

# “Leaving Judgmentalism Behind”

Endless Vacation Sermon Series | Week One | Newbreak Church

July 24th, 2022

Newbreak’s Sermon Study Guide is an in-house resource that serves sermon-based Life Groups and/or individuals who want to reflect further on how the message contributes to our spiritual formation.

In this week’s study, we talk about the danger of judgmentalism and how to leave it behind. Looking to Jesus, we see that God’s mission is to save, not to condemn, which challenges us to look at others through the eyes of compassion.

## Icebreakers for Life Groups

- What is a vacation spot that you would be glad to repeat?
- What is one area where you know you fall into being judgmental?

## Going Deeper Into the Message

### Read Matthew 7:1–5

Jesus speaks of how an attitude of judgmentalism is like having a “plank in our own eye.” A few things about the “plank in our eye” concerning judgmentalism:

- Judgmentalism can lead me to do the right thing the wrong way.
- Judgmentalism blinds me to my own areas of weakness.
- Judgmentalism says, “I can do no wrong” and “You can do no right.”

This doesn’t mean that Jesus asks us to lay aside critical-thinking and total tolerance. We wrote about this in [this blog post HERE](#).

([www.newbreak.church/pulling-planks-how-to-judge-others-according-to-jesus/](http://www.newbreak.church/pulling-planks-how-to-judge-others-according-to-jesus/))

*So... How can I break the cycle of judgmentalism in my life?*

**Point 1 – Be willing to find common ground.**

Read John 4:7–9

In Jesus' interaction with the woman at the well (John 4), He broke all kinds of social conventions. He spoke to a woman in public, a Samaritan no less, whose own life was such a mess that it could have really messed up Jesus' reputation as a holy man.

Because the Samaritans had a mixed ancestry and various religious practices and schools of thought, the Jews rejected Samaritans. However, both Jews and Samaritans revered and respected Jacob. So that's their common ground!

But Jesus brought His message of grace and freedom to the woman, knowing that in her humility, she would actually hear and respond, while the religious people were too busy and self-important to hear. He gives her what she needs, living water to last a lifetime. There are moments when Jesus says stop, don't do that. But He was discerning. Think of parenting; sometimes when your kid is acting out they don't need a timeout, they need a hug. They need to know that when they are most unlovable they are still loved.

Here is the challenge for us all: **Increasing our understanding leads to decreasing our judgment.**

### Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- Why is common ground so important in ridding judgmentalism from our hearts? How can we find common ground without lowering God's standards for us?
- "Increasing our understanding leads to decreasing our judgment." What does this look like in action for you? How might you implement this?

### **Read Matthew 9:10–11**

*How can I break the cycle of judgmentalism in my life?*

### **Point 2 – Build bigger tables not higher fences.**

God doesn't care about the artificial lines humans draw to make them feel superior to each other. While the religious leaders of Jesus' day were careful to not share a table with "sinners," Jesus expanded the table of who He ate with. After all, meals—back then—were a meaningful thing. To share a meal with someone was to share your life with them. Jesus opened up his life to others by opening up the table.

We are called to bring good news. And the idea of building bigger tables (literally or figuratively) helps get us there. How is telling someone how bad they are good news? It's not. A lot of people are already fully aware of their mistakes and failures. Good news is not found in being judged, but in receiving mercy.

Hugh Halter writes something thought-provoking:

*“People are not pagans to be converted, projects to be preached at, or demographics to be reprogrammed. Humans should never be generalized, categorized, dismissed, judged, or underestimated. Every person is a story, rich with history, experiences, creative potential, strength and weaknesses, clarity and blindness.”*

When we see the humanity in others, we are less likely to be judgmental and more likely to show compassion. After all, people are people, not projects.

### Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- Why was it significant that Jesus ate meals with the “sinners” of society? How might that look today?
- Are there some people you view as “projects”? What can you do to restore the humanity of how you see them?
- Do I find it easy to be judgmental towards others, but hard to accurately judge my own sin? Why might this be?

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**Point 3 – Remember our shared need for Jesus.**

**Read John 3:16–17**

Most Christians know John 3:16 by heart... but what about John 3:17? Take a moment to read it. Read it again and reflect on it. The very purpose for Jesus' coming was to save, not condemn. Frankly, the world already stood condemned. Coming to announce that wouldn't do anything other than state the obvious. **The world needed a Savior, not a Judge.** (Yes, God is a Judge but that, too, is usually misunderstood. A conversation for another time!)

And so, one of the best things we can do—for ourselves and for others—is constantly remind ourselves of our personal need for Jesus. He is our Savior. Everyone needs Him to be theirs as well. Judgmentalism prevents us from seeing others as a beloved object of God’s redemption. And our judgmentalism might even produce actions that create an obstacle to other’s faith. When we think about it that way, we see that judgmentalism has no place in our lives. (Again, if you want to read more on how to view what Jesus says about “judging others,” we highly recommend [this blog post HERE.](#))

As fits the title of this sermon series, “Endless Vacation,” we need an endless vacation from judgmentalism. We don’t just need a break from it, we need a break-up from it.

### Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- Why is it important to see Jesus as the world’s “Savior” and not just its “Judge”?
- Who in my life needs my compassion instead of my judgment? What can I do to show them compassion?

**Memory Verse:** John 3:17 (NIV) For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

### —FINAL CHALLENGE QUESTIONS—

How are you going to think or live differently in light of what you have read, heard, and discussed this week?

How does this week’s message shape or nurture your relationship with God?

BONUS: For those of you with kids or around kids: What is one truth from this message that you can share with your kids in a way that they would relate to or understand?