

Community Group Discussion Guide

Step 01: Recap what our current series is all about.

Note: Remind the group what series we're currently on (since not everyone will have been at church recently) and read through the series description provided below to refresh everyone on what it's all about.

Series Title: Source Code

Description: During a grueling, snow-covered hike with his friends, 13 year-old Bill Gates imagined a simple, *source code* for the one computer that was currently on loan to his middle school. The simplicity of the code allowed him to remember it for years until he was finally able to implement it, and the power of the code ended up creating a multi-billion dollar company known as Microsoft.

In this series, Source Code, we are studying Jesus' most famous collection of teachings found in Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7. The Sermon on the Mount, in its own simplicity and power has shaped the life of every follower of Jesus for the last 2,000 years. Let's take a closer look and see what Jesus taught.

Step 02: Recap of this week's message.

Note: Read through the message outline with everyone briefly. You can stop and make comments as you see fit or read straight through it. Make sure you take time to read through the main text.

Message Title: Judge Not

Main Text: Matthew 7:1-5

Supporting Texts: Matthew 8:1-3, Romans 12:18, Ephesians 4:29-30, Proverbs 26:12

Message Outline:

Read Matthew 7:1-5 aloud in your group

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This teaching from Jesus warns against not only isolated judgements, but a self-serving judgementalism—an approach to life that looks for and holds up the struggles and faults of those around us while excusing or ignoring our own.

Three Observations about Judgements

1. Judgements tend to progress to something worse.
 - a. Judgements vocalized to the subject will usually cause offense.
 - b. Judgements vocalized to someone else are gossip.
 - c. Judgements that don't come out but instead fester in our heart can become contempt.
2. Judgements tend to promote conclusions instead of curiosity.
 - a. When we judge, we stop asking questions and we don't grow in empathy.
3. Judgements tend to posture us for hypocrisy instead of humility.
 - a. When we focus on everyone else's flaws, we will remain blind to our own.
 - b. When we submit to the authority of the word of God and the work of the holy spirit, we can become a help to other people.

We cannot love completely the people we judge consistently.

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Step 03: Lead group discussion.

Note: Do your best to keep the discussion going. Make sure you have read through the questions beforehand and are primed with thoughts of your own. Make everyone get specific with *how* they will apply this message in their own lives and in community—*no vague ideas allowed!*

Specific to this week's message:

1. How do Jesus' words about judgements and judgementalism land with you?
2. How often do you find yourself making judgements about others? Are you more likely to judge a stranger? Or a friend?
3. Do your judgements or criticisms ever come out as offenses or gossip?
4. How can we fight the urge to judge and instead practice curiosity and empathy?
5. Confession is such a vital practice for the believer. Is it part of your spiritual life?

General questions:

6. How did this message encourage you? How did it convict you?
7. What is your plan for applying this message to your personal/daily life?
8. What might it look like for us to live this out in community?
9. Was there anything about this message that stood out to you?