

Tommy Meador / General

The Gospel of Luke / Luke 6:37–42

---

## Introduction

- <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2019/04/20/the-worst-jobs-in-america/39364439/> Top 25 worst jobs - 25. Photographer... 10. Painter - logs of risk for an average of 40K per year... 5. Enlisted military personnel - high level of stress, little pay... 1. Taxi driver - \$25,000 per year... My no. 1 - Little league baseball umpire - everyone yelling at you because everyone knows more about baseball than you do. As an umpire - you open yourself up to constant criticism.
- You've been the recipient of negative criticism - Criticism from someone who thought they knew better than you - who told you that something was wrong with you, someone who pointed out your shortcomings in a way that was hurtful.
- You've given negative criticism - you've pointed out the flaws of someone else in a way that was judgmental - in a way that demeaned and defamed someone else.
- You've also received and given helpful criticism - someone who out of love and compassion helped you to see an area of your life that needed some work. That helpful criticism might have hurt in the moment, but you are thankful that someone loved you enough to help you see your sin. (The wounds of a friend are trustworthy... [Prov. 27:5](#))
- How do we criticize in a way that is helpful and how do we avoid criticizing in a way that is hurtful and judgmental?
- This week, you're going to be put in positions to be tempted to give hurtful, judgmental criticism. You're also going to have opportunities to give helpful criticism. This morning, three steps to take before you criticize:

# Before you criticize check your motivation.

- Do not judge - American culture doesn't know much of the Bible, but American culture DOES know this verse... And they know it in the KJV: "Judge not, lest ye be judged."
- In eyes of the world, JUDGING others is the ULTIMATE sin... "Who are you to judge me? Who are you to tell me that my lifestyle is wrong?" If you judge someone for living a lifestyle that is NOT consistent with God's Word, you're labeled as a bigot.
- Jesus NOT telling us to NEVER judge. It's necessary to evaluate/judge. We're called to judge rightly. You need to be able to say, "This is right" and "This is wrong." That requires judgment.
- Jesus mainly concerned about our hearts - concerned with us being judgmental - an attitude of the heart that constantly points out the flaws of others in a way that condemns.
- **Judgmental person** - fast to point out fault, treats people unfairly, doesn't give the benefit of doubt, doesn't extend grace, puts people in the worst possible light, slow to forgive, doesn't overlook offenses ([Prov. 19:11](#)) but points out every offense.
- **A judgmental person condemns.** Instead of overlooking flaws, or seeking to understand someone and their situation, rashly sit in the seat of judgment and issue punishment. Most often, punish with words... "I can't believe you would..." "You'll never amount to..." "What's wrong with you..." OR, punish by withholding grace and forgiveness and you write the person off as beyond the help of God so you don't share Good News with them.
- **A judgmental person does not forgive.** Doesn't offer a second chance... Holds the fault against that person.
- A follower of Jesus is NOT judgmental. Instead of seeking to negatively criticize or have a judgmental heart, a follower of Jesus gives... gives grace, gives understanding, gives compassion.

- This is HARD - it is far easier to be judgmental than it is to be gracious, kind, and compassionate.
- BUT - the follower of Jesus knows what it's like to have God withhold judgment. The follower of Jesus knows what it's like to receive grace. A judgmental heart MAY be evidence that you do not know the grace of God.
- vs. 38 - A person who is generous with compassion, grace, mercy, and kindness can know that God will be gracious with you.
- Before you offer criticism, check your motivation. We're judgmental because we're more concerned about people living up to OUR standard than God's standard. A judgmental person puts himself/herself in the place of God. A judgmental person punishes people who don't live up to their standard. People are not called to live your standard, they are called to live to God's standard.
- **Judgmental criticism is not the outflow of a loving heart.** Instead, it's the outflow of an angry heart or a prideful heart. Out of anger, you hurt with your words. You judge without knowing all the facts - you just see your standard has been violated - but you don't know the heart of the person you criticize, how God is at work in them, etc. You're just mad that they didn't accomplish your will.
- **Judgmental criticism is aimed at the person and not the issue.** E.g., You come home and your child's room is a disaster. "You're a slob..." That's aimed at the person - not the issue - You've beat down instead of building up. You've condemned instead of offering grace and working toward a resolution.
- The motivation of judgmental criticism is to let others know they have violated your standard, and they will pay. Check your motivation. If you are criticizing out of anger because your standard was not met, and if your goal in criticism is to make your voice heard by hurting the person who didn't live up to your standards, you are guilty of violating [Luke 6:37](#).

## Before you criticize look at your own

# life.

- A parable: Can the blind guide the blind? vs. 39-40 - Jesus calling His disciples to put their eyes on Him. It is IMPOSSIBLE to not have a judgmental heart without the help of Jesus. In a culture that was full of spiritually blind leaders (e.g., the Pharisees), Jesus' followers needed to fix their eyes on Him. Only Jesus can help us to see our own judgmental hearts, and only Jesus can teach us how to give mercy, compassion, and forgiveness like He does.
- An illustration: Log/speck - hyperbole - the point: you must constantly self-examine.
- We're quick to point out the specks - the minor flaws in others that agitate us - (the way your husband doesn't put up the dishes, the way your wife doesn't show you affection exactly how you want it - the way your professor doesn't give you the perfect study guide like that other professor does...) We're always nitpicking... never satisfied with people.
- Jesus: Look inward. If all you do is point out the shortcomings of others, you have a much bigger problem. Deal with your condemning heart - look at the log in your eye. We're quick to point out the flaws of others and slow to deal with our own flaws.
- Jesus' statement seems absurd. How can you miss the log in you own eye? How can you miss a log-sized flaw in your own heart? Easy: if you are hyper-focused on everyone living up to your standard you will be blind to God's standard for your own life.
- This may be your problem this morning: You're so bent on your own way and people living your way that you are forsaking God's way.
- **Be more concerned with God's standard than your own standard.** If you look at the long in your own eye, you'd actually see that you can't live up to God's standard. You'd see that because of your inability to live up to God's standard, you are the one who is deserving of condemnation. You desperately need the grace, mercy, compassion, and forgiveness that you are unwilling to give to others.
- **Be more concerned with fixing yourself than fixing others.** You might be quick to point out the flaws of others, but you're the one who

needs the work! You're the one who needs a changed heart! You need to be far more concerned with you're own besetting sins than you with pointing out the flaws of others. (Ill. - refusal to sort laundry bigger than slowness of getting it done.)

## Before you criticize establish the right goal.

- Jesus is warning us against judgmental criticism that reveals a prideful, unloving, and unforgiving heart.
  - BUT... there are times when criticism is helpful - constructive criticism that helps people to grow in their faith. I'm thankful for people in my life who had the courage to graciously and compassionately point out sin and my life and help me grow.
  - Jesus doesn't discourage criticism with the right goal in mind (vs. 42). He's simply calling us to remove the log out of our own eye BEFORE we provide helpful criticism to others.
  - The goal of helpful criticism is to help someone overcome sin and grow in their walk with the Lord. The heart behind helpful criticism is a heart of compassion and love for a brother/sister in Christ.
  - How can we offer helpful criticism rather than judgmental criticism?
1. **Repent of judgmental criticism.** If you are that person who is constantly pointing out the flaws of others while never dealing with your own sin, today is the day to repent. Repent of calling people to live to your standard instead of helping people to live to God's standard.
  2. **Pray for those you disagree with.** Instead of immediately judging, immediately pray. Lots of things that you tend to judge critically aren't necessary sinful things. Sometimes, it's just a matter of preference. Sometimes, you just don't agree with a decision your spouse makes, or your pastor makes, or your church makes. Instead of criticizing, pray. If it is a matter of a sinful issue, pray for God to give you wisdom as to how to restore that person ([Galatians 6:1](#)).

3. **Keep your opinions to yourself.** You have lots of opinions about how people should live, and many of your thoughts about how people should live are opinions based on your preferences NOT convictions based on Scripture. You DON'T have to share all of your opinions about the way others are living their lives. Most of your opinions you SHOULDN'T share.
4. **When rebuke is necessary do it with love and compassion.** Hold people accountable, but when you confront someone in their sin, confront that person in the same way you'd want to be confronted. Be quick to point out your own flaws and struggles. None of us are perfect.
5. **Give an abundance of grace.** I'm going to mess up. I need your grace. You're going to mess up. You need my grace. We need grace far more than we need judgmental words. Give second chances, give the benefit of the doubt. Assume the best of people instead of always assuming the worst. What would your home look like if grace abounded instead of judgmental criticism?
  - When we give grace we imitate the true Judge who extends grace to all. The Good News is the Judge who has every right to send you to hell, instead offers you grace and forgiveness. If you believe that Jesus died and rose again for you as a sacrifice for your sins, you will receive the gift of eternal life. In Christ, there is no condemnation ([Romans 8:1](#)). Turn to Him today.