

Becoming like Jesus in our acceptance of non-believers (Based on Chapter 18 of *Costly Grace*)

The Big Idea

Our righteousness comes from our union with Jesus and nothing else. Therefore, we have no right to judge others because they lack righteousness.

Biblical Foundation

Do not judge others, so that God will not judge you, for God will judge you in the same way you judge others, and he will apply to you the same rules you apply to others. Why, then, do you look at the speck in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the log in your own eye? How dare you say to your brother, "Please, let me take that speck out of your eye," when you have a log in your own eye? You hypocrite! First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will be able to see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. Matthew 7:1-12 (TEV)

We can never use our righteousness as a measurement applied against how other people live their lives. In other words, we have no basis for a holier-than-thou approach; our approach should always be, "There but for the grace of God go I."

Describe what you think these two approaches look like.

Because we belong to Jesus, we can no longer judge others independent of Jesus. We must see them through his eyes. The apostle Paul says this means we no longer judge them by human standards. What do you think this means? Do you think it has to do with the fact that others are created by God and destined for an eternity in heaven or hell?

God shows us the faults and weaknesses of others so we can pray for them. Oswald Chambers, in *My Utmost for His Highest*, says: "When we discern that other people are not growing spiritually and allow that discernment to turn to criticism, we block our fellowship with God. God never gives us discernment so that we may criticize, but that we may intercede." Why would God do that?

Discuss This

The disciples can only reach others *for* Jesus *through* Jesus. We should stop being so impressed with those who carry the anointing of God and instead be impressed by the God who is able to anoint those of his choosing.

"Elijah was a *man just like us*. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops" (James 5:17-18 NIV, italics mine).