

Cultivate Reflection Guide

When in Rome: How to Stop Judging Others

August 7 & 8, 2021

If you missed this weekend's messages, watch at cultivate.sc/discussion

Since the start of 2021, we've been learning *what* we believe as Christians and *why* we believe it. As we continue our When in Rome series this summer, our focus shifts to *how* we live out what we're learning. When what we believe changes how we live, we experience REAL growth!

Use our Reflection Guide for personal study throughout the week, to start a REAL conversation with friends or under the direction of your community group leader. Choose the questions that challenge you to reflect and respond as you live out what we're learning. Keep in mind...*it's not about getting through the content, but getting the content through you!*

Reflect/Respond: How were you personally encouraged, instructed or challenged by the message? This could be a word, verse or point that got your attention or got you thinking. What is one way you can cultivate that into your life SO THAT you begin to live out what you're learning?

Review Romans 14:1-12: Consider reading different translations or paraphrases for perspective.

Accept Other Believers: We – the Church – should be a safe place where our brothers and sisters in Christ can be welcomed and accepted regardless of minor differences among us. While acceptance does not mean turning a blind eye to sin, as followers of Jesus, our lives should be marked by wise judgment, not wrongly judging others.

- Do a heart check and be REAL. Are you a person who easily welcomes and accepts others or are you prone to criticism and judgement? Keep in mind, this is a matter of the heart – which means just because the other person doesn't know you're judging them, doesn't make it any less real.
- Is there anything you're arguing about or anyone you're arguing with that needs more grace & guidance and less condemnation & criticism?
- What is one step you could take this week to focus less on the minors and more on the major – making Jesus known and accepting others?

Cultivate Community In contrast to wrongly judging others, sometimes we need to have hard conversations with those in our family of faith to encourage, challenge or instruct their spiritual growth, maturity or health. If God is prompting you to have such a conversation, seek Him first so that your heart is right. Then walk forward in grace, with love, so that you can both handle their heart and help them grow.

Wrongly Judging: We are ALL guilty of judging others, but the REAL problem lies in making misjudgments. Consider what wrongly judging does:

- ❖ Brings out our hidden feelings – judging others out of insecurities, hurt, resentment or bitterness
- ❖ Makes us feel better about ourselves – judging others to boost our own self-esteem
- ❖ Creates negative programming – judging others and trying to win others to our side
- ❖ Lacks information – judging others based on assumptions, rather than REAL information
- Are any of the above at the root of your interactions, relationships or conversations with others?
- Regardless of your intentions or even awareness, begin by confessing any spirit of judgement to God. He receives you with grace and love. Be REAL with Him.
- God not only has authority to judge, but the ability to create REAL change and transformation. That means we can step down as judge and trust Him. Who in your life do you need to release to God so that He can work in their lives? Pray for that person now.
- God loves us too much to keep us where we are. He wants to transform us to be more like Jesus. Praise Jesus for the work of transformation He's done in your life and invite Him into the growth you desire.