

# Judgement in Conflict

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 06 October 2024

Preacher: Dave Nannery

- [ 0 : 00 ]     Calling all the kids up through, including grade 6. So I'm working with Carrie today to teach on Matthew 2 and Luke 2, which is Jesus' dedication, where Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the temple to be dedicated, and of course they meet Anna and Simeon there.
- And they sacrifice two birds, which of course was the least of all the sacrifices, which is an indication of just how poor they were after Jesus having been born in the stable.
- So humble beginnings for sure. Please join me in prayer for these kids. Lord, thank you for these kids. Thank you for the opportunity to teach them, Lord.
- And you ask us to do this, and we don't do it perfectly, but you use us to teach the truth of your word to them, God.
- And we know that it is you who changes their hearts. It is you who does the saving. And there's some relief in that, because we certainly don't do the job of teaching perfectly, Lord, and yet we want to do it well.
- [ 1 : 09 ]     And so I ask for your help in teaching them well, God. I pray for their hearts, that you would soften each one, and that all of these kids would become saved, Lord, over time and in accordance with your plan.
- In your name, amen. Well, I'm glad everyone has made it out today.
- I just kept hearing story after story this past week of people coming down with, what is it, cold flu, COVID season has hit us hard, including me. So I was hit with that this past week as well.
- And so I'm grateful that we actually have a fairly good turnout today. So glad to see you all here. And for those who are sick and at home, we're glad that you're able to join us by live stream.
- We're going to be learning today. This is going to be the first of a two-week series on conflict. And so let me start with praying to God and asking for his wisdom and help as I prepare to preach.
- [ 2 : 27 ]     Father, thank you that I have this opportunity to, I've had this opportunity to study your word, to consider it, mull over it, take it to heart.
- And I pray, Lord God, I know that you and your spirit have been at work in the preparation. And I pray even now, may your spirit be at work in the delivery.
- Hold me back from saying anything foolish or untrue. If there is more that needs to be said, would you supply those words? For all of us here who are hearing this message, give us ears to hear, eyes to see, hearts to understand.
- Lord God, we often have a tendency to apply what we hear to other people and to evaluate them. Lord, let us first evaluate our own hearts.
- Let us not stand in judgment of your word, but let it stand in judgment of us. And I pray, oh Lord God, that you may begin a work of transforming us.

[ 3 : 27 ] Make us become, in fact, what we are by your declaration, that all those who believe in Christ are forgiven of their sins and are saved. Amen. Okay, for those who don't know, my name is Dave Nannery.

I am the associate pastor here at our church. And I am, for the next two weeks, preaching as BK is away on a cruise, taking a much, much, much needed rest with his wife as they are out there navigating the high seas of the Pacific Ocean.

So, speaking of high seas, we're going to have an awkward segue into the high seas of personal conflict. Has anyone, we'll do a bit of a show of hands, we're going to see how honest of a church we are here.

Has anyone had any personal conflicts this week, no matter how small? No? Oh, some of you. No matter how small, even little disagreements, you know, little tiffs.

How about has anyone made any judgments about another person, no matter how small? Well, I'm going to be honest, if you don't have your hand up, you're a liar. How about since you woke up this morning?

[ 4 : 47 ] Have any judgments happened? All right, we've got one bold, honest person here this morning. A lot of times, so the reason I'm asking this is, I'll be honest, I think if you don't have your hand up, either you're living in a box without contact with any other people, or you might not be aware of all these little conflicts, little judgments that are happening in our heart constantly in our relationships.

And it just seems that if we really open our eyes and see what we're doing, it seems that we can't go through life without judging. There is a sense on a basic level in which we're constantly making all of these little assessments about one another.

The pastor gets up there and you're like, well, yep, that's the guy with not much of a hairline there, right? We walk into church, we see someone's car, we see someone's dress, we see here the way someone talks, and we make little judgments.

They might be judgments of, oh, I really like that, that's a good person. Or, oh, I don't like that, oh, what's wrong with them? But either way, good or bad, we're just constantly making little judgments all the time.

And so, because of that, one of the most popular verses in the Bible that people absolutely love to quote is Matthew chapter 7, verse 1, where Jesus, in the middle of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, judge not that you be not judged.

[ 6 : 22 ] Judge not that you be not judged. Now, what are we supposed to do about that? How do we go through life just never making any judgments at all?

Is that practical? Why would Jesus say something like this? What does he mean? Let's read the whole passage. We're going to, not the whole Sermon on the Mount, but Matthew chapter 7, verses 1 through 12.

Turn there in your Bible, and if you're using one of the Bibles, our usher's handout, you'll see this on page 812. Page 812. And I'm going to read verses 1 through 12 of Matthew chapter 7.

Judge not that you be not judged. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?

Or how can you say to your brother, let me take the speck out of your eye, when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite.

[ 7 : 37 ] First, take the log in your own eye. First, take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds.

And to the one who knocks, it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent?

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him?

So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them. For this is the law and the prophets. This is God's word to us this morning, and we're going to spend this Sunday, and then we're going to come back again next Sunday and spend some time in this passage talking about our personal conflicts and what Jesus has to say about them.

[ 9 : 00 ] Next week, we will talk about the wisdom that we need in these conflicts. That's something Jesus speaks about here, that they take a lot of wisdom in knowing how to respond in relationships, especially ones that we find difficult.

This week, we're going to talk about the problem of judgment in our conflicts. A few weeks ago, I was preaching a sermon on the way of an excellent family, and I mentioned that the popular marriage counselors, John and Julie Gottman, they're well known for describing what they call the four horsemen that destroy a marriage.

These four horsemen of criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling. And the first horseman, that one called criticism, they described as it's attacking the other person at the core of their character and their being.

Attacking the other person at the core of their character and their being. So it's saying things, it's not just merely just offering a critique of the other person, constructive criticism. It's saying things like this.

You never think about how your behavior is affecting other people. You're not just forgetful, you're selfish. You don't care about me at all. That's not exactly constructive, is it?

[ 10 : 21 ] We all know how much these words can hurt when we're on the receiving end of them. They feel like weapons wielded against us. We also know what it feels like to deliver them to others.

In that moment, you're not thinking about how destructive it is. This feels right and righteous and good and powerful. I believe what Jesus is getting at when he says, judge not that you be not judged.

He's talking about this very thing. Now, he isn't talking when he says about judging. He isn't talking about any sort of judgment, right? For example, there are judgments you have to make.

Assessing right and wrong. Discerning truth and error. Discriminating between good and bad. In verses 5 and 6, Jesus encourages us to help fix problems we see in other people.

Then he tells a couple of little proverbs in which he invites us to see, you know, the reality is some people behave like dogs and pigs, right? So Jesus not only commends these sorts of assessments, he commands them.

[ 11 : 34 ] In that sense, we are meant to judge. We're supposed to. You've got eyes, use them. Neither is Jesus saying, keep your morals to yourself.

That is often what is meant when people quote this verse. After all, that very statement, judge not, is that not a moral statement?

Is that not a command? Jesus is perfectly willing to push his morals on other people. When people say, don't judge me, usually what they mean is get off my back.

Don't tell me I'm doing something bad. When people quote this verse to shut you down and shut you up, to silence what God has to say, they're abusing the words of Christ.

Those who abuse Jesus' words will be called into account for that by God. No, the sort of judgment that Jesus is condemning, it's not those sorts of judgments.

[ 12 : 36 ] It's not having a moral compass. It's not assessing right and wrong, truth and error, good and bad. The sort of judgment that Jesus is condemning is much more like that horseman called criticism.

It's what we might call a judgmental spirit. We saw that earlier in the passage Chris read this morning from James chapters 3 and 4, and you can think of that passage from the book of James as James' commentary on Jesus' words here.

And what James is absolutely getting at is that judgmental, demanding spirit. What does it mean? What does it mean to have a judgmental spirit?

If you want me to supply a tight definition, I don't know that I really can. This is one of those things, you know it when you see it. You felt it. You've been on the receiving end of it, and you know what it feels like.

And maybe you know what it feels like to be on the giving end of it. Maybe the best way to learn it is by watching Jesus paint a picture of it. Here in Matthew chapter 7, in verses 1 through 5, Jesus paints a picture of what a judgmental spirit looks like.

[ 13 : 51 ] In verse 5, he says, Unless you first take the log out of your own eye, you won't see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. If you want to have a judgmental spirit, well, easy.

Just do the opposite. Listen, assume, make the assumption, Hey, I already see clearly. I can simply go right up to my brother and jam my finger right in their eye.

I don't know why are they getting all defensive. What's their problem? Ever had somebody poke their finger in your eye before? How did you react? A judgmental spirit will always provoke a defense.

A judgmental spirit genuinely believes, You know what? I see my brother clearly. It carries with it this sense... I often tell people, One of the signs I can tell in my own heart when I'm angry and not is this sense of absolute moral clarity.

I'm in the right. They're in the wrong. This is so clear. And I feel so empowered. By my sense of moral clarity, there is no way I could be wrong.

[ 15 : 02 ] They're messed up. Let me jam my finger right in there and fix them. This so-called clarity comes out in the words we use.

The words are often harsh. The words sometimes get offensive. There is an intensity to them. This false clarity comes from a sense of superiority.

And you can just feel that sense of superiority just dripping off the page in verse 4 when Jesus says, How can you say to your brother, Let me take the speck out of your...

I. As though you're the expert optometrist here. And you're helping, Oh, that poor deluded patient of yours who's so messed up. Let me fix you.

A judgmental spirit comes across as a superior spirit. And so a judgmental spirit rushes in to criticize. Let me take the speck out of your eye. That's the first action such a person takes.

[ 16 : 06 ] You see a problem. You're happy to point it out. You're happy to tell the other person how messed up they are. How to fix it. What they ought to be doing differently. What they owe you.

And in fact, a judgmental person never bothers to examine himself or herself first. In verse 3, Jesus says that you do not notice the log that is in your own eye.

You don't even see it. You're not even aware it's there. What's the problem? That's how our vision can work sometimes. We think we see clearly when in fact we don't.

I remember a time, not quite 20 years ago, I was in my early 20s, and I had always thought I had 20-20 vision. You know, I was able to drive and do everything any normal person could do.

And then one day I was out eating lunch with some friends outdoors at a cafe. And as a joke, I borrowed a friend's glasses and put them on. And I made the comment, wow, that grass over there, I can see every single blade of grass.

[ 17 : 12 ] And everyone said, yeah. And in that moment, I realized something. I, my whole life I had not been seeing clearly, but I thought I had.

I did not have 20-20 vision. Some of you have gone through surgery to have cataracts removed from your eyes. And only then, when that happened, did you realize how bad your vision had really gotten.

A judgmental spirit doesn't do that work of self-examination first. It assumes it has 20-20 vision.

It assumes I've got it all right. And it just charges in and fixes the other person who's got it all wrong. And why does a judgmental spirit skip that first important step?

Why not examine our own attitudes and actions first? What could it cost us to do that? There's a reason we skip that first step, and it's because we have forgotten something important.

[ 18 : 18 ] We have forgotten that we are also people under judgment. Consider what Jesus says in verse two. For with the judgment you pronounce, you will be judged.

And with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Notice Jesus' assessment of judge not, that you be not judged, his assessment isn't, as long as you don't judge other people, you won't ever be judged.

His assessment is, you will be judged, period, no matter what. How would you like to be judged? In that moment of criticism, that moment where the judgmental spirit just takes over, you're forgetting something important.

You, too, stand under the judgment of God. You, too, answer to God. And you will be called into account for every act and every word and every thought within you.

That's what we read in Ecclesiastes chapter 12, verse 14. God will bring every deed into judgment with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

[ 19 : 35 ] Perhaps you can avoid the gaze of other people and hide from them, but you cannot from God. We are told that nothing and no one escapes his notice.

In Proverbs 15, verse 3, we read, The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good. The judgmental heart has forgotten this.

Even if for only a few minutes, it has completely forgotten this truth. It takes for itself the seat of judgment over another person. It forgets, this is not our place.

As Chris read in James chapter 4, there is only one lawgiver and judge. You and I and whatever other person you find yourself criticizing, all of us stand together under the judgment of God.

And oh, how quickly we forget this. The moment we forget, we immediately slip into a judgmental spirit.

[ 20 : 47 ] As we are warned in Proverbs chapter 15, a soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouths of fools pour out folly.

A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit. What is the harsh word, the folly, the perverse tongue that is full of judgment in conflict?

What does that look like? Well, one of the books that we were giving away at the family conference is titled Marriage Matters. The author is Winston Smith, and he lists just a few ways that a judgmental spirit will speak.

A judgmental spirit speaks in exaggerations. It loves the words only, always, never. Here's a personal challenge.

Try getting into a fight with your spouse without ever using the words only, always, never. See how far you get. Those words we use precisely because they are so powerful in their judgment.

[ 22 : 02 ] You only care about yourself. You always make us late to things. You never pay attention when I speak. These exaggerations are foolish and perverse.

A judgmental spirit speaks using trait names or labels. You are a liar. You jerk. You're a horrible person. It loves to win fights by labeling the other person.

Its harsh words only serve to stir up anger when it uses these labels and trait names. A judgmental spirit tries to read minds. I know why you did that.

I know what you're up to. I see what you're doing. A spirit of suspicion so contrary to love that we saw in 1 Corinthians 13 that love believes all things that love's heart is not to read minds like that but a spirit that is eager to unmask and expose the evil intent of the other person.

I'm not saying there isn't a place to question other people's motives but a judgmental spirit rushes to that as though we have the Lord's eyes to know what evil lurks in the hearts of men.

[ 23 : 20 ] This sort of mind reading is not wisdom it's folly. And finally a judgmental spirit uses shame as a weapon to win fights.

You want to know how sick you are? Let me tell you. I'm going to let everyone here see how bad you are. You need to be put in your place.

Shame ridicule contempt a perverse tongue breaks the spirit of the other person. If you win fights using shame be careful he who lives by the sword will die by it.

If you want to win using shame then shame will be your fate on the day of judgment when you stand exposed in public before the all seeing God.

We cannot build the kingdom using the devil's weapons and the devil's tools. These are not appropriate for the believer.

[ 24 : 25 ] This is not what you were saved to do. Hebrews 10 verse 31 says it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Brothers how then shall we live? What does it mean to let go of a judgmental spirit? What does that mean? What would that even look like?

As we've already hinted at the first thing is that we need to be able to say Lord you be the judge not me not my job.

You be the one to judge my spouse my children my boss and Lord you be the one to judge me. That is the mentality of the apostles of Jesus Christ when they wrote the New Testament.

Just as an aside by the way the Christian teaching on forgiveness is not forgive the other person and just let them get away with everything. The Christian teaching on forgiveness is this vengeance is mine I will repay says the Lord which means getting getting back of the other person making sure they get what they deserve and what's coming to them that's God's job not your job.

[ 25 : 50 ] You can let it go. You can forgive. You can let God deal with them in his way and in his time. That's what forgiveness means. It is letting God do his job and you do yours.

it is the best way to live. Letting God be the judge is so important.

Consider 1 Corinthians chapter 4. Here Paul is responding to a church, the church in Corinth, that is judging Paul and is judging his motives.

If you read 1 and 2 Corinthians it is a master class in how to respond to people who are judging you. Paul is constantly being judged by the Corinthian church and here is what he is writing.

He says, with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, this is wild guys, in fact, I do not even judge myself.

[ 26 : 56 ] you can believe that I use that verse in counseling quite a bit. We love to judge people. We're so intent on judging, we'll even start judging ourselves.

He says, for I'm not aware of anything against myself, but I'm not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore, do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart.

Then each one will receive his commendation from God. That is marvelous.

What if we had that mentality? What if we thought that way? We need to be able to say, let my brother or sister answer to the Lord, not ultimately to me.

Now, yes, there are lines of authority in the church and in the family. There is a sense in which we do answer to one another. But what humbles us in those situations is this.

[ 28 : 15 ] Ultimately, every one of us must answer to the Lord as our judge. Only when we know that each one of us answers to the Lord as our judge, only then can we have a spirit of mercy that triumphs over judgment.

That is why Paul writes in Romans chapter 14. He says in verse 4, who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls, and he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

And again, in verses 10 through 13, why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God, for it is written, as I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore, let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.

We need to be able to say to one another, hey, let's both, brother, sister, let's both be accountable to the Lord together. We will have to answer to him together.

[ 29 : 46 ] Then, and only then, you can now say, can I tell you about the log in my own eye that I've had to confess to God that I need to ask forgiveness for?

Can I help you with the speck in your eye? Then, and only then, can we correct one another. We let God be judge.

I answer to him. You answer to him. We answer together to the living God. And so, we become less judgmental when we let the Lord be the judge.

judge. Now, maybe that seems a bit strange to you. There is a common idea circulating in our culture, and you can understand where it comes from, this idea, churches are full of judgmental people.

I wish I had a nickel for every time I heard that. People love to say things like that. Then, after that, they find out I'm a pastor and immediately start backtracking. It's pretty funny. This view is the churches are full of judgmental people.

- [ 31 : 02 ] People outside the church are a lot less judgmental. Well, for one thing, you may have noticed this becoming less and less true. Our culture is awash in a judgmental spirit.
- People are becoming more and more and more judgmental, more and more willing, especially online and on social media, to label, to attack, to criticize others, more willing to punish those who fail to speak and act exactly as we are told we are supposed to do.
- So, even outside the church, this judgmental spirit is growing and flourishing. But even so, why is it happening within the church?
- How can it be that people can be so judgmental in a place where God is continually honored as the one true law giver and judge? Well, some of the reason is because we bring our worldly ways in with us.
- we've been adopted into God's family, but we still carry some of the judgmental, self-elevating values of our old way of life, our old way of thinking and speaking.
- [ 32 : 29 ] But then second, to be honest, some people are attracted to the Christian faith precisely because of the laws and the rules. Because we do say there is a law that God has given.
- There is a right and wrong. There are commands that need to be followed and obeyed. And for many of us, our hearts love that, but not for the right reasons.
- You see, these laws and rules are good if we let God be the judge, if we are all together underneath these laws. But some people just find God's law to be useful.
- to be useful as a means to stand in judgment over others, to control them, and to look down on them. That is why James warned in James chapter four about you can either be the judge or do the law.
- You can't do both. You can either stand above the law and use it as a tool to get other people to answer to you, or you can stand under the law, submit to it, alongside your brother.
- [ 33 : 46 ] Here's a word of warning. The scholar Don Carson is writing about Jesus' words in Matthew chapter seven. He says, he's paraphrasing Jesus and he says, what Jesus is saying is this, do not assume the place of God by deciding you have the right to stand in judgment over all.
- do not do it, I say, in order to avoid being called to account by the God whose place you usurp. That's what Jesus is saying when he says, judge not that you be not judged.
- For with the judgment you pronounce, you will be judged. With the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Do you really want to take God's job from him?
- Instead, when we in the church let go of a judgmental spirit, our whole demeanor changes. We read earlier, we read earlier from Proverbs chapter 15 verse 1 that a soft answer turns away wrath.
- When we stand together under the judgment of God, our words become less demanding, less condemning, they become patient, persistent, and gentle.
- [ 35 : 08 ] Someone who has taken the log out of their own eye first, now when they move in to take the speck out of their brother's eye, they do so carefully, tenderly, slowly, patiently.
- Someone with unclear eyesight just jams their finger right in there. Proverbs 25 verse 15 says, with patience a ruler may be persuaded and a soft tongue will break a bone.
- The reason this proverb is given to us is precisely because it's counterintuitive. We think if you want to be effective you use strong, powerful, forceful words. And this proverb says you use patience, you use softer words, and those words have a much bigger and more powerful effect to produce real lasting fruit in the other person's life.



We slow down in our speech. When someone does something or fails to do something and then we feel really upset at them, we don't immediately just launch into judgment, we stop.

count to ten if you need to, take a breath if you need to, step out of the room if you need to, consider your own emotions, talk to God about them. Lord, when he said that I just felt so upset, so angry, just something came over me in that moment.

[ 36 : 41 ] Lord, what's going on in me? What am I reacting to here? What was bad in what they said? What was maybe just my own problem?

we talk to God first, then we approach the other person graciously. That's why James chapter one, verses 19 through 20 says, know this, my beloved brothers, let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger, for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Now, James is saying you're slow to speak. He doesn't say don't speak at all. We do not sweep problems under the rug and pretend they're not there. We do not avoid difficult conversations with one another.

Rather, we make every effort to ask the Lord, Lord, what is going on in my anger? What's happening here? And how do I talk to the other person in a way that I can honor them even as I confront them?

How do I honor them even as I confront them? To love one another in conflict, you honor them as best you can, even as you disagree with them and challenge them.

[ 38 : 09 ] Rather than pointing the finger and telling the other person, here's what you did, we point the finger at ourselves. Now, when you did that, I felt sad and upset.

Can I tell you what I think I was reacting to? Can we talk about what just happened? Notice how different that way of responding is, from pointing the finger at the other person to pointing at our own reactions and responses.

Can we talk about what just happened? Our words become more humble. people. We approach one another with curiosity, trying to understand each other, trying to sort out why are we thinking differently?

Is there anything that we, you need to repent of, anything I need to repent of? What needs to be forgiven here? What do I need to ask forgiveness for? When we stop taking God's job as judge, we are free to do our job of reconciliation.

That's what it means to let go of a judgmental spirit. So maybe you're asking, how do I begin? How do I go back to that conflict and do it differently this time?

[ 39 : 31 ] What do I do to escape a judgmental spirit? First, you pray, you tell the Lord that you are now submitting to his judgment.

You can pray to him something like this, Lord, it's a very small thing that I should be judged by any man. It's a very small thing that I should judge them.

It is not even my place to judge myself, Lord. You are the one who is judge of both of us. Lord, you be the one to bring to light what is hidden in darkness, not my job.

Lord, you be the one to uncover the purposes of our hearts. Lord, if we're going to be commended and honored and affirmed, Lord, let us receive that from you and from you alone.

Lord, let us not demand that from one another and let us not do that ourselves. You then continue to pray and ask God for his wisdom and his help.

[ 40 : 49 ] You're going to need a lot of wisdom and a lot of help. We'll talk more about that next week. But in Matthew chapter 7, verses 7 through 11, there's a reason Jesus says these words right here.

Ask, and it will be given to you. seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives, and the one who seeks, finds, and to the one who knocks, it will be opened.

Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him?

It's that simple. God is a good father. Look, even fathers who aren't that great know how to give good gifts to their children.

does not your heavenly father know how to give good things to you? In that moment, when you are approaching him with that spirit of submission and humility, you be the judge, Lord, not me, how do I respond to this person that I'm upset at?

[ 42 : 20 ] You can ask your heavenly father these questions and he will answer them. You can ask him, Lord, what is my role here? Am I the one to correct my brother or sister?

Is that my job or is that someone else's job? What can I say to them? Lord, how do I say it? What's not helpful to say? What words should I just not say at all?

Lord, is there any way that I have sinned against them in this situation? Is there anything I need to confess first and ask forgiveness of you for?

Is there anything I need to confess to them and ask them to forgive me for first? Lord, is there anyone I should talk to for advice on how to speak?

And finally, you can mull over this question. How would I want to be approached by someone else if I were the guilty party? Now think about this.

[ 43 : 28 ] Surely, you have been wrong at some point in your life. Do I need to do a show of hands about that or are we pretty confident that? Okay, we've all been wrong at some point in our life in conflict.

How would you want to be approached if you were wrong? with what spirit? Well, Jesus says in verse 12, whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the law and the prophets.

Would you enjoy someone coming after you with a battle axe and a spirit of judgment?

Or would you prefer a spirit of humility when they come to you? Someone who believes that they are speaking as a fellow man under God's judgment.

Would you not be vastly, would you not vastly prefer to be corrected by a humble heart? Then what you wish that others would do to you, do also to them.

[ 44 : 44 ] That is how we escape judgment. When we are in conflict. So, we all stand under God's judgment. And I challenge you, if you, standing on, knowing that you stand under the judgment of God, that he will one day judge the living and the dead, have you sought Jesus Christ to be forgiven of your sins?

Have you made peace with God by believing in him and surrendering to him, body and soul, in life and in death? If not, come talk to me after the service.

Would love to talk with you about what it means to really be forgiven, to be saved, to be counter righteous by Jesus Christ so that you can begin to learn his way of engaging in conflict without judgment and becoming people who know how to make peace.

Let me pray. Father, I come to you not as a master of this, but as a fellow student, sitting at the feet of a great master.

I thank you that we have an amazing example in Jesus Christ, of someone who knows how to make peace, of someone who knows how to live righteously, whose anger is always expressed perfectly.

[ 46 : 14 ] Lord God, we ourselves admit that in conflict we slip into a judgmental spirit trying to usurp God's role, take his job.

Forgive us, Lord. We have sinned against you in doing that, and we have sinned against one another. Let us be people who humbly submit to you, let you be God, you be judge, and then come alongside one another and say, hey brother, you've got a speck in your eye, let me help you.

May that spirit be pervasive in our thinking, in our actions, in our attitudes, so we may be able to love and honor one another, and love and honor you as God above all, worthy of praise.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[ 47 : 31 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.