

Measure for Measure

“The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

1 Samuel 16:7

We so often form our first judgment of people by their appearance. I'm so thankful that God doesn't judge me that way and that He understands I sometimes judge others too early. Many times we see only the outside. We see beauty, talents, fame and such, but God sees straight to our heart and knows what we and the other people are really like. He accepts all of us as we are.

Many years ago there was a musical by Rogers and Hammerstein that really hit the social issues of that time. It was called "You've got to be taught." from South Pacific. The musical was based on a book by John Michener. I think it applies to the situation in this devotional.

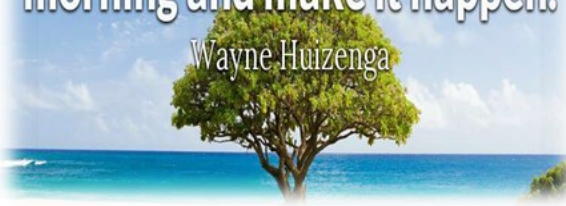
The line before the song says that prejudice is "not born in you! It happens after you're born..." It raised a lot of controversy then, but it still has a powerful message to each of today as we judge other people. It is sung by a lieutenant who has fallen in love with a Polynesian girl and a nurse who has fallen in love with a Frenchman of

questionable character who lives on the island. Some of the words are:

*“You've got to be taught to be afraid
Of people whose eyes are oddly made,
And people whose skin is a different
shade,
You've got to be carefully taught.”
You've got to be taught before it's too
late,
Before you are six or seven or eight,
To hate all the people your relatives
hate,*

*Some people dream of success,
while other people get up every
morning and make it happen.*

Wayne Huizenga



You've got to be carefully taught!”
In the Scripture for this devotional we have Samuel being guilty of just this. He needs a prince, some one to replace him when he is gone. He is sent the oldest son of Jesse and thinks this is the one God has chosen to succeed him. God tells him to reject him. Finally when Samuel gets to the last son of Jesse, David, he is accepted by God for Samuel's successor. Why were the others not acceptable? We don't know. Often though we can make a similar mistake and judge some one by appearance. We can't see inside the heart as God can. There are people in this world that many consider beautiful on

the outside, but then find out that person is not so beautiful on the inside. There are many who may not look so good on the outside to us but they are beautiful on the inside.

Have you ever stopped to think that the best book of all, the Bible, usually has a very plain cover!

From my point of view, God is the light that illuminates the darkness, even if it does not dissolve it, and a spark of divine light is within each of us.

Pope Francis

By the same token, we cannot judge another person by what someone else says. Often we can find that the other person may have a conflict of interest with the person and has prejudged and also wants you to know what he has prejudged to be correct!

Judging another person by our standards does not tell us how they are. It does tell us how we are. Despite all our efforts we often judge others. We see small things like someone who seemed to take too long a break for lunch or always seems to show up late for everything. Could we know the reason for this.

“If there is any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view and see things from that person's angle as well as from your own.”

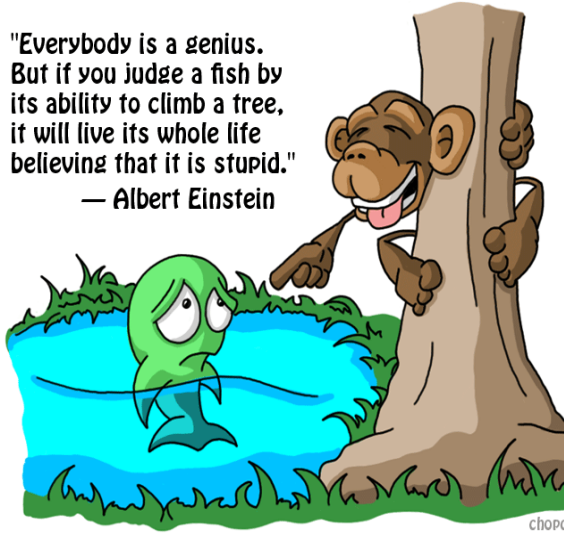
Henry Ford

Perhaps they had an emergency. Does that give us the right to invade their privacy.

Remember it is not about you. Albert Einstein supposedly said:

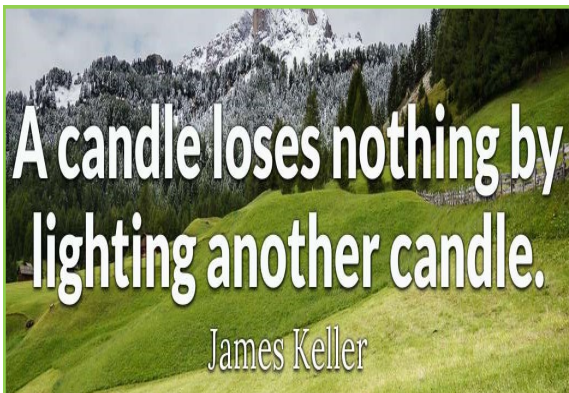
"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

— Albert Einstein

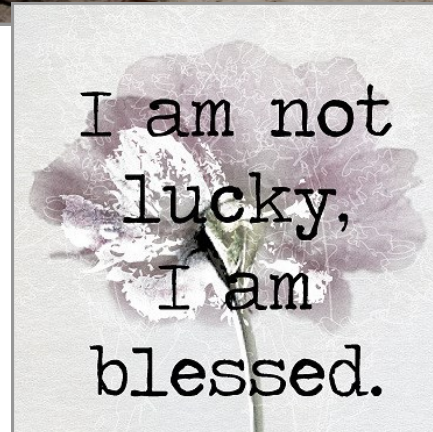
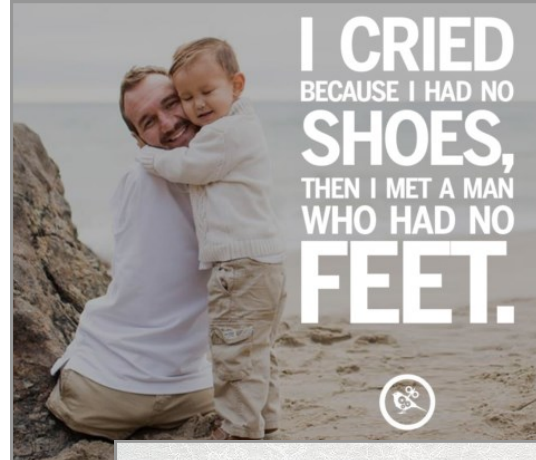


Sometimes we can harm others by judging them without knowing them.

We can harm people in many ways. Most people are aware of their shortcomings, but if we point them out to them by our behavior or tell others our opinion, we can only hurt them.



There are many poor people in this world. We do not help them by rejecting them as friends. We can gain much by listening to other people. It may help them overcome some troubles, and it will certainly help us to realize how really blessed we are. We often judge by clothes or jewelry. I am reminded of a quote illustrated here that I have seen many times. It always reminds me of how really blessed I have been throughout my whole life—through the dark times and the light times. God has always been there for me and He is there for you.



Prayer: Lord, You alone know each of us in our heart; I pray for discernment of Your Holy Spirit to help me recognize the qualities of the people who come into my life and not only look at the outward appearance. Guide me to not judge, but only to allow You to judge. Amen

1. How do we perceive people that aren't the same skin color as we are?
2. How do we perceive a person with a handicap?
3. How do we perceive a person with an abuse problem? Or someone who has committed a crime and spent time in prison?
4. What are our first thoughts when someone is in our seat at any event, especially church?
5. Do you wonder how God sees us when we are judgmental of others? What can we do to overcome this personal problem?

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I used to think that friends were the people that you could laugh and talk to. Now I know that friends aren't that, they're the people that touch your hearts. They're the people you can share your secrets with, cry with, laugh with, and just have fun with. They don't judge you or make you change. They accept you exactly as you are.