

Sermon #27

# Don't Judge the Ass; Look for Christ!

God is mysterious and surprising, sudden and awesome.

His ways are plain, and yet they are hidden.

He delights in doing us good,

and He loves to reveal Himself to all who seek to know Him.

Where do you expect to encounter God?

How do you expect Him to work in your life?

Do you think He only speaks and acts through churches and church people? If so, you are probably missing a lot of what He is saying and doing in your life.

For example, God can and does work through the lowly ass.

Literally, through a donkey;

and figuratively, through a person who you judge to be an ass.

**Situation #1:** Think of someone who you judge to be an ass because he (or she) has gotten himself into a bad situation. He just fell into something because he wasn't being diligent and careful.

Write his or her name down on line #1 on the handout.

**{pause for about 30 seconds}**

Now, imagine that you are in a position to help him. **{pause}**

Jesus was quoted as saying, “Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?”

Luke 14:5

He also said, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: <sup>35</sup>for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; <sup>36</sup>I was naked and you

clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' <sup>37</sup>Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed *You*, or thirsty and give *You* drink? <sup>38</sup>When did we see You a stranger and take *You* in, or naked and clothe *You*? <sup>39</sup>Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' <sup>40</sup>And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.'" Matthew 25:34-40

***Here is the moral:*** If you see the ass in a ditch, do what you can to pull him out, even if it means missing church on Sunday!  
You may be pulling out Christ!

**Situation #2:** Think of an annoying child or teenager that you know.  
Write his or her name down in the second blank on your paper.

**{pause for about 30 seconds}**

Imagine this person approaching you, wanting to visit with you.  
What would you do? **{pause}**

Consider this:

"And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, 'Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.'" John 12:14-15

***There are two morals to this:***

First, sometimes God chooses a young ass to carry Christ to you.  
Secondly, when Christ comes, His message to you is "fear not".

Don't be threatened--just behold Him.

Look, listen, and be receptive to Him.

Honor the King, instead of judging the young ass who carries Him.

**Situation #3:** Think of someone who makes a fool out of himself when he speaks, or someone who angers you any time he opens his mouth.

Write his name down in the third blank on your piece of paper.  
**{pause for about 30 seconds}**

Listen to what Samson did: (as recorded in Judges 15:15-16)

“And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith. And Samson said, ‘With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men.’”

**Moral:** Sometimes God works through the jawbone of an ass to accomplish His purpose.

**Situation #4:** Think of a person in your life who resists doing what you tell him or her to do, one who stands in the way of you getting what you want.

Write his name in the fourth blank on your list.

**{pause for about 30 seconds}**

*Listen to these excerpts from the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Numbers:*

<sup>21</sup>And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.

<sup>22</sup>And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants *were* with him.

<sup>23</sup>And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way.

<sup>25</sup>And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: and he smote her again.

<sup>27</sup>And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff.

- <sup>28</sup>And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, "What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?"
- <sup>29</sup>And Balaam said unto the ass, "Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee."
- <sup>30</sup>And the ass said unto Balaam, "Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee?" And he said, "Nay."
- <sup>32</sup>And the angel of the LORD said unto him, "Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me:
- <sup>33</sup>And the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times: unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive."

***Morals:***

First, sometimes an ass sees an angel before we do.

Second, sometimes the ass that is resisting you is being used by God to guide you.

Third, sometimes the ass you are mistreating is saving your life.

All four of these situations should help us realize why Jesus commanded us not to judge others.

Let's listen to a few things Jesus had to say about judging:

He said: <sup>1</sup>"Judge not, that you be not judged. <sup>2</sup>For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. <sup>3</sup>And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? <sup>4</sup>Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank *is* in your own eye? <sup>5</sup>Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

Matthew 7:1-5

<sup>57</sup>“Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right?”  
Luke 12:57

<sup>30</sup>“I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.”  
John 5:30

<sup>15</sup>“You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. <sup>16</sup>And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I *am* with the Father who sent Me.”  
John 8:15

<sup>44</sup>Then Jesus cried out and said, “He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. <sup>45</sup>And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. <sup>46</sup>I have come *as* a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. <sup>47</sup>And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. <sup>48</sup>He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. <sup>49</sup>For I have not spoken on My own *authority*; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. <sup>50</sup>And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.”  
John 12:44-50

The word of truth is the judge of us all;  
and each of us are to judge our own thoughts, speech and actions.  
When we do this, we will see ourselves rightly and be too humbled  
to judge anyone else. We'll just be thanking God for His grace and  
mercy rather than judging others.

Look at the four names you have written on your paper.  
Will you repent of judging them and thinking yourself to  
be better than them?  
Will you resolve to receive Christ when He comes to you  
through them?

God often works for our good through those who are least in our eyes.  
So, the next time you encounter an ass, don't judge him;  
just look and listen for Christ!

“I AM the Lord your God, your Creator and Sustainer.

I work through all for good.

Do not look down on the lowly and humble,  
for they are the ones who I exalt.

Look to Me for all you need, and receive all those I send to you.

Look for Me and you will see.

Look past your thoughts and see the truth.

Look for Me where you least expect Me;

there I will be, working through all for your good.

I, the Lord, love mercy. I love to forgive.

I want you to be like Me. Do not judge.

You know what is good and right, so do it. Stop making excuses.”

AMEN.

{copy the chart below as a handout for the congregation}

<b>Description of a Person</b>	<b>Person's Name</b>
Someone who has gotten himself into a bad situation, through his own ignorance or lack of diligence	1.
A child or teenager who I think is foolish or annoying, or who “has a lot to learn”	2.
Someone who either makes a fool of himself or makes me mad when he opens his mouth	3.
Someone who resists doing what I tell him to do, or who stands in the way of me getting what I want	4.