

# Sermon Discussion Guide

## Jesus Outside the Box: Judgment

### Icebreakers:

1. Has anyone ever said something about you that surprised you—in the sense that you did not know that they viewed you that way? (How did it make you feel?)
2. How well do you “think” you know yourself? (Have you ever been surprised by your own reactions to situations or people?)
3. What do you think is your best personality or character trait? (Do you think that other people see you that way?)

**Background:** Jesus is the author and the finisher of our faith. Beyond that, He is also our creator along with the Father. What that means is that He knows us; He knows us better than we know ourselves. Every strength in our character; every flaw in our personality; every hopeful thought; every worry and fear; Jesus knows it all. Since we were born into sin, we need Jesus to do two things: 1) To save us from our sins. 2) To transform us into new creations that bring Him glory. This transformation is real and necessary.

- **If you read the Gospels, one of the things that stands out is the weakness of character that is often revealed in the behavior of the Disciples.** They were very judgmental. There was a time that “they” requested that Jesus send fire from heaven to destroy those that rejected the Christ message. The idea of praying or loving your enemies was certainly a foreign concept to them.
- **Jesus began to teach them about judgment.** They needed to know that God would be judging them by the standard they applied to others.

**Digging Deeper:** It has been said that **“We judge others by their actions while we judge ourselves by our intentions.”** This is the hypocrisy that Jesus was addressing when He approached the topic of “judgment.” He is specifically speaking of judgment in the context of our relationships.

**Matthew 7:1,2** <sup>1</sup> "Judge not, that you be not judged. <sup>2</sup> For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.

1. Do you consider yourself a judgmental person? (Are you generally critical of others? Do you notice and point out other people’s shortcomings? What compels you to do so?)
2. Do you want to be judged the way you generally judge others?
3. Jesus modifies the first sentence with the second; which means that He is not telling us “not” to judge others. However, He is warning us that our standard of judgment will be applied to us. Are you comfortable with God judging you with the same standard that you have used in judging others?

**Verses 3-5** <sup>3</sup> And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? <sup>4</sup> Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from

your eye'; and look, a plank *is* in your own eye? <sup>5</sup> Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

1. Do you have a plank in your eye? (Have you ever had a plank in your eye?)
2. Why do people tend to have a double standard when it comes to judgment—a standard for themselves and another standard for others?
3. Why is it difficult for us to admit that we were wrong?

**Wrap-up: To think that Jesus called those He was teaching “hypocrites!”** He went on to say that if we humble ourselves and remove the plank that is in our eye, we can help another person with the speck that it is their eye. Dealing with a personal fault, weakness or sin does tend to make us more empathetic of others.

Suggestions for those that tend to be judgmental:

1. Take a closer look at yourself with the Holy Spirit’s help.
2. Stay in your own lane and deal with your own issues.
3. Pray for those around you who have obvious faults. Pray that the Lord will give you more compassion.
4. Ultimately, cooperate with the Lord as he transforms you into a much better version of you.