

Merciful Judgment: A Field Guide

How to Judge without Being Judgmental (Part 1)

Luke: All Things New



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



Sermon Text

Luke 6:37-42



Big Idea

V. 42 kind of judgment is a judgment that is merciful—centering on the right people, addressing the right issues, and guided by the right motivations.

I'm calling this kind of judgment we're aiming for "merciful judgment". I'm aware of the irony. We typically think that mercy and judgment are opposed to one another. But not in the biblical worldview. The Bible presents a world into which God Himself comes in Jesus Christ, takes upon Himself our judgement, and extends to us His mercy. And in light of this, we can point out something that is wrong in another without crushing or condemning them, but with great hope and expectation because our God is one who saves, and redeems, and renews broken, sinful people in Christ.

(1) Who Should We Mercifully Judge?

(1) Ourselves—This is the burden of our text in Luke: "[F]irst 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" (v. 42b). There is an order of events here. First, judge yourself, then, and only then, will you be ready to mercifully judge another.

(2) Our Brothers and Sisters—This is a family affair. We are not called to judge those outside the family of God, but those within it—those who have professed a faith in Christ and taken His name upon themselves.

(2) What Should We Mercifully Judge?

(1) Doctrinal Issues—When we look to the NT for help, while it remains tough to discern exactly where the line is between *open-handed* and *close-handed* doctrines, the core of the matter seems unmistakably clear: If there is anything that the apostles appear ready to die defending, it's the gospel.

(2) Moral Issues—There are in Scripture things we might call *black and white* moral issues, things that God's word is abundantly clear on. But then there's this whole other category that we might call *gray* moral issues. Issues that the Scriptures either don't clearly speak to, or they give a freedom regarding.

(3) Why Should We Mercifully Judge?

(1) For the Good of Our Brother or Sister—Jesus wants us to grow more skilled at helping others see.

(2) For the Glory of God—the world will come to know what Jesus is like by looking at His disciples.

Reflection Questions



- Think of a person you are tempted to judge. How would it change your approach to them to hear Jesus say: "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone"? Explain. How can you more faithfully judge yourself before judging others?
- Do you have any good friends that are not believers? Why or why not? How has your relationships with other Christians affected your relationships with non-Christians?
- Are you open to receiving merciful judgment and correction from others in Christ? Give an example. Why is it so important that we grow in this?
- Have you ever felt like another Christian was judging you harshly over matters of secondary importance, either doctrinally or morally? How did you respond? How are you tempted to do the same sort of thing with others? Give an example.