**By The Measure You Use**

Based on [Luke 6:36-42](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Lk6.36-42)

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The Fourth Sunday after Trinity

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“Judge not, and you will not be judged.” These are some of the most misused and misapplied words Jesus ever spoke. How you understand these words reveals whether you are a true Christian or an opportunist. What I mean is this: An opportunist is somebody who uses Jesus when it’s convenient. When they sin against God’s Law, they say “don’t judge.” But when someone else sins against them…they “judge away.”

And of course they judge; you can’t help judging. To judge simply means to decide, to draw conclusions. If you judge not to judge…that is a judgment. Closed communion is called “judgmental”, but open communion is judgmental too. Those who practice open communion judge everyone to be worthy to receive the Lord ’s Supper *per se*.

I’ve had to ask people to refrain from holy communion before. And I have been told by others “**Pastor, don’t judge. They might not have the doctrine right, but they’re good Christian people**.” Good Christian people!? How do you know they are Good Christian people?! Who are you to judge?

Everyone judges. What Jesus is saying here is don’t judge without the right standard…without the right measure. And here’s the key, “**Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”**

An illustration. When my children are fighting over whose portion of something is bigger (not that a pastor’s kids would ever fight over things)...But if they did, what I would do is tell one of them to divide the portions and let the other one choose. I did that once. My son divided the portions, and swore he gave himself the same amount as his sister. I said, “**If it is the same amount, prove it. Give her your portion, and you’ll have hers**.” He didn’t want to. No, on second thought, he wanted to redo the portions after all.” “**The human heart is deceitful above all things…who can understand it?”** Evidently hers didn’t look as equal as his anymore.

Jesus says, “***For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.***” That’s justice. And it is not for nothing that the 66 Books of the Old and New Testament have been called the “***Canonical*** Scriptures.” Canonical means, according to the canon…and canon means “measure”. These scriptures are the measure by which we are to measure others and by which we will be measured. **“For the measure you use, (Jesus says), it will be measured back to you.**” The Bible is God’s measure, and that’s good news, because the first thing Jesus tells us today is that our heavenly father is merciful.

For the record, merciful does not mean lenient. Some think that the OT is Law and that NT is Gospel…and what that means is that, since Jesus came, God’s law isn’t as harsh as it used to be. That the measure has been shortened, and more malleable. “*God has lightened up over the years, and you should too. Don’t be a stick in the mud, a prude, a pietist, a legalist. Don’t be boring, conservative, cautious…that only means you think you can save yourself. When you take sin so seriously, you show that you don’t really believe that Jesus paid for it. Lighten up, live a little, eat drink and be merry…Jesus hung and died on the cross so you could party. Your sinning while believing in Christ just makes his grace all the greater.”*

No. God is merciful, but he’s not lenient. The Law is just as harsh as it always was, just as strict, just as holy, and the measure is the same. But we who have the gospel are instead measured by it. For you see: “**the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus *for those who believe*.** Belief is the standard; repentance tips the scales from death to life, because repentance receives Jesus. Murderers, fornicators, adulterers slanderers will not inherit the kingdom of God…not because they committed murder, fornication, adultery, slander, or any such thing…but because they don’t trust Jesus Christ when he says these things are evil, and so they don’t turn to him for forgiveness. And neither do they forgive others, and neither will God forgive them.

For those who believe, the standard for judgment is not transgression and condemnation. The standard repentance and forgiveness; the measure is mercy and love.

Jesus teaching all leads to one point really. It’s not the salvation of your soul, or “what do I need to do to get saved.” Jesus is simply saying here, that if you follow me, and if you trust me, you will strive to be like me. “**A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher**.” Are you like Jesus, are you fully trained, are you yet perfect? If not, then get the speck out of your own eye daily, and strive to enter by the narrow gate.

Own your sins, so you have the power to give them to Jesus. And he will cart them away so that you can see (with spiritual sight) the futility of this corrupt creation, and embrace the hope of the world to come. So that you can see your neighbors sins, not with contempt, but compassion as one who is like you were. ***And as you often still are in the times when you resist the spirit and nurture things like anger, hatred, revenge, lust, selfishness, self-pity and conceit.*** If Jesus came to judge you according to your sins, can you imagine the righteous rage and anger and fiery wrath you would receive? Jesus never committed one sin, and yet everyday you sin, and every day you add stripes to his back and a nail to his cross, while you daydream about what you’re going to do after church... And he says, “Father forgive them.”

When you suffer at the hands of someone else’s sins, be merciful, that you may see righteousness, and lead others to the way of Christ. **The wrath of God is stored up for those who refuse the truth, and surround themselves in lies.** Do not hate them, love them, pity them, and live for them as Christ lived and died for you. Who knows?...they might turn, have salvation and be saved. But it won’t be because they accept your judgment, but because they saw in you the suffering servant who is merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Who has blotted out your iniquities, and remembers your sins no more.