



WEEKLY STUDY

WEEK 4

In our long look at the Gospel of Luke, we have come to this challenging teaching from Jesus near the end of chapter 6. We have begun to see just how upside-down the teachings of Jesus are when compared to the typical ways of the world. What if a Jesus-follower was your child's teacher? What if your server at the local restaurant was a believer? What if your neighbors truly encountered Christ in you? What would be different? As you study and pray, consider how judgment and condemnation creep into your daily life, and how Jesus invites you to live differently.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: LUKE 6.37-42 (NIV)

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

³⁹ He also told them this parable: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into a pit?"⁴⁰ The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.

⁴¹ "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"⁴² How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

- These words of Jesus bring perspective that can impact the daily life of a believer. As you are growing in your relationship with Jesus, you will become more and more like him. The student,

when trained, becomes more like the teacher. If you forgive you will be forgiven. If you do not condemn you will not be condemned. It seems basic, but it also seems backwards. At the heart of this teaching is the posture of the heart. You are in a better position to receive the grace and forgiveness offered to you when you have forgiven someone else. You are open to it. Your eyes are trained to see it coming. **So who does your life say that you are following? Why is it so tempting to judge and condemn others?**

- *God, do your work in me—change my heart. Help me to forgive as I want to be forgiven. Thank you for the mercy you have shown me through Jesus Christ. Amen.*

TUESDAY: ROMANS 2.1-3 (NIV)

You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. ² Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. ³ So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment?

- In his letter to Christians in Rome, Paul is quick to point out the hypocrisy that exists in us when we pass judgment on someone else. In our interactions with others, we have to remember that we are mere human beings. Ironically, Paul calls followers of Jesus to a life of humility based on our need for God. **Where do you see this kind of humility lived out in the world?**
- *O Great God, you are over everything that is and has ever been. I am your creation and I owe my life to you. Fill me with humility and gratitude as I walk through this world today. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: ROMANS 14.1-4 (NIV)

Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. ² One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. ³ The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. ⁴ Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

- Once again, Paul is addressing the human tendency to judge others and draw lines of division over things that are non-essential. If God has accepted a person, who are we to judge? In our context, this would include allowing for a variety of approaches to food. Vegetarian, low-fat, low-sugar, low-carb, gluten-free, organic etc. There are so many variations. None of those approaches to food are essential to our relationship with God. When we spend time and energy judging others for their non-essential practices, we are wasting precious opportunities to share the love of Christ. **When have you chosen to jump into a fight that didn't really matter to God? How could you react differently in similar situations in the future?**
- *God, you have cared for me so well that I am able to focus on the essentials of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Amen.*

THURSDAY: EPHESIANS 4.31-32 (NIV)

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

- The early church was not immune to struggles against rage and bitterness among its members. When we become Christians, there are outward signs that should develop and become obvious to

the world around us. When we treat one another in the same manner as the world treats one another, then we are not providing a true witness to the love of God. So Paul wanted to remind the young church of what it is that sets them apart. **How do you reveal the love of Christ in your daily life? Have you ever noticed when a follower of Jesus was truly living a life of compassion and kindness?**

- *God, the ways of anger and bitterness are loud in this world. Tune my heart to your ways and give me strength to follow Jesus in all I do and say. Amen.*

FRIDAY: 1 CORINTHIANS 6.1-6 (NIV)

If any of you has a dispute with another, do you dare to take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the Lord's people?² Or do you not know that the Lord's people will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases?³ Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!⁴ Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, do you ask for a ruling from those whose way of life is scorned in the church?⁵ I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers?⁶ But instead, one brother takes another to court—and this in front of unbelievers!

- As we have learned this week, our witness to the world is influenced by the way we treat one another. If we judge and condemn one another and resolve disputes without grace and in public places, unbelievers will see a wrong teaching. Believers should handle disputes with grace and integrity in a way that allows the world to see Jesus. This is hard, slow work of living in this world as those who claim the name of Jesus. Are you surprised by the frequency of this teaching in the New Testament? We are a part of something that is bigger than ourselves, and by handling ourselves in the Way of Christ, the movement will continue to grow! **Is there someone you need to offer forgiveness to today?**
- *God, I bring to mind those who have sinned against me. Give me a heart of forgiveness. Resolve the conflict between me and them and resolve the conflict in my heart. Amen.*

SATURDAY: PSALM 65.1-4 (NIV)

*Praise awaits you, our God, in Zion;
to you our vows will be fulfilled.*

²*You who answer prayer,
to you all people will come.*

³*When we were overwhelmed by sins,
you forgave our transgressions.*

⁴*Blessed are those you choose
and bring near to live in your courts!*

*We are filled with the good things of your house,
of your holy temple.*

- The Psalms contain some of the most honest words in all of Scripture. We all know what it feels like to be overwhelmed by sin. With Jesus, our transgressions have been forgiven and we are welcomed into the presence of a holy God. **Are there sins that continue to overwhelm you? Ask others to carry them into the presence of God.**
- *Lord, thank you for the forgiveness offered through Jesus. I want to live in your presence today. Amen.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

In Sunday's message, we were invited to live out the teaching of Jesus by praying in the following ways. Before you pray as a group, talk about specific people or groups you would like to pray for.

- Pray for disconnected people to come to Providence and find a place of love and grace.
- Pray for God to use us to love those that nobody else is noticing right now, for the poor to know riches in their life.
- Pray for the United Methodist Church (the denomination Providence Church started in but left in 2023 in order to remain focused on Jesus and the mission God has called us to). The UMC is currently meeting at General Conference, we pray blessings and abundance for them.
- Pray for relationships that are broken.