



Youth Ministry

June 8, 2014

### Lesson:

This week, we continued talking about judging others, being judged by others and judging ourselves. We started by reviewing last week's lesson on judging and condemning ourselves and the story of Jesus and the adulterous woman in **John 8:3-11**.

We remembered that it wasn't what Jesus told the religious people that was so important but instead what he told the woman in **verse 11**. Jesus told the woman that **he did not condemn her and to go and leave her life of sin**. We said this is important because the woman did not need to stop sinning first in order to be forgiven. She also did not need to do anything to earn God's grace. Jesus basically told her that she was forgiven for her sin, now move on with her life, with no condemnation, and don't do it again.

We started a discussion on how we judge and condemn others based on such things as their appearance, clothing, music they listen to or how they speak and we talked about some examples. We then looked at what Jesus had to say about judging others in **Matthew 7:1-5**. We talked about what Jesus meant when he said "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?"

We said that we have all sinned and have all fallen short of the glory of God and what Jesus is saying is that we all have our own sin issues to deal with so why would we judge somebody else for their sin instead of dealing with our own first so that we can better help them with theirs. We said that sometimes we may think that our own sin is not as bad as their sin but in the eyes of God, all sin is equal. We said that whether you steal a pencil or you steal a car, the sin is the same to God. No sin is any better or worse than any other sin.

We then asked, "then what should we do if our friend is doing something sinful?". We remembered from our lessons on friendship that we should hold our friends accountable for their actions and help them stay on the correct path but how can we do this without judging or condemning them?"

We said that the judging that Jesus was talking about was not about watching out for our friends, as long as we are speaking from a place of love and caring from our heart. We also said that Jesus was not talking about us using wisdom to discern a possible threat or danger to ourselves when confronted by something or somebody who appears to be dangerous. We said that the judgement that Jesus was talking about in **Matthew 7:1-5** was hypocritical judgement or judgement that is self-serving.

Most of the time when we judge somebody what we're really doing is comparing ourselves to them. we compare our stuff, our looks, our 'good works', our righteousness all in order to try to convince ourselves that we are better than them. We don't judge for their sake but for our own sake. We said that's why only God can truly judge. He has no sin so he has no "plank in his eye" and he also doesn't need to compare himself to us to make himself feel better.

We said that instead of judging others because they may sin differently than us, we should show them God's love by NOT judging or condemning them but by accepting them just as they are and letting the Holy Spirit guide us from there.

We also discussed how we feel when others judge us. We said now that we know why we judge others, we should understand that when others judge us it really has more to do with them than it does with us. We said that if we feel somebody is judging us, we should take a moment and think about whether it is coming from a place of love and caring for us or from a place of judgement to make themselves feel better. We may need the assistance of friends, parents, pastors, youth leaders or the Holy Spirit for help in discerning which it is.

If we decide it is from a place of judgement and condemnation we should first forgive them and then pray for them for help with whatever issues they may have causing them to judge us. Then most importantly, Let it Go. If however we decide it really was from a place of love and caring then we should make sure to thank them for helping us to stay on the right path.

Of course, if we realize that we have wrongly judged somebody or even just made them feel judged, we should apologize to them.

Next week, we will talk about choices and how people's judgement of us can sometimes affect the choices we make.

Have a blessed week!

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