

START STOPPING

YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU DID... OR WISH YOU HAD

Discussion Questions for May 17, 2020: STOP JUDGING, START DISCERNING

1. How many of you can remember a specific time in your life when you were judged, criticized or condemned? How did it feel? Did it make you angry, hurt, or just frustrated.
2. Read what Jesus said from Matthew 7: 1-6. What Jesus said here seems **very** clear - in terms of what we're to **stop** doing - and **why**. Why is it that we seem to keep **doing** it - at least based on the number one criticism of Christianity in general - and the behavior of Christians, specifically?
3. Jesus' comment about trying to get out of someone else's eye when you have a plank in your own **is** funny when you visualize an ophthalmologist trying help someone get a speck of sawdust out of their eye - when they have a 2 X 4 attached to their head - smashing everything in sight! First century humour! Ken identified the plank, the 2 X 4 as superiority and pride. What do **you** think it is? What is it that would qualify us to help someone else?
4. Talk about the **boomerang effect**.
What do you think Jesus meant in Matthew 7:1 and Luke 6:37-38 when He talked about how the judging and giving, and forgiving we pass out getting shoveled back into our lives with the same measure? Have you see either of these happen in your life?
5. Ken gave 8 reasons **why** we shouldn't judge:
 - 1) You don't have all the evidence
 - 2) It's not your job
 - 3) God didn't ask you to do it - or ask for your help
 - 4) It will boomerang; i.e., you **will** be judged
 - 5) It's not based on grace - it's based on pride and superiority
 - 6) Pride of any kind puts a target on your back (the proud will be humbled)
 - 7) Judging others is about **you** - not **them**
 - 8) It alienates people from the One they need most: JesusDo you agree with these? Are there other reasons, too?
6. Reread the section of this passage where Jesus warns us about giving what's sacred to dogs and throwing pearls to pigs. Ken suggested that this has to do with **discernment**; about understand the value of the gifts God gives - like the chance to love and influence others - and using it to hurt people instead. Does that seem like a reasonable understanding of what Jesus was saying? What would be a better interpretation?
7. Jesus gave a filter than we can use to evaluate how we handle people's lives:
In everything, do to others what you would want them to do to you. (Matthew 7:12)
Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13, that if you don't know how to love - you're nothing. How does this fit here? How can we **stop judging**?