



## Parkway Fellowship

The Elephant in the Church • Memory Like A... •

Matthew 7:1-2; John 7:24; 1 Corinthians 5:11, 13:13; Romans 3:23; James 4:6 • 05/05/2019

### Main Point

Jesus wants us to deal with judgementalism by learning how to judge correctly.

### Introduction

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**What are some topics you'd rather not discuss in the breakroom at work? On social media?**

**Explain.**

**Knowing that a firestorm typically follows, why do you think so many people do seem to want to bring such topics up in "mixed company"?**

**How have you benefited from someone who wasn't afraid to speak difficult truth when you needed to hear it?**

We live in a confusing and difficult time. It's hard to know when to speak up and when it's best to stay silent. Though the issues have changed, though, the principles in dealing with those issues in ways that honor the Lord have not. Jesus wants us to learn how to judge correctly by loving people the way He does and humbly remembering that we're not perfect.

### Understanding

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 7:1-2.

**For what reason did Jesus say we shouldn't judge others?**

**In verse 2, He infers there is a wrong measure for judgment, and we often use that wrong measure. What is a wrong measure for judgment?**

The problem with judging is that we're usually using the wrong standard for goodness. We convict others not as fellow sinners but as though we are standing in God's place as judges. So He gave us a warning. Following Jesus includes an undeniable command to acknowledge sin for what it is, clinging unwaveringly to truth. But as we do so, we are first commanded to search for and remove the sin in our own lives before confronting the sins in others. Even then, we are called to be humble, gracious and kind always—never acting out of judgment, but out of love, truth and a genuine desire to free others from the destruction of the enemy, that they too may experience the joyful self-surrender of following Jesus.

**How is Jesus' command, "Do not judge" different than the world's "live and let live"?**

| Ask a volunteer to read John 7:24.

**In the world today, it seems there is no acceptable way to "judge correctly." But what do you learn here from Jesus about what is and is not the correct way to judge?**

From 7:1, we know that some of the Jews were trying to kill Jesus. Add to that Jesus' knowledge about the various opinions about who He is, as well as the large crowd present at the festival, and His teaching in verses 16-24 was risky by any earthly standard. But Jesus didn't water down the truth. Because He is the Christ, He cannot speak about who He is in any other way than in the fullness of grace and truth. Regardless of how others will respond, Jesus must teach what comes from God.

**In today's culture, why is truth-telling so offensive?**

**What is the right measure for judgment?**

| Ask a few volunteers to read Romans 3:23; James 4:6; 1 Corinthians 5:12; 13:13.

**From these verses, what principles can we find to help us judge correctly?**

In this week's message, we were given these three principles to help us judge correctly—I'm not perfect. Strive for humility. Above all else, love.

**Which of these three principles stands out to you the most, personally? Why?**

**Why does Jesus give different rules about judging in relationships between Christians than He gives for relationships between believers and unbelievers?**

The church-versus-world distinction is key in this discussion. We aren't to hold those who don't know Christ to the standards of Christ (1 Cor. 5:10). God will do this, but we shouldn't. If we are going to reach people who are far from God, then we can't boot them from community because they have sin. We are, however, supposed to disassociate with "anyone who bears the name of brother" (1 Cor. 5:11) who is unwilling to deal with ongoing sin.

# Application

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**The following application points were given in this week's message: Call sin a sin, not a sinner a sinner. Do not rank sin. Remember the way you judge others is how you will be judged.**

**Think of others based on how far they've come, not how far they have to go. Seek forgiveness quickly and often to keep hypocrisy from your life. Which of these is most difficult for you currently?**

**How is God speaking to you, personally, about hypocrisy and judgment? How can you apply that truth to your life this week?**

# Pray

Pray that we would have a realistic view of our own sin so that we might truly appreciate God's grace and then be able to lead others to do the same.

# Commentary

| Matthew 7:1-2

7:1-2. What characteristics of great teachers do you admire most? Making you think hard? Using humor? Giving you vivid mental images? All these and more are evident in this passage. Jesus the Master Teacher challenged His followers to guard themselves against judging others in a critical and condemning way. Surely Jesus meant for us to think hard about the implications of His command, "Do not judge." On the surface, Jesus seems to suggest that His followers are to avoid ever evaluating whether the actions of another are right or wrong. Yet this cannot be Jesus' primary meaning. In this very passage, He expected His followers to determine who the dogs and the pigs are! And this, of course, requires some measure of judging.

In context, then, what did Jesus intend? He wanted His followers to beware of the natural tendency to exhibit a harsh, judgmental spirit or to engage in destructive criticism against others. These are what Jesus condemned. Whenever we fall into the trap of petty fault-finding and finger-pointing, we shouldn't be surprised when we are judged by those same people. The measure you use in evaluating others' actions is exactly the same measure you should expect will be measured to you. Thus, as Jesus' disciples, we always must be doubly wary before we criticize others.

The Greek verb krino (related to our noun “critic”) means “to judge” in the sense of thinking through a situation and reaching a conclusion. In the New Testament, it sometimes applies to judging in a courtroom or legal sense, either human or divine (see John 18:31; Acts 17:31; Rev. 20:13). More often it is used in a general sense. In such cases, it implies a person’s selecting, preferring, or deciding for or against someone or something. Paul required believers to judge and condemn immorality within the church (see 1 Cor. 5:12). Obviously human judgments can be flawed; only God judges perfectly. In Matthew 7:1, Jesus warned believers not to judge others hypocritically or self-righteously.

| John 7:24

7:24 Jesus’ statement about judging may allude to Lv 19:15.

| 1 Corinthians 5:11

It was not unbelievers that Paul commanded Corinthian Christians not to associate with, but fellow church members involved in unrepentant sin. Paul said they should avoid anyone who bears the name of brother, meaning any fellow Christian. He added those with reputations as a reviler or drunkard to the list of sinful behaviors. A reviler can be someone who insults or slanders others (1 Cor. 4:12) and is the opposite of someone who blesses others. He described the separation to include a prohibition of having a meal with such a person. This would certainly include the communal meals and observance of the Lord’s Supper (11:17-26).