JUDG'D

(Mark 11:15-18)

Often the Christian faith is presented with an unhealthy emphasis on shame, guilt, and judgment. But judgment is a future reality, guilt has a remedy, and not all shame is bad. In this text, Jesus—known for his grace when dealing with hurting people—lashes out in judgment against those that feel no shame and admit no guilt. His judgment is just, but it may not apply to you—a good thing to keep in mind as you work through this study.

1. In general, how do you tend to respond when you feel you're being judged?

2. If you conclude a judgment is just or appropriate, how—and when—is your response altered?

3. Read Mark 11:15-18 below and answer the questions that follow.

On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple area and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, [16]and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. [17]And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it 'a den of robbers.'" [18]The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching. (Mark 11:15-18)

- What does this story reveal to you about what is important to God?

- In his message, Ted explained that in this first century story, the judgment of Jesus falls on anyone that a) is guilty of constructing barriers that make God less accessible and b) is guilty of approaching worship with a consumer-mentality. How would you retell this story if you set it in the 21st century? What might be the focus of Jesus' judgment now?

4. Place yourself in the story. Who and where are you and what are you doing?

5. How will you respond in the coming week to Jesus' passion expressed toward the positive and/or negative issues you've identified at the end of question three?

We have a strange illusion that mere time cancels sin…. But mere time does nothing either to the fact or to the guilt of a sin. The guilt is washed out not by time but by repentance and the blood of Christ…. As for the fact of a sin, is it probable that anything cancels it?

- C. S. Lewis, British educator and author