

Comparisons Second Week of Lent Monday, March 13, 2017 8:15 AM
Dn 9:4b-10; **Lk 6:36-38** (You can't be one way toward yourself and one/another way toward someone else.)

“For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.”

Jesus' teachings are an extension of what was in the Old Testament called wisdom. **These are all wisdom statements.** But they are not simply statements, they are not just proverbs, they are revealing the nature of reality—**they are revealing the nature of reality.** Jesus is saying if you only understood the way the world really is, that would actually change the way you behave.

Now the Jewish people sincerely believed in the Torah as a gift from God describing how to live. All well and good except for the fact that by the time the Torah had developed in the time of Jesus there were so many stipulations, St Paul says no one could keep them all. Now **the way of wisdom** is really different from the way of Torah. It doesn't even attempt to follow thousands of different stipulations or rules. It's more **about insight into what is really right and good.**

Now it's very clever what this actually says. It's saying **stop comparing yourself to others,** which is what judging is about, isn't it? You're wrong; I'm right. That's a judgment. That's a comparison. **“Stop condemning”**—that's a judgment. That's a comparison. **You fall short of what you should do or should be or should have done. That takes place if you believe in living by rules.** But now wisdom doesn't live by rules. It lives by insight.

The insight here is that the very way in which you deal with other people comes back to you. “The measure with which you measure,” whether it's a condemning measure or a lenient measure, whether you are judging people harshly or in a very gentle way, that all comes back to you. If you are harsh with others, then somehow there is something in reality that will be harsh with you. In a way you are being harsh on yourself. **You can't be one way toward yourself and another way toward someone else,** is what this is saying. It won't work. If you condemn other

people, you are actually condemning yourself, because **everyone is limited in whatever quality you can mention**. No one is infinitely patient except God. No one is infinitely wise except God. No one is infinitely loving except God, and so on. You go through everything. Everyone is limited and so **if you're going to be condemning people for their limitations, well, you are condemning yourself because you are obviously limited as well**. In one way it's very simple, but yet it is not something people normally get.

Now when it comes to comparing, **there is a comparison that's valid. "Be merciful as your Father is merciful."** Now there you can start comparing. **Compare yourself to the mercy of God**, and when you equal that, oh, that will be very good. You can be very proud of yourself as soon as you equal the mercy of God. That's the one thing you can compare.