It's Deeper Than That – Week 8 Small Group Questions

Opening Prayer

Ice Breaker

1. Who is someone in your life (past or present) who could tell you the hard truth and you'd actually listen? What made them that person?

Discuss

Main Scriptures: Matthew 7:1-6

1. A 2022 study found that over half of Americans see Christians as hypocritical (55%) and judgmental (54%). Why do you think that perception is so widespread? Have you ever been on the receiving end of judgment from people who claimed to follow Jesus?
2. Read John 3:17. Pastor Jeff said, "Your agreement with our belief does not determine whether you can belong here." How do we hold together welcoming everyone and never backing down from what the Bible says?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 5:9–13. Paul says it isn't our job to judge outsiders, but it is our responsibility to judge those inside the church. Why do you think Christians so often get this backwards?
4. Pastor Jeff drew a line between *correction* (caring about someone's soul and wanting them closer to God) and *condemnation* (attacking someone's character, identity, and personhood). Read Galatians 6:1. What does "gently and humbly" helping someone back onto the right path actually look like in a real conversation?
5. Rich Villodas said, *"Judgment that doesn't start with yourself is hypocrisy."* Jeff added that we tend to see the twigs in others as moral failures and the branches in ourselves as mistakes. Where do you catch yourself justifying in you what you'd call out in someone else?
6. Read Matthew 5:14–16. "It is not our responsibility to tell the darkness it should be light. Our responsibility is to tell those who claim to carry their light to actually let that light shine." Where have you been "yelling at a dark house," and what would shining light look like instead?

Practice

1. Identify one or two people you trust and ask them this week, "Is there anything in my life you see that I might be blind to?" Then just listen without defending yourself.
2. Fast from judging online this week: no critical comments, posts, or shares about people you're not in relationship with. Notice how often you're tempted.