

Unpacking the Preach

Date: 10th May 2020
Sermon Title The Character of God's Family: do not judge
Bible Passage James 4: 11-12

Introduction

- What are some of the ways we 'speak evil' against one another?
- Do you ever find yourself judging other people? When?
- How big a problem do you think judging others is, in the church?

Recapping the Preach

Take time to read the passage again, perhaps read it a few times from different versions:

- How would you summarise the key message of the passage?
- Is there anything in this passage that surprised you?
- Was there anything in the passage or preach that you found yourself resisting, pulling away from or wrestling with what is being said?

Stu began by talking about the tension to obey Jesus command, 'Do not judge' (Matthew 7:1) and our need to speak the truth in love to one another (Ephesians 4:15). He noted that what seems to be chief in James' mind as he writes is the fact that if the people are judging then they would have left the way of humility (James 4:10)

- What do you think is the difference between judging and speaking the truth in love?
- James lists 5 steps in the 'way of humility'. Which ones do you find easy and which are most difficult?
- CS Lewis wrote that humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less. Do you think this is a good description of humility, what would you add?
- What, about the two examples of humility in the life of Jesus, that Stu mentioned, (Philippians 2:6-11 & John 13:1-17) stands out to you the most?

James points out that if we have left the 'way of humility' and defaming others, then this will be happening for four reasons: we will not be regarding others as we should, we will be disregarding the law, we will be disregarding the Lawgiver and Judge and we will be regarding ourselves to highly.

- Have you eve found yourself stumbling in one or more of these areas? Share your experiences?
- How does it make you feel to know that the Lord is the ultimate Lawgiver and Judge?

In closing Stu mentioned 5 prerequisites to speaking the truth in love, namely caring comes first, there must be an existing relationship, empathy before evaluation, there must be a foundation of affirmation and never insist on change.

- Do you agree with the prerequisites? If yes/no, why?
- Do you think there should be other prerequisites?
- If you daringly confront someone in sin or error and they respond, 'You're being judgemental!', how would you respond?
- How can you know when God wants you to talk to someone about sin or error, or when you should wait and pray?
- How can someone who is erring on being judgemental and critical battle against it? What steps would help?

Response

- Is there anything from the preach and passage that you will be taking away to reflect on or work on?

Prayer pointers

- Pray that we would create a healthy culture of feedback at KBC.
- Pray for a spirit of gentleness to be upon us as we grow as a family.
- Ask for prayers for healing if you are aware that you have a critical/judgemental spirit.

Additional resources:

If you need some additional resources the below websites are useful:

- <https://www.gotquestions.org>
- <https://enduringword.com>
- <https://www.biblica.com>
- <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/>