

JUDGEMENT IN RELATIONSHIPS

5

Ways to
Heal the
Hurt

Introduction

Relationships are the most important thing in life—whether it's with God or with others. But relationships don't just build themselves. It takes work and skill to develop great relationships.

In this eBook, you'll learn five important skills that will help you heal hurt from past relationships, mend current ones, and keep your relationships strong moving forward. You'll also tackle the nuanced skill of learning to judge correctly and respectfully. You may have been taught that all judgement is bad, but by the end of this eBook you'll learn the difference between judging people based on their track record versus their heart.

Chapter 1: Learn to Judge the Right Way

As Christians, we are taught not to judge, but at the same time we learn that certain behaviours contradict God's principles. So how do we stand up for what's right without judging people who live a different lifestyle?

The answer to this question lies with understanding how to judge the right way.

You may be thinking, "I thought that all judgement was wrong!" The truth is, we can and should judge in certain circumstances—as long as all we are judging is track record. You see, **there's a big difference between judging track record and judging the heart.**

THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JUDGING TRACK RECORD AND JUDGING THE HEART.

How could you think for a moment that you have the right to judge another person's servant? Each servant answers to his own Master, and he will either stand or fall in His presence. The good news is that he will stand because the Master is able to make it so.

Romans 14:4 (VOICE)

When we judge the *heart*, we make assumptions about why people do what they do, instead of simply looking at their actions. We think, "That person is bad," or "They meant to cause me harm." We assume people's motives and intentions, defining their worth and value as a person based on those assumptions.

When we judge *actions*, we might say, "I don't agree with what you've done," or "I can't trust you until you build a better track record," but we don't devalue or look down on the person because of their choices.

Jesus taught us to love and accept people as they are, unconditionally. We can *always* love and accept people, even when we can't yet trust them or we don't agree with their choices.

Chapter 2: Judge Only at the Right Time

In the previous chapter, we learned how to judge the right way—to judge actions and track record rather than the hearts of others. Now, let's talk about **when it's appropriate to judge**. Here's an example for you.

Let's say you're starting up a business and an acquaintance wants to partner with you. The trouble is, he's bankrupted four businesses in the last ten years. He owes several people money, and a few trusted friends have confided that he took advantage of them in business deals. When you ask him about it, he takes no responsibility and places the blame on everyone else.

Now, if you're not supposed to judge, does that mean you should take him at his word? Should you ignore his track record and trust that he's going to treat you differently than he's treated others?

**TRUST
SHOULD
ALWAYS BE
EARNED.**

The wise are cautious and avoid danger; fools plunge ahead with reckless confidence.
Proverbs 14:16 (NLT)

No, **trust should always be earned**, and we need to be discerning when looking at someone's behaviour. At the same time, we can't assume to know *why* people do what they do. It would be wrong to call the man a shady businessman or a snake, because now we're attacking his character. We also can't assume that he meant to take advantage of others or that he doesn't care about others, because we don't know his motives and intentions. **All we know is his track record**, and wisdom says not to partner with him unless he has changed and earned himself a new track record.

Chapter 3: Avoid Asking "Why?" in Judgement

We've been talking about judgement—how we need to judge people's track records, but not the heart, motives, or intentions. So, how do you know when you're crossing that line?

The second you ask "why," you are judging the heart.

Let's say that a pastor has just finished preaching at church. As he's walking out, he shakes hands with every person sitting at the end of each row, except the woman in the sixth row.

That woman who was missed has a choice. She can either judge the *motives* or the *actions* of the pastor. If she just judges his actions, she might say, "Pastor walked right past me. Oh well, I won't assume that he meant to." If she judges motives, she will ask the question "Why?", and then she'll start to judge. "Pastor must think he's better than me." By assuming, she's just making things up because she can't possibly know why.

If the woman carries on with this judgement, her relationship with her pastor has no chance. Meanwhile, there could have been a perfectly good reason why the pastor missed her. Maybe he made eye contact with a young husband who just lost his wife, and was focused on him in that moment. The woman will never know the truth if she just assumes the pastor's intentions and judges him instead of asking questions.

**THE SECOND
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Love bears all things [regardless of what comes], believes all things [looking for the best in each one]...

1 Corinthians 13:7 (AMP)

When you're tempted to assume why people do what they do, either **choose to assume the best or ask them a question.**

Chapter 4: Don't Attack Their Identity

Judgement damages relationships. When we judge, we attack the other person's identity and drive a wedge between us. The good news is, we can show love and acceptance for others at the same time as we confront their behaviour. **That's real love, and as a believer, you have what it takes to love this way—Jesus' way!**

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another."

John 13:34 (NKJV)

**GREAT HEALING
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CONVERSATION
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WRONG."**

We have to be careful because our words have power. Let's say you have a little daughter who just lied to you, and you reacted with, "You little liar." While calling someone a liar if they've lied seems logical, realize what you're saying. You're not saying, "You lied and that is unacceptable." You're saying, "You ARE a liar. That's who you are, and YOU are unacceptable." Big difference!

Be careful not to speak mistruths about your loved ones' identities. The truth is, she's a child of God, not a liar or sinner or bad girl. She's a beautiful new creation of God who did a bad thing. As her parent, you know that lying is a bad habit that will hurt her, so you can explain to her that you're giving her a consequence so that she will remember that lying is not something she should do, because you love her so much.

If you've used this kind of language with your loved ones before, it's not too late to talk to them about it. **Great healing can come from a conversation that starts with, "I was wrong."** And remember—we are all on a journey that involves growing and changing our actions to be more like Jesus!

Chapter 5: Don't Accept Their Judgement

We've talked a lot about judgement so far and how it's okay to judge someone's behaviour, but not their heart. We've talked about deciding to never assume why someone did what they did without asking them about it.

But what about when someone you love constantly judges you? Being judged by someone is incredibly painful. It hurts to have someone assume to know why you've made the choices you have, especially when they assume the worst.

**YOU CAN'T
LIVE YOUR LIFE
ACCORDING
TO SOMEONE
ELSE'S
OPINION.**

"Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."
Matthew 7:5 (NKJV)

In Matthew 7:5, Jesus encourages us to stop trying to fix others, so we don't need to tolerate it when others keep sending the message, "You're broken and I need to fix you." That doesn't mean it's a bad idea to listen to others' advice, but **you can't live your life according to someone else's opinion.**

Children of parents who judge repeatedly can become controlled by that judgement. In an effort to earn the love and acceptance they crave, they can live their lives in constant fear of being judged and criticized. The trouble is, when we allow someone to control us with judgement, basically we are making that person our god.

Whether it's your spouse, a parent, a boss, or a friend, if you live your life trying to avoid their judgement, you're putting what *they* think of you above what your Father God thinks.

God loves and accepts you unconditionally. He says you are the apple of His eye, His precious treasure, and His beloved child. **When you make a mistake, He's not going to judge or condemn you; why accept that kind of treatment from anyone else?**

Conclusion

Some of the most damaging words we can speak to each other are judgemental words. When we pretend to know someone's motives and assume they meant harm, we attack their self-worth. And when we attack someone's self-worth, anger and hurt is the result.

As you've read in this eBook, knowing how to judge correctly is vital to the health and life of any relationship. Here's a quick recap of the five keys we covered:

- **Chapter 1:** If you are going to judge, judge someone's behaviour, actions, and track record rather than their heart, motives and intentions.
- **Chapter 2:** Use discernment to know *when* it's the appropriate time to judge others.
- **Chapter 3:** Avoid asking *why* someone did what they did when they hurt you.
- **Chapter 4:** Never attack someone's identity when judging their actions and track record.
- **Chapter 5:** Put God's opinion of you above any and all judgement that comes your way from others.

Continue to walk in love everywhere you go and with everyone you meet, and make sure your judgement is based on their track record and not their heart. Believe in and assume the best in others, just like Jesus does for you!