

Week 4 — The Measure You Use

Luke 6:37–42

Introduction

By the time we reach this point in Luke 6, Jesus has already unsettled us.

He has told us that the blessed ones are not who we expect. He has commanded us to love our enemies. And now, He turns the focus inward.

This passage is not primarily about *how Christians should act in public*. It is about the posture of the heart—about how grace reshapes the way we see others and the way we see ourselves.

Before we can represent the kingdom to others, the kingdom must do its work in us.

Setting the Context: Why Jesus Says This *Here*

Luke is very intentional in how he arranges Jesus' teaching.

- **Luke 6:20–26** asks: *Who is truly blessed?*
- **Luke 6:27–36** asks: *How do we treat those who oppose us?*
- **Luke 6:37–42** now asks: *How do we treat one another?*

Jesus moves from enemies to neighbors. From public faithfulness to private discernment. From outward behavior to inward posture.

This is where spiritual pride is most easily hidden—not in obvious rebellion, but in quiet comparison, confident opinions, and unexamined hearts.

Jesus is not dismantling discernment. He is dismantling self-righteousness.

And He does it by exposing the *measure* we use.

Transition into Point I

In the early 1900s, the plant kudzu was introduced to the United States as a solution for soil control and even for supper tables. It was planted in gardens and along roadsides because it grew quickly, prevented erosion, and looked harmless enough. People welcomed it. They nurtured it.

What they didn't realize was its potential. Kudzu doesn't announce itself as a threat. It spreads slowly at first—quietly, almost politely. But given time, it climbs fences, wraps around trees, and eventually smothers everything in its path. Homes, forests, entire landscapes can disappear under its weight.

That's how judgment often works in our lives.

It doesn't usually show up as open hostility. It begins as an observation. A concern. A "helpful" opinion. A silent comparison.

And because it feels reasonable—even responsible—we let it grow. But over time, judgment wraps itself around relationships that matter most: marriages, families, churches, friendships. What once felt harmless begins to choke trust, empathy, and grace.

Kingdom love can be undone not only by hatred, but by quiet condemnation.

I. The Kingdom Calls Us Away from Condemnation and Toward Grace

(Luke 6:37–38)

Jesus says:

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

These words are often misunderstood. Jesus is not forbidding moral clarity. He is confronting **self-righteous judgment**.

To *judge* here means to assume the role of final authority—to act as though we know motives, context, and hearts.

To *condemn* means to pass a verdict that leaves no room for redemption.

Jesus then gives us an image:

"A good measure—pressed down, shaken together, running over..."

This image comes from the marketplace.

God's mercy is abundant, overflowing, generous.

Marketplace Imagery

Jesus then gives us an image:

“A good measure—pressed down, shaken together, running over...”

This comes straight from the marketplace.

In Jesus’ day, grain was sold by volume. A seller could pour grain in loosely—technically fair, but barely generous. Or a good seller would **press it down, shake it together, and keep pouring until it overflowed.**

That extra wasn’t required. It was a choice.

Jesus says: *This is how God treats you.*

God does not give mercy sparingly or cautiously. He gives it fully, freely, and more than enough.

Then Jesus turns the image back on us:

The measure you use reveals what you believe about God’s mercy toward you.

Modern Parallel

You’ve seen this at a farmer’s market. Some vendors count everything carefully. Others fill the basket—and toss in a little extra.

Jesus says: *God is the second kind.*

And kingdom people begin to look like Him.

And here’s the gospel truth underneath it all:

God’s mercy overflows to us because judgment overflowed onto Christ. At the cross, Jesus took the full measure—so we could live from abundance, not fear.

We don’t give grace to earn mercy. We give grace because we’ve already received more than enough.

The issue is not God’s willingness to give grace.

The issue is the **measure we use** when we deal with others.

Ephrem the Syrian put it this way:

Judge according to God's justice. Forgive according to God's grace.

Justice and grace are not opposites in the kingdom—they belong together.

Those who have truly received grace become generous with grace.

We often demand mercy for ourselves and justice for everyone else.

Kingdom humility reverses that instinct.

But judgment does not remain neutral. When left unchecked, it shapes how we see—and eventually, how we lead. So Jesus presses deeper.

II. The Kingdom Exposes the Danger of Blind Leadership

(Luke 6:39–40)

Jesus asks:

“Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?”

This warning is not limited to official leaders. It applies to anyone who influences others—parents, friends, mentors, and believers with strong opinions.

Jesus reminds us: “A disciple, when fully trained, will be like his teacher.”

Formation is inevitable. We are always becoming something.

The danger is not lack of passion—it is unexamined certainty.

A Modern Parable: The GPS with Confidence

Imagine someone driving with complete confidence—hands steady on the wheel, eyes forward, voice certain.

There's just one problem. The GPS they're following hasn't been updated in years. It gives directions confidently. It speaks clearly. It never hesitates.

But roads have changed. Bridges are out. Construction has rerouted traffic.

And the driver, trusting the voice more than the landscape, keeps going—even when the road narrows, even when the signs start warning, even when passengers begin to feel uneasy.

Eventually, everyone ends up stuck. Not because the driver lacked passion. Not because they didn't care. But because they never stopped to ask whether the voice guiding them was still trustworthy.

That's what Jesus means when He asks, "Can a blind guide lead the blind?"

Blindness here isn't ignorance. It's **unexamined certainty**. The danger isn't that we don't care. The danger is that we care deeply—but never pause to ask what is shaping us.

Formation is inevitable. We are always becoming something. The question is not *if* we are being formed—but *by whom*. Unexamined hearts create unsafe guides.

Before correcting others, before speaking with authority, before assuming clarity—Jesus invites us to ask: *What is shaping my vision?*
Who am I becoming like?

Because clarity without humility doesn't lead people to life. It leads them into the ditch—with us. Unexamined hearts create unsafe guides.

Before correcting others, we must ask: What is shaping me?
Who or what is forming my vision? Clarity without humility leads to harm.

Jesus now moves from blindness to the source of the blindness—not ignorance, but self-deception.

III. The Kingdom Begins with Honest Self-Examination

(Luke 6:41–42)

Jesus exaggerates on purpose.

"Why do you see the speck in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log in your own?"

This is not a subtle image. Jesus is describing someone trying to perform eye surgery while carrying a telephone pole in their face.

The crowd would have laughed—because the picture is ridiculous. And that's the point.

The problem isn't that we notice specks. The problem is that we normalize logs. We minimize our own sin while magnifying the failures of others.

Jesus is not forbidding correction. He's confronting hypocrisy.

Only after repentance does He say, "Then you will see clearly..."

Self-examination is not self-hatred. It is the doorway to grace—and to clarity.

A Simple Kingdom Self-Assessment (Log & Speck Check)

Before addressing a speck, ask three questions:

1. Ownership

Is there anything in me—attitude, habit, tone—that mirrors what I'm about to address? Logs often look like defensiveness, resentment, or impatience.

2. Posture

Is it more important for me to be right... or to be redemptive?

Correction without compassion is not kingdom clarity.

3. Readiness

Have I brought this first into the light with God—through confession and prayer? If I haven't repented, I'm not ready to correct.

You might say it this way for pacing: If you can't name your own log, you're probably not seeing clearly enough to help with someone else's speck.

Jesus doesn't tell us to ignore specks. He tells us to remove logs first. Why?

Because forgiven people correct differently. Humbled people restore gently. Repentant people speak with grace. The goal isn't silence.

The goal is **clear sight shaped by mercy**. And that kind of clarity only comes when we let Jesus deal honestly with us first.

Confession clears our vision. Humility makes restoration possible.

IV. The Kingdom Measures Us by the Mercy We Have Received

Judgment. Blindness. Logs and specks. All of it points to one truth: The kingdom exposes hearts before it corrects behavior. We do not live kingdom life through comparison. We live it through transformation.

The measure we use reveals what we trust.

Gospel Connection: The One Who Bore Our Judgment

Jesus does not merely teach this standard— He fulfills it.

He is judged so we can be forgiven. He sees clearly when we are blind. He bears the full weight of our sin so the log might be removed—not ignored.

The gospel is not: *Try harder to be humble.*

The gospel is: *Look to Christ—and be changed.*

Only forgiven people can forgive. Only humbled people can help others see. Only those who have received mercy can extend mercy without fear.

The measure you use reveals what you trust. If you trust your own righteousness, you will live guarded and critical.

If you trust Christ’s mercy, you are free to live generously.

You do not have to defend yourself before God. You do not have to hide. You do not have to pretend clarity you don’t have.

Come to Jesus. Let Him search you. Let Him heal you. Let Him remove what blinds you. And let Him teach you how to extend the grace you have already received.

Benediction

Go now in the mercy of Christ,
with eyes made clear by grace
and hearts shaped by humility.

May the measure you use
be the measure you have received—
pressed down, shaken together,
and overflowing with love.

In the name of the Father,
the Son,
and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.