

05-13-2018

Message: Jesus Commands Us to Reflect His Father's Mercy

Text: Luke 6:37-42

Introduction

A. Take a look at the following 2 columns:

harsh	gentle
critical	constructive
judgmental	fair
condemning	forgiving
uncharitable	generous

B. Point to which column more generally and typically corresponds to the following category of persons: drill sergeant, nurse, jihadist, mother, Christian.

C. Christians, this second column should describe us, but does it consistently? To the degree that it does not, to that degree we are not following and honoring Jesus. Pray that His Spirit will etch these following words of Jesus deeply on our hearts, that His image might be reflected in our lives.

D. Jesus's command to love our enemies is one way believers are to express obedience to Christ's command to be conformed to His image, to be merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful.

Luke 6:35 "But **love your enemies, and do good, and lend**, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil *men*.³⁶ **Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.**

E. Jesus follows with 4 more commands that call us to live by faith in the image of His and His Father's mercy. The first pair of commands are stated in the negative, the second pair stated in the positive. They are all followed by explicit and implicit warnings and promises.

I. 6:37a Do not judge.

Luke 6:37 "**Do not judge**, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned.

A. The word "krino" = "judge" can have several shades of meaning in Luke - to discern, evaluate, come to a conclusion (Luke 7:43; 12:57) ; to rule over (Luke 22:30); or as here, to regard as guilty.

- B. Even people who have little interest in obeying Christ's commands like to quote this one, though usually applying it in a way that has nothing to do with what Jesus is teaching us. "Don't judge." "Who are you to judge?" has become a popular slogan in our culture to push back against any accountability for ungodly behavior and to promote tolerance for a multitude of views involving morality and religion.
- C. That Jesus is not prohibiting appropriate ethical evaluation distinguishing between right and wrong, true and false, godly and ungodly, is obvious from his own lips as well as the lips of those He inspired by His Spirit to speak on His behalf. The choice is not between judging and not judging, but between judging with righteous versus unrighteous judgment.

John 7:24 "Do not judge according to appearance, but **judge with righteous judgment.**"

1 Corinthians 5:11 But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler-- not even to eat with such a one.¹² For what have I to do with judging outsiders? **Do you not judge those who are within the church?**¹³ But those who are outside, God judges. **REMOVE THE WICKED MAN FROM AMONG YOURSELVES.**

1 Corinthians 6:2 Or **do you not know that the saints will judge the world?** If the world is judged by you, **are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts?**

- D. But there is a kind of judging that does not reflect the heart of Christ, for it is a harsh, condemning attitude of contempt that expresses no humility, no sympathy, no good will, no interest or hope that a sinning or erring person (or one we perceive to be erring) will be granted repentance, correction, restoration.
1. Such an attitude also presumes to know the heart of those it judges in a way only God can. (Example: Misjudging a couple's wedding music honorarium [a book] as deceptively cheap - years later a check fell out of the Spurgeon devotional book given to me).

Proverbs 15:11 Sheol and Abaddon *lie open* before the LORD, **how much more the hearts of men!**

Hebrews 4:13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but **all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.**

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore **do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts;** and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

2. This self-righteous judging therefore usurps God's role as judge, and functionally judges what the law says our attitude is to be as insufficient, irrelevant, in error. Nicodemus exposed this attitude in his fellow Pharisees who spoke judgmentally against Jesus.

John 7:50 Nicodemus (he who came to Him before, being one of them) said to them,⁵¹ **"Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?"**⁵² They answered him, "You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee."

James 4:11 Do not speak against one another, brethren. **He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law;** but **if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it.**¹² There is *only* one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?

II. 6:37b Do not condemn.

Luke 6:37 "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and **do not condemn**, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned.

- A. We can and should proclaim the basis upon which God will condemn individuals.

Matthew 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on His left, **'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire** which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;⁴² for I was hungry, and you gave Me *nothing* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink;⁴³ I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.'

Galatians 1:8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, **he is to be accursed!**⁹ As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, **he is to be accursed (anathema)!**

1 Corinthians 16:22 If anyone does not love the Lord, **he is to be accursed (anathema).**

- B. Yet is not for us to assume or issue that final verdict of condemnation, as was the sin of many Pharisees.

John 7:48 "No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he?"⁴⁹ "But **this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed.**"

Matthew 12:7 "But if you had known what this means, 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT A SACRIFICE,' **you would not have condemned the innocent.**

III. 6:37c Pardon/Forgive

Luke 6:37 "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; **pardon**, and you will be pardoned.

A. We are not to pretend a guilty person is innocent. We are to expose and confront sin.

Proverbs 17:15 **He who justifies the wicked** and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike **are an abomination to the LORD**.

Ephesians 5:11 Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, **but instead even expose them**;

B. But we are to have hearts hoping to forgive, ready to forgive, quick to forgive those who repent.

Luke 17:3 "Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; **and if he repents, forgive him**.⁴ "And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' **forgive him**."

IV. 6:38 Give with generosity.

Luke 6:38 "**Give**, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure-- pressed down, shaken together, *and* running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

A. We are to give/lend to the needy, even if they are our enemies.

B. We are to go beyond refraining from judging and condemning, and even forgiving, to doing good and giving.

Luke 6:35 "But love your enemies, and **do good, and lend**, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil *men*.³⁶ "**Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful**."

V. There are the consequences to obeying or rebelling against Jesus's commands.

A. Why does Jesus say we should avoid such judging, condemning? Why should we obey?

1. So that we will not ourselves be judged in the way we judge others.

a. The way we judge is the way we will be judged by God. Jesus is communicating that if we treat people with severity, we will receive severity.

Luke 6:38 "... For **by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in**

return."

Matthew 6:14 "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.¹⁵ "But **if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.**

James 2:13 For **judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy;** mercy triumphs over judgment.

Romans 14:10 **But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.**¹¹ For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD."¹² **So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.**

- b. We will be attacking those God will save from us. We'll find ourselves on the side opposing God.

Psalm 109:31 For He stands at the right hand of the needy, **to save him from those who judge his soul.**

2. Because this is the Law and the Prophets. And it is the doers of the law who will be justified.

Luke 6:31 "Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.

Matthew 7:12 "In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, **for this is the Law and the Prophets.**

Romans 2:13 for *it is* not the hearers of the Law *who* are just before God, but **the doers of the Law will be justified.**

James 1:22 But **prove yourselves doers of the word,** and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

- B. What are the promised blessings to those who by faith in Christ obey Christ as Lord?

1. We will not be condemned by Christ, but will be pardoned by Christ.

Luke 6:37 "Do not judge, and **you will not be judged;** and do not condemn, and **you will not be condemned;** pardon, and **you will be pardoned.**

2. We will receive God's overflowing generosity in Christ. The metaphor is that of a merchant measuring grain in a measuring jar, pressing it down, compacting it to make room for a full measure, shaking it to insure every empty space is filled, then pouring a

rounded top that spills over, before pouring it into the fold of the buyer's garment for transport. God actually gives us beyond all our measure of giving.

Luke 6:38 "Give, and **it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure-- pressed down, shaken together, and running over.** For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

VI. 6:39-42 Unlike the example of scribes and Pharisees, we are to humbly use the occasion of another's sin or error as a mirror to examine our own hearts and souls for similar sin or error.

Luke 6:39 And He also spoke a parable to them: "A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit?"⁴⁰ "A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher."⁴¹ "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?"⁴² "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? **You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.**

- A. The log in our own eye here is our judgmental, condemning attitude of heart. How hypocritical to be condemning another while indifferent or blind to our own guilt.
- B. When we see what we perceive as an error or sin in a brother's or sister's conduct, we are to first look to our own hearts and conduct. Only then will we have a clear eye (6:22,23) and humble heart to help an erring brother or sister.

Galatians 6:1 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, **restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself,** so that you too will not be tempted.² Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.

- C. Cf. Jonathan Edwards' resolution #8 ...

Resolved, to act, in all respects, both speaking and doing, as if nobody had been so vile as I, and as if I had committed the same sins, or had the same infirmities or failings as others; and that I will let the knowledge of their failings promote nothing but shame in myself, and prove only an occasion of my confessing my own sins and misery to God.

Conclusion: Christ calls us to be gentle vs harsh, constructive vs critical, forgiving vs condemning, generous vs uncharitable. All who sincerely love Jesus will want to be. Call upon the Lord for grace to follow in His image.