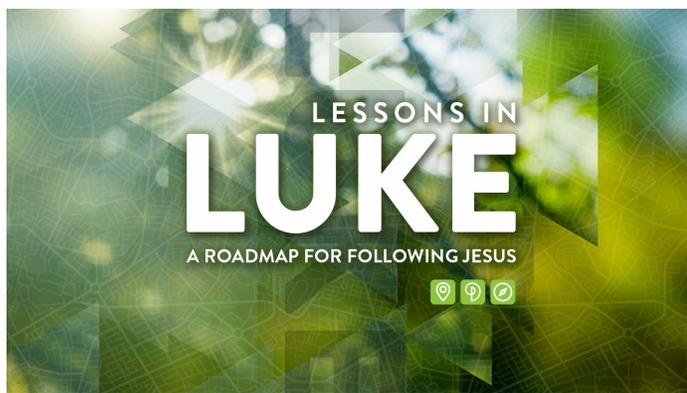


# SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE  
OF PEACE**  
Called to Connect



## Judging Others

*May 16, 2021*

Our goal is not perfection; it's to learn to love and accept ourselves just as we are – which is what God does – trusting and hoping that the Spirit is at work in our lives to keep us growing in Christ-likeness. When we learn to love ourselves as God loves us, we are far more likely to love others just as they are.

## SCRIPTURE TEXT: LUKE 6:37-42

Read the scripture text together as a group.

### BACKGROUND INFO

The very heart of the Gospel is that we are fully loved and freely forgiven. We do not live under God's judgment. We live under God's love. And nothing, not even our judgment of others, will change that. So, what then does Jesus mean when he says, "Don't judge others, and you will not be judged?" I can't help but wonder if Jesus isn't helping us to make the connection between our tendency to judge others and our tendency to judge ourselves. Those who judge others, those who are critical and condemning of others may give the appearance that they think they're superior, but scratch below the surface and you discover that they tend to be highly critical and judgmental of themselves.

On the surface, Jesus is saying that we aren't really equipped to deal with other people's "stuff" when we've got enough "stuff" of our own to deal with. But I think he's pointing to something deeper too. The goal of spirituality is not to one day become perfect enough to judge others; it's to learn to love and accept ourselves just as we are...which is what God does...trusting and hoping that the Spirit is at work in our lives to keep us growing in Christ-likeness. The log in our eye is more than our individual shortcomings. It's our self-judgment, our unwillingness to embrace the wholeness of who and what we are today. When we learn to love ourselves as God loves us, we are far more likely to love others just as they are.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever been critical of someone and then realized that judgment came from your own insecurity?
- What is Jesus teaching us in this passage?
- Why is it hard for us to love ourselves the way God loves us?
- How can increasing our love of self help us to love others well?

**APPLICATION:** This week, ask God to help you identify when you are being critical of yourself. What is one thing you can do to love yourself more this week? Remember that God loves you more than you know.