



Lesson – Judging Others

Bible: John 8: 3-11; Ephesians 2: 8-9; Mark 2: 15-17; Matthew 7: 1-5 (NLT)

Say: Let me start off with telling you a story.

You see there was this lady.

She was caught doing something, well, pretty bad.

She was caught in the act of adultery, cheating on her husband.

And all the people where she lived found out about it, and wanted to punish her.

Severe punishment!

They wanted to kill her!

Then there was this dude...who told them if they never did anything wrong in life, they could be the one to kill her.

And everyone kind of just backed down.

Because he made a good point.

You see that dude is Jesus, and those people were all the religious people!

But it's not about what Jesus told the religious people.

It's what he told the lady.

Go and sin no more!

Why do we find that so hard to do?

John chapter 8 verses 3-11 depicts what I want to talk about today:

The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to

stone such women. Now what do you say?" They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "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."

I want to talk about something that I know we all struggle with...

Judging others!

We are going to look at why we judge and condemn ourselves. Then we are going to look at how we judge other people.

So speaking about judging ourselves...why are we so hard on ourselves when we mess up?

Jesus wasn't hard on the lady!

Point #1 – We condemn ourselves

Jesus told the lady to go now and leave your life of sin.

How many people here have ever done anything wrong before?

How many of us still beat ourselves over the head about doing those wrongs? Why is that?

Is it because we don't think we deserve to be forgiven?

Is it because we don't trust that God has forgiven us? Or, is it because we don't trust that God has the capability to forgive us?

You beat yourself up because you got mad and cursed some dude out.

Or you were on the computer the other day and looked at something you shouldn't have.

We are constantly mad at ourselves for messing up!

Why can't we ask for God to forgive us and be done with it?

In John, Jesus tells the lady to GO! An act! He told her to MOVE!! And sin no more.

Point #2 – We don't have to earn it

We condemn ourselves because we think that we have to earn God's forgiveness and love!

We think we have to be good enough.

We have to go through the motions of being a Christian...

Read a chapter in the Bible a day.

Pray for an hour a day.

Go to church.

Read all the books...

We then give up on God because we try so hard to earn his love.

When we fail, we start to beat ourselves up all over again.

Read Ephesians 2: 8-9:

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.

Let's break this verse down.

“It is by grace”

Who can give me a definition of grace? (Get responses)

It is the infinite, never failing, love and mercy, and favor, that God shows to us.

Has anyone here ever been given a break before?

Have your parents let you off easy on a punishment? Well then, that was grace.

“Through faith”

How many people here sat in your chairs and didn't have to think if they were strong enough to hold you? That's faith – placing your trust in something.

“The gift of God”

What gifts does God give you?

- His love
- His mercy
- His grace
- His son
- His provision
- His comfort
- His invitation to you to be a part of what he is doing in the world
- The list goes on...

“Not by works”

You don't have to earn God's great gift, as if you are competing in the Olympics or something. We don't have to be “good” enough for God to love us, or accept us!

Point #3 – We think we are beyond hope

We condemn ourselves because we think we are beyond hope.

We mess up and think there is no way God can STILL love us.

Mark chapter 2 verses 15-17 gives us hope,

“While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and “sinners” were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the “sinners” and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: “Why does he eat with tax collectors and ‘sinners’?”

On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

There is hope!

Jesus came for those who had no hope, sinners, me and you. He desperately loves us, wants to do life with us, give us hope!!!

Point #4 – We judge others

It is so easy to judge someone else isn't it?

We see someone messing up...and we are quick to give our opinion of how it should be done.

We see someone smoking a cigarette and we immediately think that they are going to hell.

We see someone with tattoos and immediately put them into a social class.

Why are we so quick to pass judgment on people?

Let's see what Jesus has to say about the topic of judging others.

Read Matthew 7: 1-5:

“Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.

“And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own? How can you think of saying to your friend, ‘Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can't see past the log in your own eye? ⁵ Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

What is all this talk of a piece of wood in our eye?

Maybe your friend got drunk at this party last week, and you just saw them actually singing in worship.

You think to yourself, “They got drunk last week, and they have the nerve to sing to God!”

But then, you struggle with your own “sins”, don't you?

In fact, you might drink too much sometimes, but you do it in private.

And if it's not that...then it's something else. You have your own “sin” issues to deal with, so why would judge someone else?

Point #5 – When we judge others, we are comparing ourselves to them.

What are we really doing when we judge others?

We are comparing ourselves to them.

- Our stuff
- Our reputation
- Our looks
- Our identity

We are trying to convince ourselves that we are better than them, and we actually think we deserve more!

And anytime we want to be better than everyone else...

Anytime we think that we deserve better than anyone else, what are we doing?

You and I are saying that...

- I am the man...
- I am the woman...

The truth is there really is only one "I AM" and that is God.

He's the only one who can judge, because He is the only one who is perfect, he is the only one who can purely judge without any evil intentions or hidden agendas.

God doesn't love one person more than another.

He doesn't love me more than he loves you.

So, just like Jesus told the religious people (you without sin throw the first stone)...

- Don't judge people because they don't have what you have.
- Don't make the same grades you do.
- Don't like the same things you like.

But show them the love of God by not condemning them, or making fun of them, but just hanging out with them and getting to know them.

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. What's your name, school, and dream car?
2. Why are we so hard on ourselves when we mess up?
3. Do you live like you have to earn God's love (have to do certain things to gain favor with God)? Why or why not?

4. Why is it so easy to judge other people?
5. Have you been judged by someone? How did it make you feel to be judged by that person?