

Conversation Starters

- Have you ever experienced being judged?
- How did it affect you?

Discuss

Some research has shown the number one reason people were not involved with a church is because of other Christians with judgmental attitudes. Jesus did not want this to be what characterized Christians. In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus specifically said not to judge others. Judging is an attitude of personal condemnation toward others.

"Do not judge others, and you will not be judged." (Matthew 7:1 NLT)

- Have you ever experienced being judged by the church or another Christian?
- Have you ever judged others, either actively or passively or even in thought?
- What kind of attitude do you have when you approach others?

Judgement is God's job, not ours, so when we judge we assume the position of God. And we all have our own messes, so we should never think we are better than others. When we offer judgement to others, we in turn render ourselves unworthy of the grace that we also need.

"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?" (Matthew 7:2-3 NLT)

- How does assuming the position of God make you re-think judging others?
- Are there areas in your life that could use some work?
- Do you know what it is like to receive grace in your life? What would (does) that look like?

This does not mean that we can never make a value judgement or take a stand or need to affirm every action of everyone. We need to balance offering both grace and truth to others. We need to accept people as they are and welcome them into community, but also lovingly correct them if they are straying from any of God's instruction on how to live. Jesus modeled this perfectly in John 4:4-18.

- Are you quick to offer correction, before offering grace?
- Are you more likely to offer grace, but not show someone how to turn from anything that may be harming themselves or prevent them from really living life as designed by God?
- What lessons can you learn from Jesus modeling the balance of grace and truth?

Next Steps

Read John 4:4-18. Evaluate where you stand with judging:

1. Compare to how Jesus offers grace and truth.
2. Offer grace to anyone you may have judged or tried to correct poorly.
3. If someone has ever tried to correct you, did you listen fairly.
4. Evaluate your attitude when you approach others this week. Are you waiting to judge?

Further Reflection

See Matthew 7:1-6; John 4:4-18

Pray

God, thank you for the grace that you offer to each one of us. Forgive us for how we may have or have messed this up in our life. Help us to correct any errors we have made on either side of this balance. Help us to get this right, and have an attitude that is marked by being quick to offer grace and gentle correction.