

Default Settings

Week 2: Everyone's Annoying But Me

Matthew 7:1-5

I hope everyone enjoyed the eclipse last Monday. It was pretty amazing. We opened up our parking lot and invited people to join us. It was so much fun walking around, asking people where they were from. I met folks from California, Seattle, Washington, Maryland, Toronto...20 different states, several countries. People walking from neighborhoods around the church. It was great to see. Someone captured this picture that I thought was pretty good...(show eclipse picture).

I think Steve Dyer captured so well in an email he sent out to volunteers why we wanted to do something and the kind of church we want to be. He said, "While other organizations are barricading and charging, we're opening up and welcoming people from all over, praying for the chance to show them Jesus. And, instead of charging, we invited people to donate to a Habitat build for one of our Iglesia Hispana families. We raised somewhere around \$2500.

Pray

I wonder if this thought has ever crossed your mind...**Everyone's annoying but me!** You don't have to answer that, but I'll tell you, every time I've shared the title of today's sermon over the last few months, the nervous laughter gives away the truth...we've probably all thought it before. And, if we haven't thought it, we've probably felt it.

Everyone's annoying except for me. It's easy to think that, which then makes it really easy to be offended and easily angered by the words and actions of others. We think life would be so much better if people stopped being so annoying. If they stopped doing and saying those things that bother us. And we give very little thought to the ways our own words and actions can sometimes annoy those around us. Those things WE do to offend and anger others.

And, let's be honest...you don't have to do much these days to offend or anger people. And they don't have to do much to offend or anger you. We talked about it last week, it's our default setting, and it has been since Genesis 3 and the Fall. Sin entered our world and caused brokenness in our relationship with God and relationship with one another. And so, we are going to get offended and angered and annoyed by others.

But, doesn't it feel like that default setting to be offended and angry and annoyed is in overdrive? It's like everyone is walking around with a chip on their shoulder.

That's an interesting phrase, isn't it? It was coined in the U.S. sometime in the 19th century. Boys would put a wood chip on their shoulder and walk around, daring someone to knock it off. They were looking for a fight. Looking to be offended by the person who dared try to knock that chip off.

Most of us aren't going around looking for a fist fight, but I know a lot of people who seem like they walk around looking to be offended by something or someone. **Our culture has trained us, not to have a chip on our shoulder, but a lumberyard!** We walk around with all these opportunities to be offended by someone, daring them to knock one of them off. And we're not just bothered by some things, we seem to be bothered by everything, big and small.

This is the default setting of our culture, **because** it's the default setting of our heart. And only Jesus can change it. Only Jesus can remove that lumberyard of offense we carry and give us freedom from the weight of it. Because these things that we're talking about in this series...anger, offense, judgmental attitudes...these are all issues of the heart, and only Jesus has the power to change that.

We're in week 2 of our series, Default Settings, and if you have a Bible, or a Bible app you like to use, turn with me to Matthew 7. We kicked off this series last week by seeing that **Anger is not about what's happening "out there," but "in here."** Anger is about what's in our heart, but we want to make it about everyone else. We want to think our anger is about "them" not me. And if "they" would just stop being so annoying, then I wouldn't be so angry.

And it's so easy to see this attitude in others, yet miss it in ourselves. I think it's why, in our text last week, Jesus uses "if anyone" 3 times and "you" six times. He wants us to see that anger and offense and judgmental attitudes, those things aren't just in others, they're in us, too.

And as we follow Jesus and worship him...as he changes that default setting inside of us...we come face to face, not with all the ways others have hurt or angered or offended us, but all the ways **WE** have hurt, or angered, or offended others. And Jesus puts it on us to go and make it right with them.

But, when we walk around with this belief that everyone's annoying but me, we feel like it's our job, not to make it right, but to make **them** right. We feel like it's our job to "fix" them or get back at them. To make them less annoying by convincing them we're right and they're wrong (*which isn't annoying at all!*), or to get back at them by attacking them or belittling them for the ways they've hurt, angered, or offended us.

But, **as Jesus does the hard work of heart work in us, we realize that we're really good at hurting others, too.** And all those things in others that annoy us, they're in us, too.

And so, if you walk around in life looking for a fight, looking to be offended, you don't have to look hard, it's out there. But, if you're looking for freedom from that kind of life, don't look out there, look in here. Let Jesus change the default settings of your heart and you'll find freedom from the anger and offense our world is drowning in.

And as Jesus transforms you, you'll begin to see yourself, and others, differently. You'll find that you become more offended by the sin in your own heart than in the hearts of others and you'll want to deal with those things inside of you more than inside of others. I think that's what Jesus is getting at in our text today. Look at it with me. Matthew 7, starting in verse 1...(READ Matt. 7:1-5)

Jesus uses some hyperbole here to make his point. When we walk around judging others without looking in our own heart, it's like walking around with this 2x4 in our eye while trying to help others get the speck of sawdust out of their own. It's absurd.

And, I don't think Jesus is telling us here that we shouldn't make judgements discerning what is right and what is wrong. What's truth and what's a lie. There are other places where Scripture implores us to judge those things rightly so we can live a godly life. I think what Jesus is teaching us is that we are to judge rightly without being judgmental of others.

In this text, Jesus is warning us against being characterized by a judgmental attitude, where we are quick to judge the actions and attitudes of others without taking a look at our own life. Quick to judge the sins of others without taking our own sin seriously. And when we look in our own hearts first, and see our own sin and brokenness...the ways we've hurt others...we begin to have a little more grace and empathy towards others. It doesn't mean that we're blind to their sin or that we condone all their actions, it means we become a little more generous and gracious towards them because we see it in us, too.

I think what Jesus is saying is **judge others the way you want to be judged**. All of us want others to judge our actions with mercy instead of justice, because we don't always get it right. And so we ought to learn how to be gracious and generous in our judgement of others because that's what all of us want, too. We want empathy and compassion when we make a mistake, but what we typically receive...and give to others...is anger and judgement.

As Stephen Covey says, **"We judge ourselves by our intentions and others by their behavior."** We believe our actions are justified and our intentions are pure. Even when we make a mistake, we're quick to point out all the reasons why it was an honest, or even justifiable, mistake. But we rarely give that same grace to others. Instead, we make assumptions about that person's character. They're annoying. They're jerks. They're inconsiderate.

We're slow to give others the same kind of grace we want to receive. And, over time, the log in our own eye just continues to grow and we continue to become more judgmental of others. And as we become more judgmental, we get more angry. And as we get more angry, we get more easily offended. And as we get more easily offended, we come to believe, "Everyone is annoying but me."

So, how do we break free from this cycle we're in? Again, it all comes down to Jesus. He's the only one who can change that default setting inside of us. And, I want to give us just one

practical step today for how we can let Jesus change this setting inside of us. Here it is...**Curate what you consume.** Choose wisely what you feed your heart, mind, and soul because what you put in is eventually what comes out.

The last couple of months have been pretty chaotic in my life. We did a big project at home, ministry has been awesome, but full. Just a lot going on. And during that time, I stopped running and exercising. I was staying up late, doing stuff around the house. Waking up early to get my day started. I got out of those healthy routines that are great stress relievers for my body, mind, and soul.

Instead, I started walking down a darker path to relieve that stress and turned to...ice cream. Ice cream became my stress reliever. I'd get to the end of the day and start craving it. We'd be tucking the girls into bed and I'm thinking about what kind I'm going to have. And, it turns out that, when you combine lack of exercise with stress and an unholy amount of ice cream...your body reacts to that! I'd wake up feeling sore, headaches, tired because I was feeding myself all of this junk food.

The same is true with our minds. What you consume will determine how you feel. And so, if you find yourself walking around feeling annoyed all the time, easily angered, offended, you might want to ask yourself, **"What am I feeding my soul?"** Are you constantly consuming the junk food of social media and news or are you feeding on the Word of God and allowing Jesus to transform you through it?

When we evaluate what we consume, I think many of us would find that we're being disciplined more by our favorite cable news personality than we are Jesus. We're being influenced more by social media than we are Scripture. And when we look at our world through the window of social media and news, it's easy to get offended by the actions of others. And that's what begins to come out of us.

But when I look into the mirror of God's Word, I find myself getting offended by my own actions. My own sinful heart. I see the plank in my own eye, and so I'm not quite as angry or judgmental when I see some specks in the eyes of others. I'm learning to take the grace and mercy I've received in Christ and let that influence how I treat those around me...who can sometimes be **almost** as annoying as me.

Jesus wants to change the default setting of your heart. And he's a lot more interested in changing you than in you trying to change someone else. In Jeremiah 17:9, God tells us what the default setting of our heart is. He says, **"The heart is deceitful above all things."** We want to say "Listen to your heart. Follow your heart." The Lord, who knows our heart better than even we do says, "No! Your heart is deceptive. And it will make you feel and do things that only adds to the brokenness of this world."

And the problem with the deception in our heart is not that it fools others into believing you're a good person. It's that it fools YOU into thinking you're a good person. And, when

you believe that, then it's really easy to look down on others and develop that judgmental attitude.

But, if we ever need to be reminded of the true default settings of our heart, all we have to do is look at the cross. When we look at the cross, the verdict is clear...I'm not a good person, but Jesus is. And through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, we can be made righteous. Not self-righteous...we'll talk about that next week...we can be made righteous...made right in the eyes of God.