

THE BIG IDEA: We need to judge with our eyes on the cross and our hearts full of grace.

The Take-Off

Quite a few years ago, Wendy walked out the door to leave for work like normal.

She was back within minutes and I assumed she'd forgotten something, but her face said differently.

"Um, I just backed into your car."

I went out the door and before I even looked at her back bumper and my front bumper, I raised both my arms and shouted one word: "Unbelievable!"

Not my best moment, y'all, but of all the things I was thinking, the win may have been that I filtered. Hard.

But what I really accomplished was making Wendy feel like the most incompetent driver on the planet.

I made a judgement about her driving abilities and also about her personally.

Ever been there? Ever seen someone do something that caused you to want to say "unbelievable?"

Can I suggest that if you haven't, you will, especially as we'll start to spend a whole lot more time in our homes with family!

Truly, we need to hear the words of Jesus as we turn to the next section of the Sermon on the Mount.

I know we're in homes all around the region, nation, and even world right now, but can we do something together right now?

Let's all read **Matthew 7:1-6** together.

I'm going to be reading from the NIV and that's what we'll put on the screen.

Ready? Let's read.

Now, before we talk through 2 thoughts, let me clear up the most misunderstood verse in the Bible.

Verse 1 is quoted all the time as "Thou shalt not judge!"

Obviously, this isn't what Jesus meant or else He wouldn't have told us in verse 6 to make a judgement about where and where not to throw pearls!

The question isn't should we judge, but how should we judge?

Warren Wiersbe has said that the Pharisees judged and criticized others to make themselves look good, but followers of Jesus should judge themselves so that they can help others look good.

Jesus wants us to learn how to judge without being judgmental - there's a BIG difference between the two.

Here's your Big Idea: **we need to judge with our eyes on the cross and our hearts full of grace.**

1. Eyes on the cross

- a. **Matt. 7:2** says "in the same way you judge others, you will be judged"
- b. In what way should we judge? With our eyes focused clearly on the cross.
- c. Why? Because the cross reminds us of some important truths:
 - One, the seat of judgement was made for us - we're not THE Judge
 - Two, all of us needed (and still need) the cross (**Romans 3:23**)
- d. Jesus really hammers this point about seeing ourselves correctly when He starts painting a crazy picture of trying to remove a speck in someone's eye while we've got a plank sticking out of ours
- e. Seeing the cross corrects our vision - it helps us see ourselves for who we really are
- f. The reason why I threw my hands up and yelled "Unbelievable!" is because I forgot that I also make mistakes
- g. In fact, months later with Sydney in the car, I also backed into a car - my mother-in-law's!
- h. To Wendy's credit, she didn't yell "Unbelievable!" - though she could have
- i. When we see the cross, we remember the words Jesus spoke over all of us - "it is finished"
- j. Tetelestai is the word used and it means "paid in full"
- k. The only One worthy to sit in judgement has made it and paid for it and there's no more judgement for us to make over ourselves or others
- l. The cross keeps us from being judgmental
- m. Imagine how that could impact our relationships - simply seeing everyone as equally in need of the canceled debt offer at the cross
- n. It would fill us with grace and enable us to become experts and giving and receiving grace

2. Hearts full of grace

- a. If the cross keeps us from being judgmental, then grace keeps us from becoming critical.
- b. I don't mean critical in the sense of using critical thinking skills, but critical in the sense of being overbearing and unrealistic in our expectations and too easily offended when they aren't met
- c. In verse 2 when Jesus says that we'll be judged with the same measure we use, He's telling us to choose wisely the measure we use.
- d. I want to have a measuring cup (or heart) full of grace, and let me show you why
- e. In Luke 6 we find the same teaching from Jesus, but Luke includes some more detail (not surprising since he was a doctor!)
- f. [Luke 6:38](#) is often used to motivate people to give money because it sounds like such an amazing return on the investment, but in the context, Jesus is dealing with relationships
- g. "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."
- h. Basically Jesus is saying that what you give will come back to you
- i. I don't want to receive cold judgment or harsh criticism, do you?
- j. I want to receive grace, and if I do, then I need to judge others with a heart full of grace

The Landing

Now let's get practical.

Our city and state are facing a 30 day "Stay at home" order beginning tomorrow

That means that a lot of families are going to be living in close proximity to one another

The likelihood that we're going to bump into one another and have buttons pushed intentionally or unintentionally has just skyrocketed to 100%

So would you commit to doing a plank exercise every day for the next 30 days?

It's not the planks we all hate, but rather an exercise that will help all of us remove the planks from our eyes.

Every day at 9:23 am and pm (set those reminders), stop what you're doing and pray the prayer found in [Psalm 139:23-24](#) (get it - Psalm [139:23??](#))

Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

If we make this our daily prayer, we'll find ourselves free of planks and full of grace and ready to help others see more clearly, as well.

Let's pray.