

Luke Chapter 6 v 37 - 42

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[0 : 00] Good morning. Very warm welcome to all of you, particularly those of you who are visiting us. I think we've got some folk from overseas as well and others more local.

Trust that together, we might know the Lord's presence and nearness amongst us. There's a verse on the screen which comes from Romans chapter 6 and verse 9.

It says this, For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again. Death no longer has mastery over him. The wonderful reality is this, that we come to worship a risen Savior, a living Lord.

Not a dead God, not a historical figure alone, but someone who has conquered death, who has risen again on this Sunday morning, the first day of the week.

We meet as Christians, particularly because it's on that first day of the week that he rose again from the dead. And our first hymn is a reminder of the wonderful events of that Easter Sunday, of the Sunday that we celebrate every Sunday, the reality we celebrate every day that we live in a relationship with a risen Savior.

[1 : 15] So let's stand and sing. The song is going to come on the screen behind me. See what a morning, gloriously bright. Let's pray together.

Let us all pray. You, O Lord, are the mighty God, the great God, the good God, the powerful God, the faithful God.

You are the God who raised the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. And the resurrection of Jesus is the most vital, the most important, the most glorious, the most wonderful truth that we hold to and that we declare, O Lord.

It makes all the difference in the world that Jesus, who bore our sin and died in our place, has conquered sin and death and hell for us and that he lives, that he lives today.

O Lord, what a pitiful, what a mournful, what a wasteful religion Christianity would be if its Savior was a dead man.

[2 : 24] But, O Lord, we thank you that it is not the case, for Jesus is alive, risen from the dead. We thank you that he died and rose again. We thank you that unlike every other religious leader in the world, or that has ever been, all have been mere men.

All have died, all have been buried, all are worshipped or thought about their tomb, but Jesus broke the bones of death. And Jesus lives.

Why? Because he was not only man, but God. We thank you that he was and is God come amongst us. God who took on our humanity, its weaknesses, not its sins, but its struggles, its heartaches, its troubles, its difficulties.

We have in Jesus the man, God, who wept, who cried, the man, God, who laughed, the man, God, who felt pain, which is, O Lord, beyond our comprehension, not just the physical pain of the crucifixion, but that inner pain of tasting of hell itself, of feeling and knowing the punishment of sin upon himself.

Not his sin, but our sin. But Lord, we thank you that you vindicated him. You recognized and said to the world, look, here is the one who has paid the price.

- [3 : 50] Here is the one who you can trust when you raised him from death. We thank you that even now, Lord Jesus, we can know you and experience your power, your resurrection power in our lives.
- Lord, what good would you be to us if through this week and through day by day you did not pour into our lives power? We feel weak.
- We felt perhaps even this week as if we're crumbling and falling apart. We felt even perhaps as if death would be welcome. But, O Lord, it isn't because you have conquered death.
- We thank you that you are alive and that your resurrection life gives us power. Gives us power in the face of every enemy, every struggle, every torment, every concern, every fear.
- Lord, your resurrection gives us hope. Hope that is not mere wishful thinking, but hope that is certain and genuine. Hope, Lord, that is tangible.
- [4 : 53] Hope, O Lord, that speaks into our lives. Jesus is alive. And he lives in us by his spirit. That same resurrection power, Lord Jesus, lives in us.
- We who have been born again of the spirit have been raised from death to life. Lord, we have been brought into everlasting life. Because Jesus is our savior and our king.
- O Lord, may we this morning know and feel that sense of power. May we in ourselves, O Lord, not look for strength, but, Lord, look to you. And may we receive from you that resurrection power again and afresh in our hearts and lives.
- To bring you the worship and the praise that you deserve. To exalt you and glorify you. And to renew our faith and trust in you. O Lord, come amongst us.
- Come by your spirit, we pray. And make Jesus known. We ask these things as we bring all of our prayers to our God. In the living name of the living savior.
- [5 : 58] Jesus Christ, the God man. Amen. Amen. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. I invite everybody to stay if they can for lunch with us.
- That's always a good time to catch up and fellowship together. And also, yeah, please be aware that all the gifts that are going to be given and collected in the harvest will go to Caring for Life.
- One of the charities that we, Christian charities that we support and which our dear friend Kath Miller works with. So, there will be something about that in the harvest service itself.
- But this morning we're going to be thinking about the words of Jesus in Luke and chapter 6. So, if you'd like to turn there in your Bibles, Luke and chapter 6. And we had a little break from this.
- Last week was the September Bible School. And we were greatly blessed and encouraged by the ministry of James Swanson. And then the week before that we had a visiting speaker.
- [7 : 00] So, it's been a couple of weeks since we've been in Luke. But we're back into Luke and chapter 6. If you have Church Bible, the Red Church Bible, that's page 1034. Page 1034.
- We've been looking over the last weeks at this condensed, in one sense, sermon of the Lord Jesus, which Luke gives us in 6.
- We've looked at most of it, but we're going to look particularly at verses 37 and following. But to give us a sense of the context, we're going to read from verse 27.
- So, page 1034. Luke chapter 6, verse 27. But to you who are listening, I say, this is Jesus, of course, speaking.
- Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who ill-treat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also.

- [8 : 01] If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Give to everyone who asks you. And if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.
- Do to others as you would have them do to you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them.
- And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you?
- Even sinners lend to sinners expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies. Do good to them and lend to them without expecting to get anything back.
- Then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High. Because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful just as your father is merciful.
- [8 : 59] Do not judge and you will not be judged. Do not condemn and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. 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, it will be measured to you. He also told them this parable.
- Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the pit? The student is not above the teacher. But everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.
- Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye.
- When you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye. You hypocrite. First take the plank out of your eye. Then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.
- [9 : 58] No good tree bears bad fruit. Nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thorn bushes or grapes from briars.
- A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart. And an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.
- Why do you call me, Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say? As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like.
- They are like a man building a house who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When the flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it because it was well built.
- But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed.
- [11 : 01] And its destruction was complete. We are going to send the young people to their classes, to Bible studies.
- And if you want to make use of the creche, please do that as well. Good if you could have your Bibles open. They would be very helpful to you.
- As we look at these words of the Lord Jesus in Luke and chapter 6. Particularly those verses 37 through to 42. Where Jesus says, Do not judge, you will not be judged.
- Do not condemn and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and it will be given to you. In the English language, there are quite a few phrases that we have to warn against judging others, aren't there?

Things like, People in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. Meaning, Don't criticize people's faults when you've got those faults yourself. Or of course, Don't judge a book by its cover.

[12 : 09] Meaning, Beware valuing something or someone By their appearance alone or first impressions. And my favorite is this. Before you criticize someone, Walk a mile in their shoes.

Somebody added to that. That way, When you criticize them, You'll be a mile away from them and you'll have their shoes. That isn't what it means, Of course.

When Jesus taught his disciples about judging others, It seems to me that there is a certain element of humor In the way that he speaks. You can imagine someone who is guiding somebody else who's blind.

That just is farcical, if I can put it that way. That just is surreal. But particularly, of course, His parable of the speck and the plank. This person with this great beam of timber in their eyes is a cartoon figure, isn't it?

Searching out and looking for the speck, The piece of sawdust in the eye of another. But the principles that Jesus sets before us And before his hearers and his disciples, Particularly, of course, are extremely serious.

[13 : 20] The whole theme of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount here, As we have it in Luke, Seems to me to be this. If you're a disciple of mine, A follower of mine, Your whole way of life will stand out from the crowd.

Your whole way of life will be different To that of those who are not my disciples. And we've seen that. We've seen that in the contrast in verses 20 through to 26 a few weeks ago.

The contrast between the blessed disciple And the woeful unbeliever. We've seen that when we looked at this incredible teaching of Jesus on loving your enemy, Verses 27 and following, Where Jesus exposes the supernatural love of the child of God, That he's able to love one's enemies, And compares it to the self-interested love of those he calls the sinner, Who only love those who benefit them.

There's a real difference. There's a marked contrast. There's no sense in which, According to Jesus, There can be any confusion Between the believer and the unbeliever.

And now we come to verse 36 and following. And I believe 36 is the key verse, The hinge, Be merciful just as your father is merciful.

[14 : 43] That's the conclusion of what he's just said, But it's also the leading into what he's about to say. It's good to have, As we do in our Bibles, Paragraphs and breaks, And even perhaps some added subheadings.

But sometimes they aren't helpful, Because they make a break in our minds. No, this is a one sermon. This is one flowing exposition. This is one theme. Remember that Luke has been very careful, He tells us at the start of his gospel, In the way that he's played out, The chronology and the teaching of Jesus.

And he's gone to great lengths to bring together, Teaching which is connected. It's not just a mishmash. It's not just a putting together of disjointed ideas, Or disjointed words and sayings of Jesus.

There's a train of thought here, That we're meant to follow. That's all the way through the scripture, But it comes out particularly here, In the words of Jesus.

As I say, Verse 36 is the link. God's mercy to us, Makes us merciful. Mercy stands out in one sense, In contrast to judgment.

[15 : 57] James, when he writes in his letter, Writes this, Mercy triumphs over judgment. God is merciful. He's been merciful to us.

Therefore our lives will be marked by, His mercy. His mercy. Do not judge, And you will not be judged. Is Jesus forbidding, Every sort of judgment?

Is he saying that we must never ever, Use judgment in our relationships, To one another? That it is forbidden outright? No, he's not.

That's not how we're meant to understand, This command, Do not judge. In fact, Later on in John, In chapter 7, He commands us, To stop judging, By mere appearances, But he says, Instead, Judge correctly.

He's speaking against, Wrong judgment. Bad judgment. Unmerciful judgment. The sort of judgment, That leads to, Condemnation of others.

[17 : 01] That's how we're meant to understand, This judging. That's why he, As he were, Backs it up. Do not judge, Do not condemn. Judgment that leads to condemnation, That condemns others, Is wrong.

Judgment that will not forgive, Is wrong. Judgment that does not give, Mercy, Is wrong. Right judgment, Includes forgiving.

Right judgment, Includes giving. It makes room, For forgiveness. And it continues to give, Even, To the one, That's judged.

We see that, Particularly in other parts, Of the New Testament, And the Bible. One particular episode, Is in, The life of the Apostle Paul, When he writes to the church, In Corinth, In his first letter, 1 Corinthians chapter 5, He has to address them, And speak to them, Concerning a very serious, Sexual sin, That has been committed, By a man in the church.

And Paul goes on to say, That he passes judgment, On that man. For my part, Even though I am not, Physically present, I am with you in spirit, He says, As one who is present, With you in this way, I have already passed judgment, In the name of the Lord Jesus, On the one, Who's been doing this.

[18 : 32] And his judgment is, That that man, Should be put out of the church, Until that time, That he repents, And is restored. And he goes on, To talk about, The reality, That the church, The Christians, Are to judge one another.

What they were doing, In Corinth, Was that, Whenever they had an argument, With one another, They'd go and take it, To a civil court. They'd take one another, To court, To law. In fact, Paul is saying, Look, When there's a problem, Sort it out, Judge between yourselves, Work it out.

Because he goes on to say, That one day, Christians will judge the world. So how can we avoid, Judging wrongly, Which, Means condemning, Being unforgiving.

How can we judge, Correctly, Rightly, Which includes, Forgiveness, And mercy. Well, I think that's why, Luke puts together, These three parables, That follow, Immediately afterwards.

They are the explanation, They are the helpful, Insights, From Jesus, That we may, Grasp and comprehend, What's needed. And I believe, That we are being called, To judge ourselves.

[19 : 44] If we're to judge others, Or, If we are to have, Right judgment of one another, Then we must begin, By judging ourselves, By judging ourselves, Correctly. Again, The Bible has a lot to say, About self-examination, Self-judgment.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 11, And verse 28, When Paul talks about, Coming and sharing, In the Lord's supper, In communion, He says, A person ought to examine themselves, Before they eat of the bread, Or drink of the wine.

It's testing, Judging yourself. 2 Corinthians, In chapter 13, Examine yourselves, Judge yourselves, To see whether you're in the faith. Test yourselves, He says. So we have to begin there, I believe.

And in one sense, That's what Jesus has already been doing, And in fact, What he's going to do later on as well, In the rest of the chapter. He's been highlighting for us, As he's been speaking, We're to test ourselves.

Do I love my enemy? Do I have mercy, As my heavenly father has mercy? Am I one of those who is blessed? Because, As we've described, And has been described, The life of the disciple.

[20 : 51] There's been judging going on, But now that judgment is to be exercised, For ourselves, That we might judge others rightly. So what should we find?

When we judge ourselves, And examine ourselves, What is the first thing that we should find? Verse 39, He told them this parable, Can the blind lead the blind, Will they not both fall into a pit?

I believe the first thing that we must do, Is to judge ourselves as blind. To examine ourselves, And see, That we do not see. That's our problem, Isn't it?

That's the reason why we judge others wrongly, And condemn others, Because we think we know better than them, Or we are better than them. We think that we have good judgment already, And that our judgment is right.

We judge that we can see the wrong in others, Even when they cannot see it. But the realization that the Bible teaches us, Is that we all start off blind.

[21 : 59] Until we recognize that we know nothing, Then we shall never know anything. Until we see that we are blind, We shall constantly be judging wrongly.

Church in Laodicea, Was a church, Which thought of itself as being brilliant. The Christians there thought that they had it all. They thought that they were rich, They were clever, They were holy, They were godly, They were marvelous.

But actually when Jesus speaks to them, Through his letter, Through John, In chapter 3 of Revelation, He says this, You do not realize that you are wretched, Pitiful, Blind, And naked.

How they saw themselves, Was not how God saw them. And that's the problem, We do not see ourselves as God sees us. Yes we are, All of us gifted with the ability to judge, On certain matters, Material matters, Financial matters, And so on and so forth, But we lack spiritual insight.

We are, The Bible says, All of us born, In nature blind, And unable to see the things of God, And to therefore discern, And judge the things of God, As we should.

[23 : 21] In Ephesians in chapter 4, Verses 17 and following, This is how Paul describes, Those outside of the church, Those who are without Christ, He says, They are darkened in their understanding, Separated from the life of God, Because of the ignorance that is in them, Due to the hardening of their hearts, That's how we all were, We all started in that way, We all began, Blind, I've never been blind, I can't imagine how difficult, And how distressing it is to be blind, Particularly if you've been able to see, So well previously, To be struck down with blindness, Is something you do recognize, I'm sure, You're aware of, But for someone who's always been blind, Who's never seen, It's a very different thing altogether, When do they recognize, When do they acknowledge, How do they acknowledge, That they are blind, If the Bible says that we are blind,

Then we are blind, Even if we think we can see, And if we are blind, Then when we come to judging others, Which in one sense is, Attempting to guide them, In the way that they should live their lives, Or correct them, Then what does Jesus say, Can the blind lead the blind, They'll both fall into the pit, No we can't judge others, When we are blind, We can't guide others, Or help others, Or tell others right and wrong, When ultimately, We are already ourselves, Walking in the wrong direction, Living the wrong type of life, Have you ever seen yourself as blind, Have you ever examined yourself, Have you ever recognized, That when it comes to these matters, These spiritual things, The things of God, That you are blind, I just don't see God, I just don't see, Then that's the place, We have to begin, Because once we recognize,

We are blind, And see that we are blind, And judge that we are blind, Then we will judge, That we need someone, To instruct us, We judge that we need a teacher, Verse 40, The student is not above the teacher, But everyone who is fully trained, Will be like their teacher, Now some of what Jesus, Was saying here, Was definitely pointed at, The religious leaders of the day, In fact if you, Look into Matthew's gospel, He refers to them again, And again, Woe to you blind guides, They thought they didn't need, Instruction, They thought they didn't need, To be taught anything, In fact when, A man who had been healed, By Jesus, From his blindness, Came and spoke to them, Or they examined him, When he began to point out to them, That Jesus must be somebody from God, And must be right, And they should listen to him, They said how dare you lecture us, We know everything, We're the religious leaders, We've got the insight,

We've got the understanding, So not only did they, Not accept that they were blind, But they were not willing to see, They weren't willing to accept it, So they didn't want, The light, That's why they constantly rejected Jesus, And rejected his teaching, And his words, Why ultimately in the end, They murdered him, Isn't our greatest problem this, We think we know enough, We would never say we know everything, Or we know it all, That would be too arrogant, But we know enough, We know enough about life, We know enough about making, Decisions and choices, We know enough about, The world as it is, And about God, And all these other things, We know enough to be able, To choose for ourselves, And judge for ourselves, And to make decisions, About others too, To think that I know enough,

And don't need to know more, Don't need to study, Don't need to be taught, Don't need an instructor, Is just as bad, As a person who thinks, They know it all, Because actually underneath, That's what we do, But we put on the mask, Of humility, We pretend, Oh no, I've got so much more, I need to learn, It's just I don't really want to learn, It's just I don't really want you, To teach me, I just don't really want to be corrected, Myself, An unteachable attitude, Surely is the most dangerous, And self-destructive, Persuasion that there is, Isn't that what we see, Around about us, In the political leaders, Of our day, This attitude of, We know what to do, We don't need to be told, We are, The authority, We have, The answers, And we see what havoc, That reaps, But it reaps the same havoc,

[28 : 29] In our own lives, In our relationships, Particularly our relationship, With God, But with others too, We need a teacher, And, But we must be careful, Who that teacher is, There's so many, Gurus in the world today, So many people, Who have the answer, Or who proclaim it on TV, And through their books, And so on, But we need, The right teacher, Jesus says, You only have one, Teacher, One instructor, Christ, In Matthew chapter 23, We need to recognize, Our need, To be taught, To listen to, To hear, To understand, To acknowledge, The words of Jesus, Surely that's what's going to come through, In the next few weeks, Where Jesus says there, Anyone who comes to me, And hears my words, And puts them into practice,

And then thirdly, This semi-humorous, Parable, That Jesus speaks about, We're to judge, That we are blind, We're to judge, That we are, We need to be taught, And what is it, That we are taught, When we come to Jesus, What is it, That he trains us in, He trains us, To recognize, That we must be changed, Before we can judge rightly, We must be changed, So this parable of the man, With the huge piece of timber, And that's exactly what it is, It says a plank in the NIV here, But it means a beam, It's the sort of size of piece of wood, That you find under your floorboards, A joist, It's not a tiny little piece of doweling, It's something that, You just can't possibly miss, If you could see, Jesus calls such a person,

A hypocrite, You hypocrite, First take out your plank, That's what a judgemental person is, Isn't it, We judge others differently, To how we judge ourselves, We sort of, Don't see our own faults, And failings, It's what we, Can find them in others, Wow, We are such amazing insight, Into the lives of other people, About the things that are wrong with them, The way that they walk, Or speak, Or talk, Or dress, Or whatever it may be, But there we are, Walking around, The whole of our lives, With a great big thundering beam, In our eye, I'm better than them, I know more than them, I'm cleverer than them, I'm more godly than them, I'm more holy than them, Does Jesus then mean to say, That we can only judge, When we are sinless ourselves, Is that what he's saying, He's saying, Unless you're completely free, Of all sin, Then you can't judge anybody else,

Unless you're perfect, You can't discern, Things in other people's lives, Or speak to them about, Their own lives, No he doesn't say that, Notice he says, First, Take the plank out of your eye, Then you'll see clearly, To remove the speck, From your brothers, He's not saying, You must never judge, But first, There's got to be a change, In you, You must have your sight, Restored, And corrected, To become a disciple of Jesus, Is just that, Receiving divine sight, Seeing things, That once, Were hidden to us, Once were, We were ignorant of, In 2 Corinthians, In chapter 4, Paul writes, To the Christians, Telling them about, The wonderful transformation, That's taken place, In their lives, When Christ, Opened their eyes, Or rather, When God opened their eyes, He said this, For God, Who said, Let light shine out of darkness, That's what he said, In the beginning, In creation, Made his light, Shine in our hearts, To give us the light,

Of the knowledge, Of God's glory, Displayed in the face, Of Christ, That's got to happen, In your life, Dear friend, There has to be, The taking away, Of the darkness, And the giving of light, And that will only happen, When we acknowledge, That we're blind, It'll only happen, When we acknowledge, That we need, A teacher, The only knowledge, When we come humbly, Before God, And say, Lord, My faults are huge, My sins are, Are a beam, My failings, My selfishness, My pride, My arrogance, My, All these things there, Lord, Will you please, Not only forgive my sin, But, Take away my sin, And change me, And change me, That's the wonderful experience, Of being born again, That's the wonderful experience, Of becoming a disciple of Jesus, That's the wonderful experience, Of becoming a child of God,

[33 : 37] We experience forgiveness, We experience God's mercy, Ourselves, And so we are able, To act with mercy, In our judgment, And dealings with others, Jesus says, Forgive and you will be forgiven, And there's that, But there's that sense, In which because we are forgiven, We forgive, And we keep on forgiving, We've been forgiven so much, When we stop and think about it, It becomes all the more incredible, That God should ever have forgiven us, And so when we come to judge another, Because of their sin, Or perhaps their sin towards us, Or the way that they're living their life, In sinful way, Or whatever it may be, When we come to judge them, We remember, Firstly, I have been given much, Much, Forgiven much, Much more, Than whatever this sin is, Or failing is, In their lives, And so we come to them first,

With mercy, Not to condemn, Not to put down, Not to destroy, Not to undermine, In that sense, But with mercy, And we remember, How much we've been given, How patient God has been, With you and I, Haven't we continued, To fail him, And sin against him, Even though we've been Christians, For donkey's years, Can we still, Entertain, Those thoughts, Those doubts, Those wrong attitudes, Don't we have to keep on, Coming to him, For more grace, And more mercy, And more patience, Hasn't he given, And given, And given, Hasn't he given to you, And I dear friends, As believers, Good measure, Pressed down, Shaken over, Running over, Poured into our laps, See this passage here, About giving and receiving, It's nothing to do with money, Though sadly, Some Christians, Have taken it that way, And said, Well if you give, Ten pounds to God, He'll give you a hundred pounds back, This prosperity doctrine,

As it's called, That's rubbish, That's not the context, The context is mercy, The whole context is judgment, And grace, And forgiveness, And the giving of love, And time, To one another, Now we don't, If we exercise judgment, As we should, As we must, In our relationships, To one another, It's not that we might, Condemn them, Nor make ourselves, As peer, Better than them, We simply, Long to see them, Restored, There's a couple of places, In the New Testament, Where, Paul and also, The writer of the Hebrews, Make it clear, That when we judge, Somebody has committed a sin, That we are, To help them, Galatians chapter 6, Verse 1, Brothers and sisters, If someone is caught in a sin, And that's what sin is like, Don't, Don't ever forget, That sin is a trap,

Don't ever forget, That sin is a snare, Sin is, Sin is something that, That latches onto us, Like a blood sucking leech, And drains us of life, Sin is never a good thing, It is always a destructive thing, It catches and takes hold, And traps men and women, And boys and girls in it, Brothers and sisters, If someone is caught in a sin, You who live by the spirit, Should restore that person, Gently, Gently, In other words, Showing mercy, Grace, Seeking to win them back, Seeking to help them, To follow Christ better, Seeking to do them good, So have you been changed?

Have you experienced, The forgiveness of God, In your own life? Do you recognize, And realize, That you are a sinner, And that you're constantly, In need of God's forgiveness, And constantly in need, In need of his grace, And constantly in need, Of his patience and love, Only then dear friends, Should we then speak, To judge others, With one motivation, With one desire, That we might do them good, We might bless them, We might help them, And to do all things, With gentleness, Just close, An illustration, That I heard some time ago, It's a very old illustration, About, In the days when, Ministers used to ride around, On horseback, So it was a little while ago, Now they're on bicycles, And, One minister, Who was particularly,

[38 : 27] Unfortunately, Had a judgmental, Critical attitude, Of others, Thought he was the bee's knees, Thought he was great, One day he saw, A fellow minister, Who was probably, In his town, And he was on his horse, Riding along, But as he was on his horse, He was swaying on his horse, He had little control, He was sort of, In the seat, He was all over the place, And the first minister thought, That's a disgrace, Cores himself a minister, A gospel preacher, A Christian, He's drunk, Drunk, On his horse, Probably just come from the pub, Of course what he didn't know, Was that minister, Had spent, The last several days, Ministering to a family, Who were seriously ill, With a fever, And he'd caught that fever himself, And so he was, Very ill, And weakened, How often do we judge, And we don't know, What's going on,

In that person's life, And we're quick, We'll come to more, On this matter of judgment, Next week, Because it seems to me, That when Jesus talks about, Good trees, And bad trees, And good fruit, And bad fruit, He's talking about, Using judgment, On ourselves, And others, And then the final conclusion, That Jesus comes to, Which is so serious, It's a matter of life, And death, Eternal destruction, Or eternal joy, As to how we, Act, Upon the words, And judge the words, Of our Lord Jesus Christ, In the meantime, Let's pray, Let's spend a few moments, Quietly in our own hearts, Dear friends, Responding to God's word, It may well be, That as I've been speaking, As we've read God's word, There's a conviction, That's come upon your heart, By the Holy Spirit, That says, I have been so judgmental, Of one person,

Or another, And I ask you to forgive me, It may well be, That you yourself, Are still blind, And you recognize, That you just need, Jesus to, Take that beam away, And to make that change, Then ask him to do it, But let's, Come before the Lord, In prayer, In the quietness of our hearts, And then I'll close in prayer too, Be safe, Christ.

Lord our God, you are the just judge. And we know that we all must stand before your judgment seat one day.

And be judged as to how we've lived and how we've acted and how we've spoken. And your judgment is always perfect because you have no sin, no failing, no fault. You see perfectly into every heart and mind and life.

[42 : 00] And your word judges us in that sense because whenever we look at your word it holds up to us a mirror in which we can see our reflection.

We see what is good and perfect in your word. And we see that in our lives the reflection is horrible. Sinful pride.

Judgmental condemnatory attitudes. Lord, we want to be different. We want, Lord, for you to take the beam away.

We want, Lord, for you to give us insight and understanding. We want, Lord, to be those whose motivation is always forgiveness and always mercy.

And so we pray help us, Lord, in this. Help us and change us. That we may truly be marked out as your people, as your children in the world around about us.

[43 : 04] We thank you again, oh Lord, that though we sin much, your grace is much more powerful.

And that you forgive when we confess. And you give help, Lord, when we feel weak. And so we pray, oh Lord, grant us help in our weakness.

That even in these days ahead we may walk and live as men and women of God. As children of the Heavenly Father. Who is merciful.

Who is kind to the ungrateful. And the wicked. For we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Be kind and compassionate to one another.

Forgiving each other. Just as in Christ God forgave you. Follow God's example. Therefore, as dearly loved children. Live a life of love.

[44 : 06] Just as Christ loved us. Gave himself up for us. As a fragrant offering. And sacrifice to God. Amen.