

## Who Are We to Judge? Outline

*1st Corinthians 5:9-13*

*Matthew 18:12-20*

- I. The double entendre
  - A. Who are we TO JUDGE?
  - B. WHO ARE WE to judge?
  
- III. “*Who am I to judge*”
  - A. We must judge ourselves before ever judging anyone else.
    - 1. We are all sinners: Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:23; Jeremiah 17:9
  - B. Who am I to judge? MYSELF!
  
- IV. ***WHO ARE WE to judge?*** (Verses 9-10)
  - A. Edgy—“What gives you the right to judge others?”
  - B. “*Do not associate with sexually immoral people*” (1 Cor. 5:9).
    - 1. Not referring to unbelievers.
      - a. Everybody is immoral (sinners).
  - C. The Christian is to “associate” with unbelievers.
    - 1. Associate—to mingle with, to keep company with (*sunanamignumi*).
    - 2. To give them the gospel of Jesus Christ.
    - 3. We are not to judge the unbelievers sin.
  
- V. ***Who are we TO JUDGE?*** (Verses 11-13)
  - A. We are to judge the professing Christian LIVING in sin.
    - 1. We are not to *associate* with them.
  
- VI. The importance of every believer in the church. (Matthew 18:12-14)
  - A. “What do you think?” (V.12) – Not so much *what’s in your mind* but *think about this*.
  - B. Question—*Should you leave the 99 sheep to save the 1 lost sheep?*
    - 1. Sheep, the perfect metaphor for the Christian.

- a. Prone to wander!
2. Conventional wisdom—*Never leave 99 sheep alone only to save 1!*
3. God's wisdom—Nobody is not worth going after.

***There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance.***

Luke 15:7

4. We have no right to say that a person is to be “written off” from God's kingdom.

VII. The procedure—Church Discipline (Matthew 18:15-20)

- A. Step 1—Confrontation must be done in private (Verse 15)
  1. Go to the person by yourself in private, not to gossip.
- B. Step 2—Take a witness with you (Verse 16)
- C. Step 3—Tell it to the church (Verse 17)
  1. Think of them as a gentile and tax collector.

***The goal of church discipline is ALWAYS restoration of the sinner***

## Who Are We to Judge? Pastoral Notes

*1st Corinthians 5:9-13*

“*Who are we to judge?*”.... That’s a legitimate question... but which question?... *Who are we TO JUDGE?*... or *WHO ARE WE to judge?*...there’s a difference isn’t there?.... we call it a “double entendre....a simple statement with multiple meanings...

One is a question we ask that assumes we actually are to make judgements on others, but we’re inquiring as to who.... Who are we TO JUDGE?...And the other has an edge to it...perhaps a little defensive in tone... WHO ARE WE to judge?

It’s a question I’ve asked myself...especially in the context of the church... as being a Christian in a secular world... who are *we* to judge?

It has been an accusation from the secular world to the Christian... *Who are you to judge?*... Back in 2013 Pope Francis shook the world a bit when he was asked by a journalist in a news conference “*what about all these priest that are coming out as being gay?*”... the pope’s response was.... “*Who am I to judge?*”

Well... that shook the religious world and it made the secular world very happy.... *Finally the church is going to stop making judgements... implying that the church will now become all accepting and inclusive .*

You can understand the question with its edge being put on us by the outside world.... Today’s church has been caught publicly in so many sins within itself...denominations rife with scandals of all sorts... prominent preachers caught up in gross immoralities... at the same time condemning the immorality of the world around them..... no wonder we’re being asked *Who are you to judge?*

We should be asking ourselves both of those questions within the one question!.... WHO ARE WE to judge and who are we TO JUDGE? It could be a bit confusing...In three words, blunt and absolute, Jesus commanded us, "**Do not judge**" (Matt. 7:1).

But did he really mean that we should never judge others? He goes on to suggest that it's not the act of judging but the attitude with which we do it that God is most concerned about—"**For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged**" (7:2).

James 4:11-12

...**The one who speaks against a brother or sister, or judges his brother or sister, speaks against the law and judges the law;** but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law

**but a judge of it. 12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you, judging your neighbor?**

Romans 14:13

### **13 Therefore let's not judge one another anymore....**

Common sense suggests that if no one ever judged other people, there would be no real human community. In a sinful world... no community can exist for long where nobody is ever held accountable:

No teacher would grade a student's performance...no need for juries in a court...when you come to think of it, nobody would ever forgive anyone for wrongs he had done... we only forgive people for what we blame them, and we blame them only after we have judged them.

The church cannot exist either without accountability which is accomplished through making righteous judgements.... If we put those verses into proper context.... And add to them many verses that instruct us on making judgements... we would see that the Christian **is** to make judgements on others... but the Bible is very specific as to who those "others" are.... And how we do it.

Last week we looked at a tough passage... one that made us a bit uncomfortable... 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5... Paul reprimanded the Corinthian church for not making a judgment on someone... One of the church members was involved in flagrant sexual immorality.... He was with his father's wife... the sin of incest.

Paul was most concerned over the church's lack of judgement on this man than he was the actual sin the man was involved with... *Instead of confronting this man with his sin...which is making a judgement,... "you have condoned his sin.... You have accepted his ongoing sinning in your church.... You should have judged this man and put him out of the church!"* ...WOW!

Tough words... tough passage... this morning I want to continue with what Paul was saying in chapter five... there's some clarification that is vital for us regarding judging others.... I hope to answer those two questions ... *WHO ARE WE to judge* and *who are we TO JUDGE*.... With some clarification...but begin with a third question... *Who am I to judge?*

Three passages this morning... 1 Corinthians 5:9-13... Matthew 18:12-14 and Matthew 18:15-18

### **1. Who am I to judge?**

Before we can ever even think about making a judgement on someone else we have to begin with making a judgement on ourselves...we need to take a look at ourselves and acknowledge we are all sinners... every single one of us...we know this but need to be constantly reminded.

We need to begin humbly... we are all sinners... as a result of the original fall of man through Adam in Genesis 3...every part of us... our minds... our emotions.... Our flesh... have been corrupted by sin...

And because of that... sin influences every aspect of our being... sin affects who we are... what we do... how we think... what we think... even our good things are tainted by sin... Isaiah 64:6 reminds us even **our righteous acts are like filthy rags**... as we stand in contrast to our all Holy God...

J. O. Philpot stated (1835)

*As no heart can sufficiently conceive, so no tongue can adequately express, the state of wretchedness and ruin into which sin has cast guilty, miserable man.*

We sin because sin is our nature... familiar passages:

Romans 3:23 **for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

1 John 1:8 **If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.**

Jeremiah 17:9 shows us that God sees each one of us how we really are.... Not the person we project to others around us... he says **“Man’s heart is deceitful and desperately wicked.”**... the idea of being so wicked it is actually sick... which is why Jeremiah yells out **“Heal me O Lord!”**

Ephesians 2:1-5

**2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.**

The point is... we are all sinners... we still sin... we are still battling with the flesh **4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved**

—  
Spurgeon—*We are so vile that our vileness is beyond our own comprehension, but nevertheless, the blood of Christ hath infinite efficacy, and he that believeth in the Lord Jesus is saved, be his sins ever so many, but he that believeth not must be lost, be his sins ever so few.*

By His grace we are forgiven of all sins past present and future.... But we are sinners!... the reason we need to begin here is this realization should affect how we deal with other sinners!...

right?... none of us can be self-righteous... we can only address the sin of someone else in complete humility knowing we are no better than they.

Jesus's penetrating words in Matthew 7:3

**3 Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the [c]speck out of your eye,' and look, the log is in your own eye? 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!**

So... Who am I to judge?... MYSELF...we must begin there.

## **2. WHO ARE WE to judge?**

That's the one with the edge to it... *what gives you the right to judge?...*

Look at 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5 where we left off last week... Verse nine tells us that there was a letter before this letter we call 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians... we really don't know just how many letters the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians Church... we do know which ones God wanted to have included in His word... 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians. But there was an earlier letter. [maybe many!]

Apparently Paul made a statement that either was taken wrong or he said something that he did not mean... he says here... **I wrote to you in my letter...the one before this one... not to associate with immoral people...**

It seems as though word must have gotten back to Paul telling him that the church is trying to not associate with any immoral people... I assume they were all getting very, very lonely!... they couldn't associate with anybody!

Unfortunately... today... many in the church have this same idea that they are not to associate with any immoral people... and so they put themselves in the category of being moral... being the good ones... and they shun anyone they deem as being below their moral standards.... *The immoral.*

To view yourself as not a sinner is a sin making you a sinner... pride!

We could call these people the *self-righteous-judgmental legalists*... in Jesus's day... Pharisees... so Paul... hearing about the miscommunication says:

**(10) I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world....**

In other words... everybody is immoral!... you won't have anyone to associate with if we're talking about all immoral people of the world.... Everyone is!... **you would have to go out of this world!... you would have to start looking for a new planet!**

Apparently the Corinthian church had stopped associating with “unbelievers” because they labelled them as the immoral... *won't have anything to do with them!*... WHILE ALL THE TIME ALLOWING...IGNORING... ACCEPTING flagrant ongoing sin within the church... shunning the unbelievers while embracing UNFAITHFUL professing believers...[WHO ARE YOU to judge!]

Now this is so important for us all to understand... **We are NOT to stay away from people who need the gospel!**...that's the very mission Jesus left us to do!... **Go into all the world and preach the gospel**... go into the heathen nations... the sinful lost corners of the world... and spend time with them... love them... care for them... have coffee.... Lunch... with them... show them Christ through your love... through your life... love those... did you see his partial list?... **the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters...**

Notice all these words are nouns... not verbs or adjectives.... so these are people who are characterized by these sins...these aren't people who blew it and committed some immoral act.... These people are characterized as being that act!... you could add to that list all those sins I listed last week.... Associate with them!

One of the great Greek words we translate as “associate”... ready? [Su Nanami Gnumi] *sunanamignumi*...it means “**to mix up with**”... “**to keep company with**”... you meet up with a non-believer person involved in adultery...actually characterized as an adulterer...you don't condemn him... you don't judge him..... Mingle with him!...spend some time with him!

You become friends with a non-believing homosexual... bisexual.... Whatever sexual... the gender confused... the polygamous... whatever you can think of.... love them...associate with them...why?..... they need the gospel of Jesus Christ.... And hear this.... IT IS NOT OUR JOB TO JUDGE THEM!

Really?... that's what Paul is getting at in verses 12 and 13... **For what have I to do with judging outsiders?.... (13) But those outside GOD judges!** It is not only NOT our job to judge ANYONE who is not a professing Christian.

[This doesn't mean we are to accept sin now...this is not saying we now sin so as to reach the sinner for Christ....no ... We are not to disown or defriend an unbeliever because of his sin... most likely they will de-friend you for being a Christian!... ]

Boy does the church get this wrong!..... right?... the church tends to judge those outside of the church...we attack them for their sin...we condemn them... you can chastise the lost all you want for their sin... that's not going to save them... only their embracing the gospel of Jesus Christ will save them.... so we have the marching orders from Jesus Himself to share His gospel.

Matthew 9:9-13

**9 As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man called Matthew sitting in the tax collector's office;** [A tax collector...a tax collector here would be one who has betrayed his people...they were Jewish by birth but betrayed his people by working for the Roman government ...as tax collectors...oppressing their own people.... the lowest of the low...}...**and He \*said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him.**

**10 Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining at the table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and began dining with Jesus and His disciples. 11 And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "Why is your Teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?" 12 But when Jesus heard this, He said, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. 13 Now go and learn what this means: 'I desire compassion, rather than sacrifice,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."**

We need to get off of condemning lost people who are involved with sin... and become obsessed with making sure they've received the gospel!... one of the big criticisms I hear from the non-Christian world is "*where is the love of this Jesus in those who call themselves Christian?*" ...

I think maybe most of the time that is a legitimate question... because we've confused our role as being judge of the sinning unbeliever.... With being concerned for their souls.... Who are we TO JUDGE?.... not the unsaved!...So...

### **3. who are we TO JUDGE?**

#### **Read verses 11-13**

We are to judge the professing Christian who is LIVING in sin... in fact... Paul says don't associate with them... don't mingle... don't mix... he even says don't even share a meal with this person...of course this is pointing back to the man living with his father's wife.

Why?... to punish them?...to humiliate them?....here's where we need to understand God's *process* in dealing with sin in the church.... Jesus Himself gives us a very specific procedure in dealing with this situation.... Turn to Matthew 18... verses 15 through 20is the instruction... but we're going to begin with a classic parable that precedes it in verses 12-14.

Perhaps you didn't realize the two are closely related... what these three short verses show us is just **how important EVERYONE is in the body of Christ...the church**...including the flagrant sinner...everyone who is in the kingdom of God... all professing believers in Jesus Christ... Every single one....is important.... We need to grasp this prior to any judging.

When we understand this... we will better understand the drastic measures that the apostle Paul was reprimanding the Corinthian church with...understanding Jesus's message with this parable will help us understand the instructions that follow in verses 15-20.... We know this parable... it is affectionately called *The Parable of the Lost Sheep*.



The same story is found in greater detail in Luke 15:3-10...It begins in verse 12 with a question... the question was directed to His twelve disciples... they had just had the “*Who’s the greatest in the kingdom of heaven*” talk...Jesus responding to the prideful twelve tells them nobody will enter into the kingdom of heaven unless they are converted and become like little children.... “*The greatest in heaven will be those who humble themselves like this little child sitting on My lap!*”

Such an important chapter.... In three verses...Jesus gives them a simple story with huge ramifications.... The question (12) “**What do you think?**” ... I don’t think Jesus is as much wanting to know their thoughts as He was wanting them to turn on their brains.

### **Read verse 12**

“**Think carefully?**”...Even though these men are probably not in the Sheep business... the culture they are in is... everyone in that day and time would know much about shepherding...

The reason Jesus wants them to turn on their brains and think carefully about this question is because if they get the answer to this question wrong... they will miss the entire message Jesus is trying to make..... that goes for us as well.

So what is *our* answer to the question?... there are 100 sheep... one strays off and is lost... do we leave the 99 to go find the one?... what’s our answer?... Of course! YES!..because we’re not really thinking and we’re not of the sheep culture..... I love math only when dealing in tens..... so... one sheep leaves.... 1/100th of your wealth has wandered off....99% of your sheep are still together.

1% of your life’s investment is lost and *vulnerable*...(risk in seeking it)...every time we look at this parable... we have to say some things about sheep...sheep are the perfect animal to describe the Christian right?...

Sheep are the most defenseless mammals on earth... they are totally unable to protect themselves...they don’t have fangs... they don’t have claws... they don’t have strong legs to run away... they have very small brains...

I learned this week that sheep are so... so “simple minded”... vulnerable.... That they won’t run from a raging fire as it approaches them until it’s too late...there is no better animal to illustrate weakness, vulnerability and simple mindedness of people who are Christians than sheep!

So one of the hundred wanders off and Jesus says “*What do you think?*”... well...really, really think about it... if this was *your* business.... And this was all you had... 100 sheep.... And one wanders off.... Certainly the people of that culture would have said... “***NO!... I’m NOT leaving the 99 for one stupid sheep!***”

You’re just one shepherd... and you are alone with 100 sheep... you got your hands full!...***you’ve got four hundred legs to watch over!***...sheep aren’t like cows... they go in all

directions... that's why you need sheep dogs...that's why you carry this long staff with a hook at the end... if you don't watch them they're walk right off a cliff!

Sheep are “prone to wander”... you know the hymn?...Come Thou Fount... *Prone to wander, Lord I feel it Prone to leave the God I love...* Sheep!

So... four of the four hundred legs left... that leaves you with 396 legs!...*I'll cut my losses...if I leave the 99... I may get the one back.... But I'll come back to a scattered flock... maybe half of THEM lost!...* AN ACTUAL NEWS STORY

*Hundreds of sheep followed their leader off a cliff in eastern Turkey, plunging to their deaths this week while shepherds looked on in dismay. Four hundred sheep fell 15 metres to their deaths in a ravine in Van province near Iran but broke the fall of another 1,100 animals who survived. The Shepherd from a nearby village neglected the flock while eating breakfast, leaving the sheep to roam free. The loss to local farmers was estimated at \$74,000.*

One sheep wandered off a cliff and 1,499 others just followed along.....Can there be a better illustration for a Christian?... Isaiah knew this... Isaiah 53:6 **All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the wrongdoing of us all To fall on Him.**

Sheep stray.... They wander off because they are st.... they don't have the mental fortitude to stay together...so... considering all this... the answer to Jesus's question would logically be “NO!”...you don't leave the 99 for 1!.... this is what Jesus is getting at...

In God's economy... God's business practices... one sheep is worth going after!...God's methods are counter-cultural...Jesus is showing them and us is that **nobody is not worth going after**....put this in our context...change the sheep into people...the way we think in our society....people are expendable...

We accept the idea that we will lose a few people ... *we're going to lose a few*...that person was *annoying anyway!...glad he left the church!...glad the church had to put him out*... “we still have 99 left!... that's almost twice the size of the average church in America..... losing one isn't going to matter..... Jesus is showing us that when it comes to seeking after sinners...

God's love is so different than ours... What God values is so opposite ours... *What do you think?*... Listen to Luke 15:

**4 “What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the other ninety-nine in the [a]open pasture and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? 5 And when he has found it, he puts it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost!’ 7 I tell you that in the same way, there**

**will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance.**

You want to know what causes all of heaven to rejoice?... Not filling up churches with 99 righteous people.... not those who have made a long list of tasks for God and have fulfilled them...no...ONE lost sinner...just one!...who repents... who comes to Jesus....WHO COMES BACK TO JESUS....

Do you see the value difference between God's economy and ours?... we do the math... *"I'll keep the 99.... I can take the loss....* What does God say?

**Read verse 14**

**This is what I'm wanting us to see.... This is telling us... Jesus is telling us... that we have no right to say that this person can be written off as lost.... We have no right to just let ANYONE go... this one is expendable...We can lose one...**

We have no right to say *well... they just wandered off... let them go... they're unreachable so let them go... they've messed up their lives... let them go... they annoyed me anyway... they had a bad attitude... they had a few strange thoughts .... Let them go.*

There's no one in this room that through your vast intelligence and great wisdom wandered into the gospel... every single one of us began hostile towards the gospel... it was Jesus that came after us!.... WE AT ONE TIME WAS THE ONE JESUS WENT AFTER.

No one can be on our list that can be written off for the kingdom...This is the attitude and value we are to place on those who must be put in church discipline for their ongoing flagrant sin....so....

*what's the procedure?.....*verses 15-20 is the procedure the Corinthian church should have followed in dealing with the man living with his father's wife.

**Read verse 15**

This is not telling us to go look under rocks to find sins of church members...remember... we all sin... sin here is a flagrant lifestyle of sinning THAT has become known... this sin has been detected by someone... let's say you... the sinner here is now the one sheep that wandered off...

He is so valuable to the body of believers that you go after him...the whole point is to bring the lost one back into fellowship.... This is all about restoring the sinner... **this is what you do if you have ANYTHING against a brother or sister in Christ.**

Note Jesus didn't say *"if your brother sins, go tell everyone in the church!"* ...

Now...this wandering sheep has wandered into what he thought was a hot spring and he goes in it thinking it's like a hot tub... what he doesn't know is he's standing on quicksand.... He needs

saving but he doesn't know it yet.... So out of love for him...you seek him out... you confront him....you want to pull him out.

**1. Confrontation must be done in private**.... You don't tell someone else.... You don't go to the pastor first... you go to the person.... It's vital this stays as private as possible if restoration is truly the motive.... Most difficult situations will be resolved at this point.

First step... have a private... loving confrontation over the sin.... And it's done in complete humility remembering you are a sinner as well!... here's the promise... **if he listens to you... you have won your brother**... if he listens to you he lets you pull him out of the quicksand and he comes home with you....it's like a rescue!

If you don't do this... you are saying *we can lose this one... this one isn't that valuable.... Every shepherd loses a few sheep*... Jesus says *that's not how my people think!*...if your brother is sinning and you find out about it... if you have something against your brother or sister... go after them....unfortunately step one doesn't always work.

## **2. Take a witness with you**

### **Read verse 16**

Witnesses are very important... witnesses verify the truth... they see the situation from the outside... they can offer objectivity... and notice... you're not to go with 15 or 20.... Just two or more... keep the number small... this isn't about spreading the news!...this isn't public... just less private.

There is such good wisdom in this... the second time you don't go alone... it is so important to have more than two sets of ears hearing what is being said... if only two sets... you won't get anywhere because at this point they are opposing ears!

The risk of mishearing or misunderstanding is lessened greatly by having more ears.... So... you've got two or three people trying to pull the sheep out of the quicksand... but he still doesn't want to go!.....it feels so good in the hot spring (sin)!

### **Read verse 17**

## **3. Tell it to the church**

This is called "church discipline"...Most churches don't do this... they talk about sin but don't do anything about it... when we think of discipline... we usually think of punishment...and we think of church discipline as church punishment... it's greater than that...

you've got an entire church body trying to pull this sheep out of the quicksand to save his life... to bring him back into the fold... but some sheep are just too stubborn and obstinate...and prideful to respond to the rescue attempt.... By the way... all this may take a long time...

especially if there are signs of progress towards repentance... we should be loving during this entire process!

**If he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a gentile and the tax collector.**

Think of him as an unbeliever!...BUT this is a person who has rejected being a part of the body of Jesus Christ... think of him as a gentile... gentile here referring to an unbeliever... one outside of the New Covenant.. tax collector...lowest of the low!

Interesting isn't it?... the one writing this...Matthew... was a tax collector!...who had a face to face confrontation with Jesus Christ who pulled him out of the quicksand and gave him a new identity as a follower of Christ... one of his disciples.

- Judge yourself...humble yourself as a sinner...repent from our sins.
- Do not judge the unbeliever... “associate” with them...share the gospel of Jesus Christ!  
SU NANAMI GNUMI
- In humility and love... judge the sinner in the body of Christ...
- As a lost sheep... nobody is expendable in the body
- Meet him in private
- Take two or more
- Take him to the church

All for restoring him back into the body

