

A couple of weeks ago, when we began to look at how Jesus serves as our example on how to embody God's communicable attributes in our daily lives, we opened with an attribute that is safe. The very foundation of God's grace is that it is broad and deep and available to all. If we have a proper understanding of God's grace, we realize that it isn't an excuse to excuse or justify sin. With that fundamental truth in place, we are called to seek opportunities to exceedingly meet the needs of others without thought of personal cost or benefit.

Last week, we looked at an attribute that requires more caution. Holy jealousy and zeal for the Lord must not be confused with human jealousy. We must make sure that our motivation is the glory of the Lord and not selfish or self-righteous gain. We must also ensure that when we act in zeal, that we do so in such a way that we do not bring disgrace to God, lest we become like the very thing we oppose.

This week, we address another attribute that demands diligence and a firm biblical understanding. Remember, while we are redeemed sinners who have been made new creations, we still war with our own fleshly desires and must always make sure that we are fully surrendered to God as we seek to embody his greatness for others to see. Unfortunately, throughout the Church's history we have struggled in those efforts. However, that is not a reason to continue pressing forward towards the heavenly call we have received to be like Christ Jesus, our Lord.

So join me as we look at personifying God's judgment.

Scripture: John 8:15

I. Jesus: God's Judge

A. **Human judgment VS Holy judgment**

1. Qualities

a) Pervertible VS Perfect

(1) We lack omniscience

(a) We don't know all the facts

(2) We struggle with motivation

(a) We judge others to exalt ourselves rather than judging to bring about repentance

(3) We struggle with objectivity

(a) We often identify with the person and allow our personal shortcomings to cloud our judgment

(i) Too lenient (self-indulgence)

(ii) Too harsh (self-hatred)

(4) We struggle with hypocrisy

(a) Awareness of our failings prevents us from being bold

(b) Unawareness of our failings prevents us from being effective

2. Qualifications

a) Authority

- (1) While we have been given authority by Jesus, our authority is still less than his
- b) Identified with what is good and right
 - (1) While we have been made new and called to holy living we still sin
- c) Wisdom to discern truth
 - (1) While we have God's Word we often mutilate, misrepresent, and mistakenly use it
- d) Power to impose and execute sentence
 - (1) While we may proclaim the sentence, we lack the power to impose and execute it

B. How we judge

1. Who we are judging

- a) Professing believers
 - (1) Obligation of every Christian
 - (a) Matt. 12:33 (a tree is recognized by its fruit)
 - (b) Luke 3:8-9 (produce fruit consistent with repentance)
 - (c) John 15:1-16 (produce or be pruned, productivity dependent upon remaining in Christ)
 - (2) Object lesson
 - (a) Nicodemus (John 3:1-21)
 - (i) Pharisee
 - (ii) 2 Timothy 3:16 (Teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness)
 - (iii) John 3:18 (No condemnation)
- b) Pagans
 - (1) Opportunity for every Christian
 - (a) Rom. 2:4 (Kindness leads to repentance)
 - (b) John 3:19 (Confession & Repentance or Condemnation their choice not yours)
 - (2) Object lesson
 - (a) Samaritan woman
 - (i) Misguided
 - (ii) John 4:13-14 (Offer hope rather than condemnation)
 - (iii) John 4:17-18 (Gently help them see their sin)
 - (iv) John 4:26 (Introduce them to Jesus)
 - (v) No condemnation just truth in love

Just as displaying holy jealousy rather than human jealousy is a tall order, so is exercising holy judgment rather than human judgmentalism a difficult task. We must check our egos at the door and we must make sure our motivation and manner is in keeping with what we see in Jesus.

Too many times, we judge because it makes us feel better about ourselves. When Jesus judged he did so to produce belief in the Savior on the part of the judged not to promote or boost the self-esteem of the judge.

As Christians we are well aware of the fact that one day all of humanity will stand before the one holy judge. We recognize the biblical truth that on that day, the confession and profession of those who are lost that Jesus is King will be too late. Therefore, we should understand the importance of coming to Christ while there is still time.

Because we are sinners who have been forgiven much and because we have the example of Jesus, we have no excuse for our spirit of condemnation or even glee when we see others suffering because they are enslaved to sin. Our hearts must be like that of our Lord as we judge. It must be broken for the professing believer who is being unfruitful and for the pagan who is unbelieving.

If that is not where your heart is, you need to use our time of invitation to come and repent. If your heart is hardened, judgmental, and condemnatory toward those who need to experience God's kindness and hear the message of his hope in the person of Jesus, you are sinning in your judgment. "For with the judgment you use, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."