

OUTGROWN 7: Judgmental

→ *Would you say you were 'judgmental?' Would you say you were less judgmental than, say, 5 years ago, or more?*

→ *Are you ever surprised at what immediately jumps into your head? Where do you think it comes from? How did it get there?*

3 FOUNDATIONAL THOUGHTS

1. All know what Jesus said about the SPECK & LOG (Matt 7:1-5).
2. All understand the GOSPEL = Jesus took our PLACE, was JUDGED for our sin, found GUILTY & paid the price in FULL.
3. Know Gal 3:28 → Called to UNITY, but not UNIFORMITY.
→ *Why are each of those important in the way we judge or otherwise?*
→ *Do you think Christians, in general, are judgmental? Do you think Christians are considered by wider society to be judgmental? Why do you think that is & what can we do about that perception?*

9 SIGNS WE'RE JUDGMENTAL

1. OVERLOOK things in ourselves we'd GLADLY CRITICISE in others.
2. FAVOUR people JUST LIKE US.
3. Innately SUSPICIOUS of people DIFFERENT to us.
4. Apply law MORE HARSHLY to others than we do to ourselves.
5. Have either a SUPERIORITY COMPLEX that looks down or an INFERIORITY COMPLEX that wants to drag others down.
6. Quietly pleased when people get their COME-UPPANCE.
7. Quick to believe & make harsh judgments based on GOSSIP.
8. Though we know it's true, tend to forget they're on a JOURNEY, just like us and need extravagant GRACE, just like us.
9. Jump to conclusions based on what our NATURAL EYES see, rather than discerning what our SPIRITUAL EYES can see.
→ *Do any of those strike a chord? Are any of those particularly difficult to 'outgrow?' How does this relate to our levels of Christian maturity or whether we are operating as carnal or spiritual people?*

THE WORD 'JUDGE' CAN MEAN

1. WEIGH (Prov 3:21, 31:9) → Ability to determine whether something is GOOD, RIGHT, TRUE, WISE, APPROPRIATE.
→ *What does it mean to 'weigh' & how do you do it?*
2. CONDEMN (Matt 7:1) → When we judge, we don't REALLY KNOW, which should make us cautious to JUDGE & reluctant to CONDEMN.
→ *How does weighing become condemning? How do we stand out as agents of grace in an angry, condemning culture?*

3. CRITICISE → One of reasons sinners came running to Jesus, was because when they got there, He was very slow to CRITICISE & extremely quick to LAVISH GRACE.
→ *Recognising that there can be elements of constructive criticism that can be helpful, to what extent should we offer criticism? How should we offer it? When should we offer it?*
→ *As a rule, do you personally find criticism helpful & encouraging or deflating & discouraging? Do you reckon you are perceived as an encourager or discourager?*
4. DISCERN (Prov 4:13, 14:33, 16:21) = To PERCEIVE by means of your SPIRITUAL SENSES. More than OBSERVATION, INTELLIGENCE, DEDUCTION, rather Holy Spirit INSIGHT.

HOW DO WE BECOME DISCERNERS INSTEAD OF JUDGERS?

1. TRAIN yourself to LOOK beyond and deeper than the surface.
 - * What HURT are they protecting or what AGENDA is in play?
 - * Flesh LEAPS; Spirit PAUSES (seeks, listens & prays).→ *Do you tend to leap or pause? How good are you at looking behind the scenes or under the surface? How might you become better at it?*
2. Ask God what HE SEES, rather than defaulting to what I SEE.
4 LENSES to look through first
 - a) WORD: What does the WORD say?
 - b) CHARACTER: What would JESUS do?
 - c) MISSION: What does God PURPOSE?
 - d) REVELATION: What is the Holy Spirit SHOWING me?→ *Do you tend to look through any of those lenses & how do they help?*
→ *Why do we tend to 'default' to what we can see with our natural eyes? How can we train ourselves to use our spiritual discerning eyes?*
3. Train yourself to see from the OTHER'S POINT OF VIEW
 - * Discernment is able to look beyond how it AFFECTS ME and instead ask how it HELPS THEM.
 - * Discernment sees the BIGGER PICTURE and straight into the other person's HEART.→ *"The self-absorbed will always be prone to judge defensively. The humble are far more likely to discern generously." Discuss!*
4. Actively look for REDEMPTION
 - * For Jesus, it was never ABOUT HIM; always about the fulfilment of His Father's PURPOSES.→ *What does it mean to say, 'it wasn't about Him?' What were His Father's purposes? How should our pursuit of the Father's purposes affect how we judge & discern?*