

Forgiven

You can't really understand another person's experience until you've walked a mile in their shoes.

Judging my strengths against another's weaknesses is about as fair as Jordan Speith comparing his golf game against mine, or me comparing my speaking ability to Elmer Fudd.

When people become Christians their sinning often shifts from the overt, outward, visible sins to more inward, hidden, non-apparent ones, such as a critical spirit, a spirit of judgmentalism, which is labeled Christian Cruelty.

Judging?

- Reading evil into another's motives merely because of how things appear.
- Webster—to criticize or censure, to think or suppose by pretending to know the motives of the person doing the acting
- Appointing oneself a committee on one to be the judge and jury in matters where only partial knowledge or evidence is available
- Byron Langenfeld, "Where is the person who can weigh the faults of others without putting his thumb on the scale?"

Luke 7:36-50

- ▲ We should not judge because things are not always as they appear. We lack the appropriate data.
 - A pastor was seen leaving a tavern in a small Illinois town at 12:45 am. "He was with another man, and both were drunk," swore the informant. The pastor was actually there at the request of a distraught wife. He entered the tavern to persuade the husband, who was squandering his paycheck, to go home. The pastor stumbled in trying to hold the inebriated man upright. But the story with all its lurid implications would not die. The deacons of the church upbraided the pastor for indiscretion, and finally dismissed him from his church.
 - False, misinformed, bribed, and prejudiced witnesses did the same with our Lord Jesus. An innocent man was unjustly convicted and the cross was his sentence!
- ▲ We should not judge because we may be setting our own (not God's) standards of judgment
 - **Matthew 7:2** For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.
 - A Christian radio broadcast minister decided to change the format of his program in an effort to attract those who normally do not listen to such broadcasts. Although no compromise with the Gospel was involved, many wrote to say they would no longer support or listen to the program. Cruelly and inaccurately, he was accused of "no longer preaching the Gospel."
 - Another radio preacher in a newsletter published a picture of his wife wearing earrings. That brought on a storm of protest of accusations accusing her of being "worldly" and a "poor testimony."
 - In middle school and high school we categorize and judged our fellow students by our differences—dumb jocks, rednecks, losers, potheads, nerds, etc.
- ▲ We should not judge because we may not understand the weaknesses and battles of others
 - Let's examine this woman—sinner (prostitute)
 - What causes a woman to choose prostitution?
 - Prostitution is a particularly lethal form of violence against women.

- Vast majority have been hunted, dominated, harassed, assaulted & battered. Many are murdered every year.
- **More than anything prostitution is NOT a choice.**
- Worldwide most enter before age 14
- They enter prostitution after enduring incest, abuse and rape. **90%** have been physically battered in childhood. 74% were sexually abused by family members & 50% were sexually abused outside of the family
- Poverty drives women to prostitution—support families, drug addictions
- Who would we refuse to seat at our table?

Forgiven much

- With who do you mostly identify?
 - Simon? (judgmental, exclusive, inhospitable)
 - Woman? (broken, generous, grateful, humble)
 - Jesus? (forgiving, healing, helpful)
- **John 20:21-23** So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."
- *This woman was not invited to the table. She crashed the party. Yet, Jesus offered her forgiveness & peace. We offer you the same in His name today.*

Forgiven Much Discussion Guide

Why do we find it so easy to judge others?

How does the expression—"You can't really understand another person's experience until you've walked a mile in their shoes"—apply to judging others?

Luke 7:36-50

- ▲ We should not judge because things are not always as they appear. We lack the appropriate data. Please discuss.
- ▲ We should not judge because we may be setting our own (not God's) standards of judgment. **Matthew 7:2** "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you." Please discuss.
- ▲ We should not judge because we may not understand the weaknesses and battles of others. Please discuss.

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John 20:21-23

- ▲ What does this passage mean to us today?
- ▲ What does it mean to be sent in the way the Father sent Jesus?
- ▲ How do we forgive the sins of others?