

**Title:** "Judgment" // **Scripture:** John 7:53-8:11

**ARRIVAL / SOCIAL TIME** 15-20 minutes

**SERMON REVIEW** 5-10 minutes

Judgment is a difficult subject to talk about. How do we address this idea of judgment as Christians when one of the worst things that you can be labeled in our society is "judgmental"? Today Jon broke our stereotype of judgment by changing the metaphor we think about when it comes to this difficult subject. Instead of thinking of swords and clubs, Jon demonstrated how the gospel of John uses the metaphor of light to talk about judgment. Light simply reveals what is really there—the good, the bad, and the ugly. Then the question becomes once we stand in the light, "Will we return to darkness or linger long enough for the possibility of forgiveness?"

**THE MAIN THOUGHT** (*keep this in mind as you facilitate discussion*)

"Living like Jesus is Judge means leaning into the light"

**SEE IT – Questions** 10-15 min

Picture: What do you think about when you hear the word "judgment"? How do you think most people think about "judgment"? Who does John's gospel say is the right Judge? What does it mean for Jesus to be the Judge? What does Jesus' judgment look like? What does Jesus' judgment bring? (revelation)

Mirror: How do you normally view Jesus' judgment? What in Jon's sermon challenged your view of Jesus' judgment? Do you think you ever try to become the Judge (instead of Jesus) like the religious leaders were doing in this passage? How? Have you ever felt like there was no Judge or have you ever felt judged by others? Explain. When have you released judgment to Jesus in the past? What is the toughest moment you have ever offered forgiveness?

Window: Do people around you experience the grace and forgiveness of Jesus in you? How? Do those around you experience truth in you that may make them uncomfortable? How? How do you think we as Christians should balance what light does—expose things that need exposing but also release, redeem, and forgive things that need changing? Who have you seen model this tension well? How did they do that?

**BE IT – Practice**

**Change UP // Turning the Light on Ourselves**

Jon mentioned in his sermon that a survey taken in 2007 reported that 87% of people gravitated to the word "judgmental" to describe Christians. In this same survey only 3% of non-Christians had a favorable opinion of evangelicals. This is pretty disturbing. So take a moment to *Turn the Light On Ourselves* as Christians in your group by taking a white board or large note pad and writing Christ on the left side of the board and Christians on the right side of the board. Draw a line vertically down the middle of the board to separate the two columns. Take three minutes to list words that you would use to describe Jesus. Then take the next three minutes to list words your unchristian friends would use to describe Christians. Spend the last five minutes comparing the two lists. *Ask the group* what *encourages* them and what *disturbs* them about what they see.

**Change IN // CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Families have conflict, and because our groups are operating as spiritual families we should expect at times all of our groups will experience conflict of some kind. One of the best times to talk about conflict is before conflict actually happens. This week's sermon gives us the perfect opportunity to start this conversation together. Talk about how the group will deal with tough truth in each other's lives that might be difficult for any of us to hear or share. Reflect together on how you might do this well for each other. Then think about how your group will offer forgiveness to each other and how that might be given and received well. Come to consensus on conflict resolution as you discuss.

**Change OUT // Break the Stereotype**

In our UP Exercise this week we identified places where Christ and Christians might be in conflict. Many of these conflicts lead to stereotypes non-Christians have about Christians. List together some of these stereotypes. Then take some time to develop three Stereotype Breaker Strategies that your group can put into regular practice with unbelievers.

**CLOSING PRAYER** 5 minutes