

Holy Week Devotions—Monday: Judging



“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” Matthew 7:1-2

“To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:28

For our first devotion for Holy Week, we are looking at the beginning stanza of this poem: See [here](#) for the complete poem.

FAST from judging others: FEAST on Christ dwelling in me.

This is a good reminder for me. It's all too easy to **judge** my family, friends, and people I see as I go about my day. Peoples' appearances, language, lifestyle choices, and behavior can all have me rendering a split-second judgment when I have only a minuscule piece of the total picture of their lives. Would I want to be judged and found wanting in the same way that it is so easy for me to do to others?

The Bible tells us in 1 Samuel 16:7 that man looks at the outside of the person, but God looks at the heart. That's exactly what Jesus did. Jesus often seemed to seek out the people who had been judged and found wanting in Jewish society.

One such person was Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus would not have won

any popularity contests in his village. As a chief tax collector, he was despised by his neighbors. Jesus created quite a stir when He invited Himself to Zacchaeus' house for dinner. Luke 19:7 tells us that the town was buzzing about Jesus' choice of a dinner companion.

Or how about the Samaritan woman Jesus met at the local well in John 4 at the sixth hour (about 12 p.m.) of the day? The very fact that the woman was getting her water at that time was unusual. Women were usually at the well when it was coolest outside—in the early morning and evening. She was there at a time when not many other people would be there. She was living an immoral lifestyle and was most likely rejected because of that, so she probably didn't want to risk seeing the stares and hearing the whispers behind her back. Besides that fact, she was a Samaritan, and Jews would not associate with Samaritans.

Jesus knew that both this woman and Zacchaeus needed an encounter with forgiveness, and He freely offered it to both of them. Jesus didn't reject a person based on their standing in the community; neither did He overlook the sin in a person's life. He always dealt with it.

That's a good distinction for us to make too. We need to address the difference between judging someone and speaking the truth in love. The one God may call us to do, the other He doesn't. When we judge someone, we are making a decision that only God can make about a person—the personal state of their heart. That's different than speaking the truth in love when a person that we know is living in a sinful situation. God may give us the go-ahead to address that sin with the person—especially a family member or close friend that we know well. Always approach that talk with prayer, a **humble spirit**, and in God's timing. If God has laid it on your heart to have that difficult conversation about a person's situation/behavior, that's different than a quick pass of judgment that we can be prone to doing based on outward

circumstances.

So, today, we want to put the focus on Christ dwelling in us. That means we take our eyes off of others and ourselves and put them on Jesus. The very fact that the Holy Spirit dwells in us (see John 16:12-15) is what makes Christianity different from all other religions. As Christ-followers, we have the amazing reality of Christ living in us as the Holy Spirit. We can change because we have God's power at work in us. In John 16:12-15, Jesus introduces this cataclysmic coming change to his followers. The Holy Spirit guides us into all truth, teaches us, and changes us. Because of Him, we can lead an abundant life of serving the Lord.

Application: What is it in your life that would benefit from remembering you have "Christ in you, the hope of glory" in your life? What situation do you need a fresh dose of Christ's transforming power in? Pray for a transformation of a situation, a heart, an attitude today.

Prayer: Lord, we pray that we would not take upon ourselves the job of judging others. Instead, may our focus and our eyes be on You. Fill us up and transform our lives to Your glory. Amen.

If you'd like to study more about judging and how that affects people, here's a link to an Outcast Bible study Mary wrote dealing with this topic.

Image courtesy of Salvatore Vuono / FreeDigitalPhotos.net