November 1, 2026
Sea Change Church
Storm Proof: A Study in James
S2E4: Who Are You to Judge?
Pastor Harry Wilson

James 4:11-12
[11] Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. [12] There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

Key Word: Katalaleō: "to speak ill or evil of" or "to slander"

- We too easily become comfortable domesticating small hidden sins that we deem insignificant.

Leviticus 19:16
You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand up against the life of your neighbor: I am the Lord.

Galatians 6:1
Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

- The goal of Christian correction is restoration not condemnation.

- Self righteousness is a common contagion that turns Christians into Pharisees.

Matthew 7:1-5 "Judge not, that you be not judged. [2] For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. [3] Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? [4] Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? [5] You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

- The first step on the path to clarity is humility.

“It begins with a grumbling mood, and yourself still distinct from it: perhaps criticising it. And yourself, in a dark hour, may will that mood, embrace it. Ye can repent and come out of it again. But there may come a day when you can do that no longer. Then there will be no you left to criticise the mood, nor even to enjoy it, but just the grumble itself going on forever like a machine.” - C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*

- Self-control is not the fruit of human effort, but the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Discussion Questions

1. Was there anything in the worship or message that stood out to you on Sunday? Did you sense the Holy Spirit speaking to you in any way?
2. What are some things in your life that currently have the greatest influence on your thoughts, attitudes, and behavior? How do those influences compare with the influence of Jesus?
3. How does recognizing our own need for God's grace change the way we view and respond to the failures of others? What does it look like to approach others with humility rather than judgment?
4. What is the difference between trying harder to control our behavior and allowing the Holy Spirit to transform our hearts? What might this look like practically in your life this week?
5. Are there any lingering questions from the sermon or the passage that would be helpful to discuss together?