

JUDGING AND PAIN

- A. Introduction: We have been dealing with the fact that many Christians are in bondage because of sinful attitudes.
1. Last week we began to deal with a potentially sinful attitude -- judging others.
 - a. Judging, the kind of judging which can be a sinful attitude, is basically finding fault with others. We all do it. We can't avoid doing it. In some cases, we have to do it.
 - b. Nowhere does the Bible tell us not to judge. Rather, it tells us how to judge.
 - c. There are a number of types of judging, and there are different circumstances in which we judge. We'll discuss many of them over the next few weeks.
 2. In the last lesson, we dealt with a type of judgment which many do not recognize as judgment. Yet, it is a major source of bondage in the lives of countless people. The pain in their lives is the result of their judgment of others, but they don't know it.
 - a. Someone overlooks us and we judge them or make a determination about why they did it.
 1. We assume we know why they overlooked us: They don't like me. They don't respect me. They are angry with me. That guy over looked me because he is a self righteous idiot, etc.
 2. Our conclusions hurt us. The pain is real, but the pain is not based on what really happened (they overlooked us because they were preoccupied), but on our judgment of that person.
 - b. We then respond to them not based on what they did, but on why we think they did what they did. We talk to ourselves and others based on why we think they did what they did.
 - c. Because we do not really know (cannot know) why they did what they did, our response to them could be completely inappropriate, bringing more pain and consequences to our life.
 3. To judge means to render a decision or make a determination about something. When you assume you know why someone did something, when you make a determination, you judge them.
 - a. Identifying what someone did is an observation. Determining why he did it is a judgment. "The tone of his voice was harsh" is an observation. "He spoke to me that way because he doesn't like me" is an judgment.
 - b. The problem is, you cannot know why someone did something. You cannot know what their motive was because you cannot see their heart or read their mind. Only God can do those things.
 - c. Not only do we make judgments, we condemn people. We declare them wrong, guilty, deserving of punishment, and blameworthy (we blame them for our pain).
 4. Matt 7:1,2; Luke 6:36-38--Jesus tells us that what we give out in judgment we will get back, not from God, but from other people -- and we'll get more than we give.
 - a. The context of these verses is behavior toward others -- mercy, judgment, condemnation.
 - b. Jesus said we get back what we give to people and more. People will treat me the way that I treat them only more so.
 - c. Many people live their lives relating to others on the basis of judgments they've made and getting back what they give pressed down, shaken together, and running over.
 5. It is important that we become aware of when and how we judge people in this manner so we can stop reaping the emotional destruction it brings. In this lesson we want to deal further with this kind of judgment.
- B. We judge people in this manner because we tend to think that the way we do things or see things is the right way. But, it isn't necessarily the right way or even the wrong way. It's just the way we see it, the way we do it. Prov 16:2; Prov 21:2
1. I like red, you like blue. I like pizza, you like fried chicken. I like to study in quiet. You like to study

with the TV on. None of that is necessarily right or wrong.

2. You must realize that our flesh (the part of us not changed by the new birth) wants to rule over others. Mark 10:42,43--But Jesus called them to [Him], and said to them, You know that those who are recognized as governing and are supposed to rule the Gentiles (the nations) lord it over them -- ruling with absolute power, holding them in subjection -- and their great men exercise authority and dominion over them. but this is not to be so among you; instead, whoever desires to be great among you must be your servant. (Amp)
 - a. Not all of us are in positions of authority where we are authorized to rule over others as part of our job. None the less, our flesh still finds ways to rule over others.
 - b. One way we rule over others is by exalting ourselves in our mind (which is pride). One way we exalt ourselves is by judging others. Through finding fault with others we elevate ourselves: He is an idiot. I'd never be that stupid. I'm much more considerate and humble than he is.
 - c. I exalt myself by finding you inferior to me in behavior or character. I do it by determining that my way of doing things or seeing things is right and yours is wrong.
 - d. One side note: Right now, we are not dealing with moral issues where the Bible clearly states what is right and wrong. We will get to those issues in another lesson.
 3. You must become aware of that tendency in your flesh to see yourself as right and others as wrong and then assign moral value to issues which are not moral issues. Through judging, your flesh achieves the superiority it longs for.
- C. Another reason we judge people in this manner is that we mistakenly assume people do what they do for the same reasons we do what we do.
1. Let's consider an example of how we judge each other because we assume people do things for the same reasons we do them.
 - a. Joe always tries to make small talk with other people. He is trying to make people feel comfortable and cared for. That is how he feels when people take the time to make small talk with him.
 - b. Bill, on the other hand, gets right to the point. He prefers that when people talk to him, and he believes it is the most polite way to talk to people. He takes as little of their time as possible.
 - c. Both men do what they do out of personal preference and out of what they believe is polite and considerate toward other people.
 2. But, these two people interact with each other and they both judge each other based on their preferences and perceptions. Conflict is the result.
 - a. Joe feels offended because Bill made no small talk with him in a recent phone call. Joe judges Bill to be a very rude, inconsiderate person.
 - b. Bill is equally offended because Joe wasted his time with small talk. Bill judges Joe to be a very rude, inconsiderate person.
 - c. Yet, each was trying to be polite and caring. The conflict was not based on what either person actually did, but on the judgments each made about why the other did what he did.
 1. The conflict was based on each one assuming that other people do what they do for the same reasons they do what they do.
 2. If Joe skipped the small talk with someone, he would be expressing a lack of concern for that person by not taking time for him. If Bill engaged in small talk, he would be expressing a lack of concern for that person by wasting their time.
 3. We set ourselves up for emotional hurt by judging people -- by assuming we know why people do what they do and by assuming they do what they do for the same reasons we do what we do.

- a. You believe good friends call each other three times a day. When you are in a friendship, you call them three times a day.
 - b. Then, you enter into a relationship with a friend who only calls once a day because they believe that to call more often would be inconsiderate of your time.
 - c. But you judge them according to your standard, declaring them guilty of being a bad friend, and reap the emotional pain of rejection. They haven't rejected you, but because you've judged them, you feel rejected.
4. Often, when we judge, we make ourselves and our personal preferences the standard of right and wrong.
 - a. Luke 18:11,12--This man made the standard, met it, and then judged himself superior and others inferior to his standard.
 - b. Just because people don't do things the way we do things doesn't make them wrong. It makes us different from each other.
 5. The bottom line is: You cannot assume you know why people do what they do. You don't know why. Only God knows why people do what they do.
 - a. As you interact with people, deal only with the facts -- what you actually know, what you can actually know. John 7:51
 - b. Prov 18:13--He who answers a matter before he hears the facts, it is folly and shame to him. (Amp)
- D. But, what if what someone did to me (not why I think they did it, but what they actually did) was really rude or hurtful? How do I deal with that?
1. The first thing you must do is forgive them. Eph 4:32
 - a. That means give up the right to get even or pay them back. God say: Do not return evil for evil. Rom 12:14,17; I Thess 5:15; I Pet 3:9
 - b. In your self talk, remind yourself: They may have just received terrible news or had someone else bite their head off. This person may not be saved and that is more important than my hurt feelings.
 - c. I Cor 13:7--Love...is ever ready to believe the best of every person. (Amp)
 2. Second, you need to distinguish between close relationships and casual relationships.
 - a. If it is a casual relationship (a clerk at a store, a driver on the road, someone with whom you will probably not interact with much), forgive them, let it go, bless them, and praise the Lord.
 - b. If it is someone you closely interact with, forgive them, bless them, and praise the Lord. But, you may need to communicate with them. Most people have no idea they have offended us and when told so, quickly apologize.
 3. When you communicate with them, drop all judgments. Judgment seeks a penalty, a punishment. The goal is to make them hurt, too.
 - a. Talk about what they did and how it made you feel -- not about why they did it and what is wrong with them. Prov 15:1
 - b. There is a difference between observation and judgment. "Your choice of words and tone of voice hurt me" is an observation. "You said that to hurt me. You hurt me because you are inconsiderate" is a judgment.
 - c. When you get into the "how you hurt me, how bad you are" arena, you are in the arena of judgment and you'll reap emotional pain.
 4. When you confront someone, it must be done in love, otherwise that person will get defensive and judge you (you're too touchy; you think I'm an idiot), and it becomes a fight about whose judgment is right instead of what is right before God.

- a. Honestly consider why you are confronting them: To prove yourself right? To get the last word? To win the argument? To punish or shame them? To get even with them? To make them hurt? Or, to restore the relationship.
 - b. You simply tell them the effects of their actions on you. You don't tell them why they did what they did or rate their character. Good communication: This is what you have done. This is how it has affected me.
 - c. If they continue the same actions against you after you tell them how the actions make you feel, you still cannot know why they do it, however, you may have to decide that close involvement with them is too emotionally damaging to you and back off.
5. Not judging people does not mean you have to stay involved in damaging relationships.
- a. It is okay to withdraw based on facts, not on judgments.
 - b. Note the distinction between a judgment and an observation:
 1. An observation: Based on your observable track record, it is hard for me to trust you.
 2. A judgment: You'll cheat me again if you get the chance.
 - c. We begin to judge (assume we know why people do what they do) when we look at our situation and tell ourselves:
 1. Why is everyone putting so much pressure on me?
 2. Why does everyone expect so much of me?
 3. Why is God letting this happen to me?
 4. Nobody understands what I'm dealing with.
 5. He did that to try to cheat me.
 6. He did that to make me look bad.
6. We don't realize how often we judge or make determinations on something other than facts.
- a. If we say: She has a good heart. That is a judgment because we can't see her heart. We can only look at their observable track record.
 - b. Sometimes we say: This just feels right in my heart. But, that is also a subjective judgment. Prov 28:26
 - c. People get into as much trouble wrongly judging people good as wrongly judging them bad.
7. This is a whole lesson for another night. But, we do need to make this point: The fact that people are not supposed to judge you does not give you the right to be careless or insensitive to people.
- a. If you speak harshly to other people and people judge you as condemning and uncaringly, they shouldn't judge you, but perhaps you should change the way you talk to people.
 - b. "They should know what I mean" is not a good enough answer. We should learn to say what we mean and mean what we say. People can only respond to what we say the way we say it.
 - c. If you expect people to figure you out, you invite judgment. Prove 18:6--A [self-confident] fool's mouth is his ruin, and his lips are a snare to himself. (Amp)
- E. Conclusion: It is easy to justify sinful behavior because we have been hurt, so we must learn to deal with pain in a godly, healthy way. In order to do that, we must stop judging people.
1. When you feel hurt or offended, ask yourself: Is this pain due to what they have actually done or due to why I think they have done what they've done.
 2. When you talk to yourself or others about people, ask yourself: Am I speaking facts or making judgments?
 3. When you find yourself judging people, deal with it right away.