deserved — and how it changed you. Maybe a spouse, a friend, a church member. That moment reveals the gospel in miniature.

Application:

Who do you need to forgive?

Who do you need to bless?

Who do you need to treat with the measure of mercy you’ve received?

Remember: **forgiven people forgive**.

Point 4: Deal with Your Own Plank Before Touching Someone Else’s Speck

Then Jesus tells a parable — a little bit of holy humor:

“Why do you see the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the plank in your own?”

You can almost picture it — a man walking around with a two-by-four sticking out of his eye, pointing out the sawdust in someone else's. It's ridiculous. And that's the point.

We're often **blind to our own sin**.

We notice small faults in others but excuse massive ones in ourselves.

Before you confront someone else, Jesus says, **look in the mirror**.

Before you fix their speck, remove your plank.

Illustration: It's like trying to perform surgery while wearing muddy glasses — you'll hurt more than you help.

Application:

Be a **repenter** before you're a **rebuker**.

Examine your heart before you examine anyone else's.

The Gospel: The Judge Who Chose Mercy

At the heart of this teaching is the gospel itself.

Because the truth is — there **is** a Judge.

A holy, righteous, perfect Judge who sees every sin.

And He had every right to condemn us.

But instead... He came to **save** us.

On the cross, the Judge took the judgment.

The Innocent One bore the sentence for the guilty.

The One who deserved to condemn chose instead to forgive.

So, if you want to stop being judgmental,
stand at the foot of the cross.

When you realize how much mercy you've received,
you'll be eager to give it away.

Romans 8:1: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Conclusion: The Measure You Use

So, how do you want God to measure you?
With grace... or with grudges?
With mercy... or with meticulous scorekeeping?

Jesus says,

“With the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.”

So, church —
Let’s be people who measure with mercy.
Who lead with love.
Who forgive freely.
Who discern wisely,
and judge righteously — never self-righteously.

Because our Savior has filled our basket —
pressed down, shaken together, running over —
with His grace.

So let’s go out and **measure others with the same mercy.**

Invitation

If you’ve never received the mercy of Jesus,
come to Him today.

Lay down your self-righteousness,
your bitterness,
your judgment —
and receive His forgiveness.

Let the Judge become your Savior.

He’s waiting to fill your empty basket with grace.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You that You did not come to condemn us,
but to save us.

Teach us to measure others the way You’ve measured us —
with mercy, grace, and overflowing love.

Search our hearts for planks of pride and replace them with eyes of compassion.

Make us a people of discernment without condemnation,
conviction without cruelty,
and truth seasoned with grace.

In Your merciful name, Amen.