“Do not judge or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, “Let me take the speck out of your eye” when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye. Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn on you and tear you to pieces.” Matthew 7:1-6

What does it mean “to judge”?  

- Judge - one qualified to make critical evaluations  
- Judging - to decide authoritatively, conclude, decide.

Jesus is not saying that there should never be a judgment of any kind at any time for any reason, as some would suppose. Jesus is saying you cannot set yourself up as a judge, declaring yourself qualified to make a conclusion about someone by your own standards.

- We are commanded to judge but not to be judgmental.

“Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment.” John 7:24

“Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!” 1 Cor. 7:3

- The question to ask yourself when making a judgment is, “Is it true?”

“By judging others we blind ourselves to our own evil and to the grace which others are just as entitled to as we are.” — Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship

Four problems with being judgmental:

1. One can never know all the facts about a person or a situation.

2. It is impossible for anyone to be absolutely impartial in his judgments.

3. Being judgmental places a value on a person that God has not placed on them.

4. Judgmental people hypocritically overlook the shortcomings in their own lives.
How to avoid being judgmental

1. **Look** at yourself first. “Remove the plank in your own eye.”

2. **Learn** to see clearly. “Then you will see clearly.”

3. **Love** the other person. “…To remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”

4. Understand that there is a time to love with mercy and a time for tough love.

“How do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you.”
Prov. 9:8

“Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him. You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.”
Titus 3:10-11

Discussion starter questions for your Groups InCommon

1. Talk about a time when you have been judgmental. Was your judgment true? What was the outcome of your judgment?

2. How have you seen the correction and rebuke of God’s Word effectively administered in the church? (2 Tim. 4:2)

3. Jesus made some aggressive judgments about the Pharisees in Matthew 23. How do you feel about this confrontation in light of today’s culture?

4. In our nation there is rampant judgmentalism from many sides. How can the church be salt and light in this tumultuous time?