



**Sermon Series:** Questionable Cliches, Intro to Series & Part 1

**Sermon Title:** “It’s Not My Place to Judge”

**Speaker/ Date:** Armin Sommer, April 11, 2021

A cliché is a statement we overuse and often reflects a lack of original thought. We repeat clichés so often that we accept them almost as articles of faith.

Jesus addresses the issue of judging in **Matthew 7:1–6**. Self-righteousness sensitizes us to the faults in others but desensitizes us to our own.

Jesus warns his followers in **Matthew 7:15**. He expects us to discern the difference between truth and falsehood. Jesus warned the religious leaders at the Temple, said in **John 7:24** to “**stop judging by mere appearance, but instead judge correctly.**”

**Big Idea:** Judge rightly, but don’t be judgmental

What’s the difference between judging and judgmentalism? To judge rightly is to distinguish truth from error. To be judgmental, however, is to be excessively critical. A judgmental person is someone who endlessly finds fault and intimidates others.

**Question 1:** Can anything be objectively true or false?

Christians believe in an afterlife (**Hebrews 9:27**), but Buddhists do not believe in an actual afterlife. Those beliefs cannot both be true.

In our attempts not to judge others, many people resort to one of several responses:

**1<sup>st</sup>** we confuse truth claims with opinions. Some assertions are true, regardless of how we feel about them. Truth is knowable. **John 8:32**

**2<sup>nd</sup>** objection to judging is to say, “Jesus didn’t judge people; therefore, neither should we” **John 8:7-11**. Jesus is compassionate. But He also says he will judge those who reject Him. **John 3:36**

**3<sup>rd</sup>** objection: We can’t judge anyone until we ourselves are blameless in every respect. But it doesn’t require perfection to determine right from wrong, truth from error. **Isaiah 5:20**

Jesus offers the solution to this world of dilemmas. **John 8:31–32**

Let's think deeply about this. Truth is a 3-legged stool. Knock out any of the legs, and you're left with hunches, not knowledge.

1<sup>st</sup> leg- You believe something to be true

2<sup>nd</sup> leg- That belief corresponds to reality.

3<sup>rd</sup> leg- You have a "warrant" – an authoritative basis.

When all three legs are present, our beliefs are justified.

The late Christian philosopher Francis Schaeffer described this as "true truth." It's not just "your" truth or "my" truth. It's true, regardless of your feelings about it.

Belief in Jesus Christ is a justified belief based on the historical event and eyewitness accounts of hundreds of those who saw him firsthand after his resurrection. Based on the remarkable manner in which a band of a dozen cowards changed the world. That is a great reason to follow Jesus Christ and trust in His Word. The resurrection supports his claims. It makes sense to follow Him. It's real - a justified belief. It's true.

If the Bible's assertions are real, then what He says about truth is reliable. His ten commandments aren't just "nice ideas"; they are the commands from the source of reality itself. **Colossians 1:16–17**

Our society seems so confused and divided on these because God has clearly communicated, and His creatures have rejected His authority. **Romans 3:23**

The Bible describes Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life (**John 14:6**). While we cannot grasp everything about God, we can grasp what He has chosen to reveal.

## **Question 2: How Can We Appropriately Communicate Truth?**

Several helpful steps:

1<sup>st</sup>, surrender the outcome, including your timeline, to God. People don't respond to truth according to our schedule. It often takes repeated exposure to the truth before someone finally "gets it." **2 Timothy 2:24–26**

2<sup>nd</sup>, season your dialogue with questions and humble conversation. That's what Jesus did.

The next time you're tempted to default to "it's not my place to judge," resist the urge.

### Discussion Questions:

- What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?
- Name some common cultural clichés that are influential but are not true
- What is it about clichés that make them memorable influential?
- Describe a situation where judging is biblically supported. Describe a situation where judging is not biblically acceptable.
- Explain the benefits that come from biblically-based judging.
- Explain how both absolute truth and hunches have shaped your life?
- How would you answer someone who says it is not our place to judge?

### BIBLE VERSES

**Matthew 7:1–6 (NIV)** “Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye. “Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

**Matthew 7:15,** “watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.”

**Hebrews 9:27 (NIV)** Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,

**John 8:7 (NIV)** [He] said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”

**John 8:10b–11 (NIV)** “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” “No one, sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”

**John 3:36 (NIV)** Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them.

**Isaiah 5:20 (NIV)** Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

**John 8:31–32 (NIV)** To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

**Colossians 1:16–17 (NIV)** In him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

**Romans 3:23 (NIV)** For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

**2 Timothy 2:24–26 (NIV)** And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.