

Further up, Further in

Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

“KINGDOM CHARACTER (PART 2)”

For individual study or group discussion

Today we continue our study discussing the character traits of the citizens of the Kingdom of God. We noted last week that Kingdom characteristics are radically different and “upside down” from those of the world. But in today’s passage, Jesus points to a particular sin pattern that profanes his people and prevents them from pursuing forgiveness: justifying ourselves while blaming others.

In Luke 6:37, Jesus tells his listeners, “Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned.” In other words, true Kingdom character requires us to rightly relate to others with the same charitable assessments we want others to give to us (v. 31). Although we are called to unconditional love when dealing with our neighbors and even enemies (v. 27-30), it is not a call to unconditional approval. Judging as an ethical evaluation is not being prohibited here by Jesus, but rather the judgment of condemnation.

- How can we as Christians be careful to obey Jesus’ instruction not to judge others (Luke 6:37), while also being faithful to our responsibility to instruct and confront one another in the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:15-16; Galatians 6:1-2)?
- The comedian George Carlin summarized the universal rule of the road as “Anybody driving slower than you is an idiot, and anyone going faster than you is a maniac.” Can you relate? If we are to give one another the benefit of the doubt by “bearing with one another in love” (Ephesians 4:2), discuss how Paul’s admonition should make us slow to judge. (cf. Proverbs 18:13; James 1:19)
- How did Jesus summarize the importance of extending grace, mercy, and help to others? (v. 38)

Rightly viewing ourselves helps us to rightly relate to others. To drive this principle home, Christ instructs his listeners with a parable about vision (vv. 39-42). What Joe Novenson calls “a potent punch with an editorial cartoon,” this parable describes a scene with a man walking around unaware that he has a log sticking out from his eye, all the while nitpicking at the speck of dust in his neighbor’s eye.

- How does the satire in this parable help us better understand and apply the underlying truth—not only to our own lives, but to disciple-making?
- Can you be a good leader when you are blind to your own faults (v. 39)? Read Jeremiah 17:9, Proverbs 4:23, Luke 6:45, Colossians 4:6, and Jude 1:21. What advice do these passages provide on how to rightly view ourselves?

Called to a life of humble, self-examination, citizens of the Kingdom must learn to exemplify the self-sacrificial characteristics of their Savior-King, the one who forgives freely and gives generously from his Father’s storehouse of mercy and grace (v. 38). (cf. Malachi 3:10; Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 6:10)

- Read I John 1:5-7 and Galatians 6:1-3. What messages do you take away from these verses and how do they work together with Luke 6:37-42 to illustrate the transformative power of love and forgiveness?

In his *Resolutions: And Advice to Young Converts*, Jonathan Edwards states in 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.”¹

- Discuss and think of practical examples of how you might be able to use Edward’s resolution as a rule of thumb in your own life.

DATE: February 27, 2022

SPEAKER: Chad/Frank

SERIES: Gospel of Luke

PASSAGE: Luke 6:37-42

Family Dinner Table

On a recent Instagram post by Paul David Tripp, the pastor and best-selling author pointed out the restorative blessing of forgiveness in relationships. From his free, online seminar, *Free From Debt*, Tripp asks the following:

“Why is it such a struggle to forgive? Why don’t people forgive at all? The sad reality is that there is short-term power, albeit destructive, in refusing to forgive the other person. There are dark ‘benefits’ in keeping someone else in our relational debt.

Keeping a record of our spouse’s wrongs gives us the upper hand in the relationship. There is power in having something to hold over another’s head. There is power in using a person’s weakness and failure against them, so in moments when we want our own way, we pull out some wrong against our spouse as our relational trump card.

How ugly and selfish is that?

It seems almost too obvious to say, but forgiveness is a much better way than unforgiveness. It’s the only way to live in an intimate, long-term relationship with another sinner. It’s the only way to negotiate through the weakness and failure that will daily mark your marriage.

Forgiveness is a relational transaction that needs to occur in moments when sin has gotten in the way of the unity, love, and understanding between a husband and wife (or any two people for that matter). Forgiveness lifts the burden off our shoulders of bearing wrongs and restores what has been broken.”²

- Discuss with your family why accurate self-examination is an important first step to forgiving others. How does forgiveness relate to judging others rightly?

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¹Edwards, Jonathan. *Resolutions and Advice to Young Converts*. N.P., ReadaClassic.com, 2011.

²Tripp, Paul David. *Free From Debt*. Forgive Your Spouse (Or Anyone!) @pauldavidtrippquotes, Instagram. Posted February 23, 2022, 7:00am, <https://www.instagram.com/paultrippquotes/?hl=en> Accessed, February 23, 2022, 2:08pm.