

42-06-01.wpd --The End of Our Inner Pharisee
Pharisaism, the Cross, mercy, judging, condemnation, forgiveness
Luke 6:36-38
Seeing ourselves before the Cross helps nurture a merciful spirit.

INTRODUCTION: (read the **text:** Luke 6:36-37)

--This **text** hits on three activities of the human soul that are like what happens in a courtroom. The purpose of a courtroom is to bring justice, but human courtrooms are not 100% accurate. People have been tried and found "guilty," when they were not. More often, true perpetrators of crime have been found "not guilty," when they actually were.
--God knows our tendency to bring people into our mental courtroom. He also knows about our big failure rate in accuracy, when we do so. In Jesus' day, the Pharisees emulated this characteristic. But there is a little bit of Pharisee in all of us, and the instructions in this verse, if we follow them, can help bring what I have called in my **title**, "**The End of Our Inner Pharisee**." Each time we see ourselves in the light of the Cross, or when we eat the fruits of the Cross in Holy Communion, it spurs us on in obeying Christ's instructions here, because **HOM.idea**.

I. We Are Not Capable of Judging Others

- A. We don't know others, as God knows them-- 1 Sam 16:7b, The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart. [quote: "*In the most virtuous there may be hidden vice; in the most vicious, a redeeming virtue.*"]
- B. We don't even know ourselves, as God does-- 1 Cor 4:3-4, I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.
- C. We don't have God's overview of reality
 1. We lost God's closeness in Eden... and today we are still judging right and wrong independently of the mind of God.
 2. Potentially, we regained God's closeness at Pentecost, but we can't use the Holy Spirit as we did the forbidden fruit (Jesus is our example of judging properly-- John 8:15-16, You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one. But if I do judge, my decisions are right, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father, who sent me.
- D. Only God can judge 100% accurately
 1. God sees exactly not only what we do but why we do it-- 1 Cor

4:5, Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.

2. We get in trouble playing God... thinking we know the motives behind what people do [Paranoid schizophrenics create a whole world revolving around themselves. They say they know that everyone's actions are part of a plot against them. Anything anyone does has a motive behind it that keeps the paranoid in the center of the universe. Only God is at the center of the universe, and, to be healed, the paranoid must relinquish that spot.] And that is the only way for us to put an end to our inner Pharisee.

TRANS: On the Cross, Jesus was judged in our place, and we rejoice in that. We can resist our tendency to judge others when we realize that we are hypocrites to take for ourselves, the freedom from being judged, which we deny to others when we judge them. **Seeing ourselves before the Cross helps dispel that judgmental spirit. Beyond that...**

II. We Are Not Qualified To Condemn Others

- A. If we are not capable of judging, we are even less qualified to condemn [to pronounce someone guilty] [Jury duty might be avoided on religious grounds: "God says I can't condemn anyone."]
- B. In spite of being unqualified, we can move quickly from judgment to condemnation, just as in a courtroom: "*The accused has been found guilty and is sentenced to the full penalty under the by law.*"
- C. The Pharisees were quick to jump from judging to condemning-- John 8:3-11, The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."
 1. The Pharisees, after judging and condemning this woman, tried using her as a means of finding grounds to condemn Jesus.
 2. Jesus found a way to get them to condemn themselves, so that

they abandoned their prosecution of this woman. (Taking time to review our own sins helps us drop the condemnations we are ready to hurl at others, just as these Pharisees did.)

TRANS: On the Cross, Jesus was condemned in our place. The condemnation that we deserved fell on Him. Again, we are hypocrites to deny others the *freedom from condemnation* that we ourselves enjoy. **Seeing ourselves before the Cross helps dispel a condemning spirit.** Finally...

III. We Are Capable and Qualified to Forgive Others

- A. The former two commands were in the negative: *do not judge*, *do not condemn*; this last one is in the positive: *forgive*.
1. Negative commands try to stop us from ruining our testimony, positive ones try to help us establish it, and the testimony that God wants us to have is the one in **v.36**, "*Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.*"
 2. God wants us to reflect Him to those who do not know Him, and when we *forgive*, rather than *judge* or *condemn*, we show what He is like and what He offers to sinners in need of forgiveness.
- B. Because new birth through the Holy Spirit has made us children of a merciful Father, we are *qualified* to be merciful. How our *merciful attitude* is to translate into action is by forgiving others.
- C. Because we personally received forgiveness through the Cross, where our sins were paid for, we are *capable* of forgiving others.
- D. God's forgiveness is a dynamic, life-changing force can become stagnant in us if we withhold it from others. (Giving forgiveness makes room for receiving more for ourselves, and God knows we will need it-- **v.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.

CONCLUSION:

--[I saw a car bumper sticker that said "*Separate Church and Hate.*" I wonder if its creator had been *judged* and *condemned* somewhere along the way by professing Christians.] That sticker may come off of cars whose drivers are touched by Christian mercy. **Seeing ourselves before the Cross helps nurture the merciful spirit** we need to show to everyone around us.

Luke 6:36-38 (NIV) Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. {37} "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."