



## A Better Choice

In her many anxieties, Martha became angry and self-righteous. We saw it in Luke 10, and if you're anything like me, you've sensed it in your own heart as the week went on too.

These are scary days. And like Martha, we can react to our many fears through control and self-righteousness. To help us see this, Pete quoted a series of scalpel-sharp questions taken from a blog by Dave Harvey.

For your ongoing consideration, the questions are written up below, along with an extended quotation from the original. If you've time to spare this weekend, [the full version](#), like everything written by Dave, is worth your time.

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### The Voice of Judgment

Sinful judgments speak fluently in the language of *self-righteousness*. We assume a dialect of moral superiority. Think about the cynical disdain we display when we prosecute other people who insult, injure or disagree with us. You know, the I-can't-believe-you-did-that-said-that-or-thought-that spirit. We've all

seen it. Actually, we've all done it! If we're honest, each of us has memories of speaking to others as if we were incapable of their despicable behaviour. Isn't that why reality television was invented? "That's *appalling*. . . we would never stoop *that* low!"

- ***Do I relate my opinion with a self-confidence that assumes I see all the facts clearly?***
- ***Am I quick to assign motives to people who are not adopting the same COVID-19 precautions I am?***
- ***Can I articulate ideas with which I disagree in a way that accurately reflects the content and spirit of that position? Or do I relate to the position dismissively, as if no rational person could really believe those things?***
- ***Am I known for asking leading questions with built-in assumptions that presume the correctness of my position? Or do I ask impartial questions that sincerely seek to understand the other perspective?***
- ***Am I excessively concerned with finding something or someone to blame for what has gone wrong?***
- ***Do I speak in a way that betrays my impatience with or intolerance of those who disagree?***

If these questions call to mind recent interactions in your life, I can relate. While processing the best steps for moving forward in this COVID-19 world, I've had plenty of occasions where my judging heart started talking with a self-righteous voice. Sometimes I should just put my facemask in my mouth, not across it. I've found an additional question, posed by John Newton, to bring conviction when I'm stuck at the carnival: "*What will it profit a man if he gains his cause, and silences his adversary, if at the same time he loses that humble tender frame of spirit in which the Lord delights, and to which the promise of his presence is made?*"