

## **DO NOT JUDGE**

**Do not judge, or you too will be judged.**

**For in the same way you judge others, you  
will be judged, and with the measure you use,  
it will be measured to you.**

**— Matthew 7:1-2 NIV**

## **HOW DO YOU TRANSLATE THE BIBLE?**

**⇒ Understand the context.**

**⇒ Interpret scriptures with other scriptures.**

**⇒ Apply what you learn.**

**“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? How can you say to your  
brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’  
when all the time there is a plank in your own  
eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of  
your own eye, and then you will see clearly to  
remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”**

**— Matthew 7:3-5 NIV**

# WHAT DOES SCRIPTURE

## NEVER JUDGE SUPERFICIALLY

Stop judging by mere appearances,  
but instead judge correctly.

—John 7:24 NLT

The Lord doesn't see things the way you see them.

People judge by outward appearance,  
but the Lord looks at the heart.

— 1 Samuel 16:7 NLT

## NEVER JUDGE HYPOCRITICALLY

You may think you can condemn such people,  
but you are just as bad, and you have no excuse!

When you say they are wicked and should be punished,  
you are condemning yourself, for you who judge others  
do these very same things... Don't you see how

wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you?

Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his  
kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?

— Romans 2:1, 4 NLT

## **RE SAY ABOUT JUDGING?**

### **NEVER HOLD NON-CHRISTIANS TO CHRISTIAN STANDARDS**

**What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside?**

**God will judge those outside...**

**— 1 Corinthians 5:12-13a NIV**

### **ALWAYS HELP RESTORE FALLEN BELIEVERS**

**Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.**

**— Galatians 6:1-2 NIV**

**A new command I give you: Love one another.  
As I have loved you, so you must love one another.  
By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,  
if you love one another.**

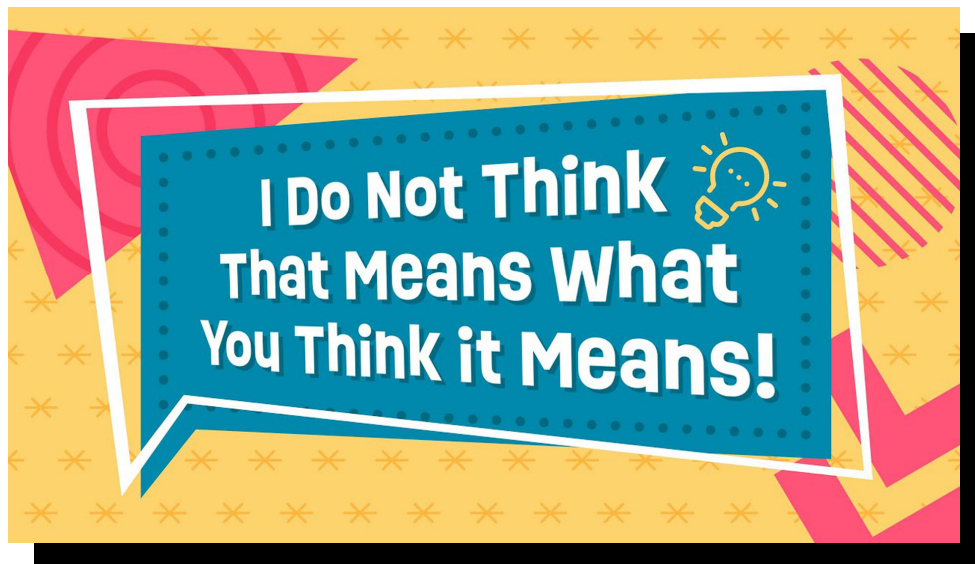
**— John 13:34-35 NIV**

# MY APPLICATION

Find someone to answer these questions with this week:

- In what ways am I quick to judge others while excusing similar flaws in myself?
  - How might giving someone the benefit of the doubt change my perspective on their actions today?
  - Am I holding non-believers to standards they haven't chosen, or am I loving them toward Christ?
  - What "plank" in my own eye needs removal before I address specks in others?
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Next Week  
Jeremiah 29:11

## Devotional 1: LOOKING IN THE MIRROR FIRST

*"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?...You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." Matthew 7:3-5*

In our daily interactions, it's easy to spot flaws in others while overlooking our own shortcomings. Jesus uses a vivid image, a speck versus a plank, to illustrate the absurdity of hypocritical judgment. Imagine trying to help someone remove a tiny particle from their eye while a massive beam obstructs your own vision. It's not only ineffective but also ridiculous.

This teaching calls us to prioritize self-examination. Before addressing issues in others, we must confront our own sins and weaknesses. This isn't about ignoring problems around us but ensuring our hearts are right first. When we deal with our "planks", perhaps pride, anger, or unresolved bitterness—we gain clarity and compassion. Hypocrisy repels people from faith, but humility draws them in.

Consider how often we accuse others of behaviors we excuse in ourselves. We judge actions in them but intentions in us. Scripture urges us to reverse this: accuse ourselves honestly and extend grace to others. This approach fosters genuine relationships within the body of Christ. As believers, we're family, bound by love and accountability.

This daily practice transforms us from fault-finders to grace-givers. In a world quick to cancel and condemn, Christians are called to model a different way: self-aware, merciful, and restorative. By removing our planks, we help others with their specks effectively, building up the church in unity and love. Let this principle guide your conversations, conflicts, and corrections today.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, Help me to examine my heart daily, removing any planks that blind me. Grant me humility and clarity to restore others gently, reflecting Your grace. May my life draw people closer to You through compassionate accountability. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## Devotional 2: JUDGING CORRECTLY

*Stop judging by mere appearances,  
but instead judge correctly. -John 7:24*

Superficial judgments are a common trap, where we form opinions based on outward looks, first impressions, or rumors rather than truth. Jesus warns against this in His teaching, emphasizing that true discernment comes from looking deeper, as God does, with the heart in mind.

We often label people quickly: "He's arrogant," "She's unfriendly," based on a snapshot moment. But what if that "arrogance" stems from insecurity, or the "unfriendliness" from hidden pain? Scripture calls us to judge correctly, giving the benefit of the doubt and seeking understanding. This means pausing before concluding, asking questions, and listening actively.

Correct judgment builds bridges, not walls. When we avoid superficiality, we create space for authentic fellowship. Remember the Pharisees, who judged Jesus by His associations with sinners, missing His divine mission. In contrast, Jesus saw potential in tax collectors and outcasts, transforming lives through compassionate insight. As followers, we're to emulate this. In everyday life, this might mean not dismissing a coworker based on gossip or a neighbor on their lifestyle choices.

Instead, engage with kindness, praying for wisdom to see as God sees. By judging correctly, we honor God's creation and reflect His justice. This doesn't mean ignoring sin or danger but approaching with discernment rooted in love. It protects us from bitterness and opens doors for evangelism. In a divided world, where snap judgments fuel conflicts, believers can stand out by choosing depth over haste. Cultivate habits like reflecting on your biases, seeking counsel from Scripture, and extending grace.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, teach me to discern correctly, with Your wisdom and compassion. Help me to see people as You do, extending grace and understanding. Guide my thoughts and words to build up rather than tear down. Amen.

### Devotional 3: GENTLE RESTORATION

*Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. -Galatians 6:1-2*

In the family of God, restoration is a sacred duty, done with gentleness and humility. When a fellow believer falls into sin, our response shouldn't be condemnation or gossip but loving correction aimed at healing. Paul instructs us to restore gently, mindful of our own vulnerabilities. This fulfills Christ's law of love, bearing one another's burdens. Gentleness reflects God's patience with us—He doesn't crush the bruised reed (Isaiah 42:3).

Imagine a sibling straying; would you shun them or guide them back? As Christians, we're interconnected, members of one body. Ignoring sin harms the whole, but harsh judgment drives away. Instead, approach with prayer, empathy, and truth. Matthew 18:15-17 outlines a process: speak privately first, then involve others if needed, always with reconciliation in mind. This isn't about superiority but mutual edification.

We've all sinned and received grace; now we extend it. Pride lurks in correction, so Paul warns to watch ourselves. Self-examination prevents hypocrisy. Stories like the prodigal son show the Father's welcoming arms and are a model for restoration. In practice, this might involve listening to a friend's confession without shock, offering Scripture for encouragement, or walking alongside in accountability. It builds resilient communities where vulnerability is safe. The world watches how we handle failures; loving restoration testifies to Christ's transformative power. Let gentleness define your interactions, turning potential divisions into opportunities for growth. God equips us through the Spirit for this work, promising fruit in perseverance.

**Prayer:** Gracious Father, thank You for restoring me gently when I fall. Help me to extend the same mercy to my brothers and sisters in Christ. Guard my heart from pride and fill me with Your Spirit to carry burdens lovingly. In Christ's name, Amen.

## Devotional 4: EXTENDING GRACE TO THE WORLD

*What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? — 1 Corinthians 5:12*

Believers are called to live by God's standards, but imposing them on non-Christians creates barriers rather than bridges. Scripture clarifies that judgment of those outside the faith is God's domain, not ours. Our role is to love unconditionally, introducing them to the transforming power of Christ. Non-believers operate under different influences, enslaved to sin without the Holy Spirit's empowerment. Expecting Christian behavior from them is unfair and ineffective. You can't behave your way into salvation; it's by grace through faith.

Rather we should focus on embodying Christ's love, which draws people in. Jesus dined with sinners, not to condemn but to offer hope. We follow that example by building relationships, listening without agenda, and sharing the Gospel naturally. Avoid stumbling blocks like self-righteous attitudes that alienate.

Paul avoided judging outsiders, concentrating on preaching the gospel of grace. In today's culture, where tolerance is prized, Christians can shine by loving without approval-seeking or compromise. Pray for opportunities to demonstrate kindness like helping a neighbor, forgiving an offense and pointing to God's goodness. By not judging, we create space for the Holy Spirit to work.

This doesn't mean endorsing sin rather we prioritize evangelism. Reflect on how Jesus treated the woman at the well, He acknowledged her life but offered living water. Emulate that compassion. As ambassadors our message is reconciliation, not rules. Trust God to change hearts.

**Prayer:** Merciful God, help me to extend mercy to those outside Your family. Help me to love them as You do, without imposing standards they can't yet meet. Use my life to draw them to Christ through kindness and truth. Strengthen me to be a light in the world. Amen.