

"A Warning for the Merciless"

Luke 6:37-42

Get to Know Each Other

- One year from now, I am going to be more _____ than I am today. How will that happen?

Learn

1. Read Luke 6:37-42. What does Jesus mean by "do not judge?"
 - a. Clearly Jesus is not against the rational process of determining right from wrong, in fact, he's doing it right now when he tells us what's right and wrong to do.
 - b. What Jesus means by "do not judge" is not cutting us off from noticing sin, nor is He cutting us off from rightly executing judgment. Jesus is condemning excessive judgment and censure as a result of hating our neighbor. (Or, recalling last week - hating our enemies) Jesus is warning against over-the-top judgment
 - c. Jesus is warning the unkind person who always has a comment about how things could have been better, always thinks/assumes the worst, thinks vengeance is theirs (not God's), someone who always thinks there's malicious intent when mistakes are made, or the person who goes "0 to 100" to imagine the worst possible outcome - oftentimes this is the person with a 2x4 in their eye who wants to point out the speck in others eyes
2. What is the difference between feeling shame and being judged? Why can feeling shame actually be a good thing?
 - a. Feeling shame for your sin doesn't mean you're being judged, and being ashamed of someone for something shameful isn't judging.
 - b. What's comforting about the shame we feel is that God is merciful. (Is. 61:7) God turns his people's shame into a double portion. Shame is good, because it can drive you to be cleansed by faith in Christ, and it drives you away from your sin. When you turn from your sin and turn to Christ, your shame is taken away and turned into an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ.
 - c. Don't short-circuit shame. Let it do its work to drive you from sin and toward Christ, because that's the only way to be rid of it. Weaponizing "judge not" to avoid dealing with the shame of your sin is a recipe to end up living in it forever.

Video: Take a moment to reflect on God's mercy toward us ["God Doesn't Owe Us Mercy"](#) (1:50) and ["Mercy vs. Injustice"](#) (2:22)

Practice

1. Two signs that a person may be merciless is judging others excessively, and judging themselves too leniently. As we examine ourselves against the mirror of God's Law, what can we correct in our lives so that we demonstrate mercy and bear fruit in keeping with repentance?

- a. Signs of being merciless: The merciless person cannot forgive. They're bitter, hold grudges, keeps account of hurt, glories in their suffering and victimhood and turns it into an identity. In the case of shameful acts, judging looks like belaboring the point, continuing to bring it up, never letting a repentant person move past it, never forgiving, allowing the shame to so define the person that it's all they are and all they'll ever be in your eyes - that's judging.
 - b. In contrast, mercy describes God's pity for sinners. Considering the mercy shown to us by God we should do the same to others. To not show mercy is exactly what the Pharisees did. Example: I am bitter toward a family member who is an unbeliever, and justify my actions toward them due to their sin, but to correct that I can...
2. What are the benefits of seeing our own sin? As the Spirit works in us, what are the other means we can put into practice to help rid ourselves of sin?
 - a. If you can see it then you can repent of it. This is what the law of God does—it breaks us down so we can be built up in Christ. If you want to be merciful as your Father is merciful, you need a healthy dose of recognizing your own sin.
 - b. Dealing with your significant sin will actually allow you to correct your brother in love and humility. It will allow you to see clearly, and it will allow you to be a benefit to others! To remove the irritant of sin from their lives, and become more like! And to do it in such a way that, if at all possible, it's your kindness that leads them to repentance, just like your Father.
 - c. Means: God's Word (read, hear, study, memorize, meditate), prayer, transparent relationships with other Christians who will point us to the gospel, abiding in Christ, and walking in a manner worthy of our calling
3. The burlap sack paints a great picture of how God treats us. In light of this, take a moment to honestly reflect on a circumstance in your life where you can demonstrate the same generosity of your Father in heaven and then share with others.
 - a. Burlap sack: The image is someone filling the sack right to the brim with grain, and then you set it on the ground, and you smash it down, and shake it around to get all the air pockets out, and then you fill it to the brim again, and repeat this process until it's spilling over.
 - b. God judges the merciless, but he so richly rewards His children that we get far more than we deserve. That's His gracious reward for you, when you trust His words, when you humble yourself before Him, and when you live in obedience to him. God loves to reward his children.

Change

Take some time to do some soul searching. Examine yourself against the positives and negatives mentioned in the sermon. (Positives: Merciful and generous in grace. Negatives:

Short-tempered with your spouse or others, looking down on others, harboring bitterness, or being lenient about your own sin, etc.) What needs to change in your life so that if someone else heard this sermon they might think of you and say, "I want to emulate the mercy that I see in _____'s life?"

- 1. Cast yourself at the feet of Jesus for his mercy. Come to him in faith, offering nothing, to be cleansed from your sin. He literally suffered the wrath of God for your nastiness and hypocrisy. He bore it so you wouldn't. 2. Turn from sin and toward righteousness. Pursue mercy. Motivated by the love and mercy you've received from your Father, and your desire to be just like Him, motivated by the promise of gracious reward for your faithfulness. Trust that God will make all things right in His time.
- After everyone has shared, read Ps. 26:2; 139:23-24 and then pray for each other.