

Character – Lesson 7

Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School

Discussion Questions

- In what ways are you tempted to judge others?
- How do you intend to please God today?
- What in your life attempts to master you?

19. Just (Titus 1:8)

δικαιοσ: righteous, observing divine laws

- in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God
- in a narrower sense, rendering to each his due and that in a judicial sense, passing just judgment on others, whether expressed in words or shown by the manner of dealing with them

Since we are all called to “keep the commands of God”, it would seem better to understand this qualification in the narrow sense concerning our relationships with other.

... it may be best to see it as meaning “fairness,” a commitment to and understanding of that which is just and equitable. MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: Titus

Upright, honest, fair, and impartial in one's dealing with people. He is able to make mature and proper judgements in his relationship with others. VBC Position Paper on Church Leadership

Q: Is judging others always wrong?

How to judge...

¹“Do not judge so that you will not be judged. ²“For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. ³“Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴“Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and behold, the log is in your own eye? ⁵“You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. Matt 7:1-5

Jesus' command “Do not judge lest you be judged” (Matt 7:1) is often used by Christians to oppose discipline in the church and is sometimes quoted by outsiders in opposing the church's taking strong stands against certain evils. As the context makes clear, however (see vv. 3-5), Jesus was talking about a self-righteous, condemning person who acts as judge, passing sentence on others, since he sees only the best in himself and the worst in everyone else. If such a person confesses and is cleansed of his own sin, the Lord went on to say, he then is qualified to confront his brother with the purpose not to condemn but “to take the speck out of [his] brother's eye” (v. 5). He is then spiritual and has the right and even obligation to help his brother overcome a trespass. MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: Galatians

When to judge...

– A sinning fellow believer

¹It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father's wife. ²You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst. ³For **I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this**, as though I were present. 1 Cor 5:1-3

¹Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Gal 6:1

¹⁵“If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. ¹⁶“But if he does not listen *to you*, take one or two more with you, so that **BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED.** ¹⁷“If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Matt 18:15-17

– Teachers

¹Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits** to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1 John 4:1

¹⁰The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. ¹¹Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily *to see* whether these things were so. Acts 17:10-11

– Disputes among believers

¹Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous and not before the saints? ²Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? If the world is judged by you, are you not competent *to constitute* the smallest law courts? ³Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life? ⁴So if you have law courts dealing with matters of this life, do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the church? ⁵I say *this* to your shame. *Is it so, that* there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren, ⁶but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers? 1 Cor 6:1-6

When not to judge...

– Morality of unbelievers

⁹I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; ¹⁰I *did* not at all *mean* with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world. ¹¹But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one. ¹²**For what have I to do with judging outsiders?** Do you not judge those who are within *the church*? 1 Cor 5:9-13

– Others exercise of freedom

¹Now accept the one who is weak in faith, *but* not for *the purpose of* passing judgment on his opinions. ²One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables *only*. ³The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him. ⁴**Who are you to judge the servant of another?** To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. ... ¹⁰**But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt?** For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ... ¹²So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God. ¹³Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother’s way. Rom 14:1-4; 10; 12-13

The proper attitude...

Love... ⁷bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 1 Cor 13:7

¹Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, ²to **malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.** ³For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. ⁴But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, ⁵He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, Titus 3:1-5

A maturing believer is able to make proper judgements in relationships with others.

20. Devout (Titus 1:8)

ἁγιος: undefiled by sin, free from wickedness, religiously observing every moral obligation, pure, holy, pious – holy, pleasing to God, observable practical holiness, being undefiled, innocent, righteous, pious.

Holiness of life, faithfulness to what we understand God would have him to be and do. It involves a commitment to becoming more like Christ in daily life and conduct. VBC Position Paper on Church Leadership

This involves a heartfelt, striving, moment-by-moment desire to be pleasing to God.

⁹Therefore we also have as our **ambition**, whether at home or absent, **to be pleasing to Him**. 2 Cor 5:9

⁷But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, ⁹and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, ¹⁰that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; ¹¹in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. ¹²Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, **but I press on** so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. ¹³Brethren, **I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus**. Phil 3:7-14

¹Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us *instruction* as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that **you excel still more**. 1 Thess 4:1

This involves striving to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

⁸... walk as children of Light ⁹(for the fruit of the Light *consists* in all goodness and righteousness and truth), ¹⁰trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Eph 5:8-10

This involves seeking the approval of God not man.

³For our exhortation does not *come* from error or impurity or by way of deceit; ⁴but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, **not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts**.

⁵For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness— ⁶**nor did we seek glory from men**, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. 1 Thess 2:3-6

This involves walking in a manner worthy of the Lord (obedience), bearing fruit, and knowing God better.

⁹For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰so that you will **walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God**; Col 1:9-10

¹⁵Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. ¹⁶And do not neglect doing good and sharing, **for with such sacrifices God is pleased**. Heb 13:15-16

²¹Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; ²²and whatever we ask we receive from Him, **because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight**. 1 John 3:21-22

This involves a proper, eternal focus.

⁴No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that **he may please the one who enlisted him** as a soldier. 2 Tim 2:4

This involves a choice to forsake sin and walk in obedience.

¹¹Even so **consider** yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, ¹³and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace. Rom 6:11-14

⁵Therefore **consider** the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. ⁶For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, ⁷and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, since you **laid aside the old self with its evil practices**, ¹⁰**and have put on the new self** who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him— Col 3:5-10

²²that, in reference to your former manner of life, you **lay aside the old self**, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, ²³and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴and **put on the new self**, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Eph 4:22-24

A maturing believer strives moment-by-moment to be pleasing to the Lord.

21. Self-controlled (Titus 1:8)

εγκρατε | σ: 1) strong, robust; 2) having power over, possessed of (a thing); 3) mastering, controlling, curbing, restraining

Sin desires to master us.

⁷“If you do well, will not *your countenance* be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.” Gen. 4:7

We must choose to present ourselves to God as instruments of righteousness.

¹¹Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, ¹³and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace. Rom 6:11-14

We must exercise self-control as we discipline ourselves for the purpose of godliness.

²⁵Everyone who competes in the games **exercises self-control in all things**. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; ²⁷but I **discipline my body and make it my slave**, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified. 1 Cor 9:25-27

⁶In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, *constantly* nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following. ⁷But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, **discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness**; ⁸for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come. ⁹It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. ¹⁰For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers. 1 Tim. 4:6-10

The maturing believer exercises self-control and discipline for the purpose of godliness.