

# Pharisees Seek to Catch Others in Their Words

by Zac Poonen

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*A godly response to others' words is to place the best construction on them and not judge by what we see or hear.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 18:13, Isaiah 11:3, Matthew 7:1-2, Matthew 19:3, Matthew 22:15, Luke 11:54, Romans 14:10, Ephesians 4:29, Colossians 4:6, James 1:19

**Topics:** "Judgment", "Love and Understanding"

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## Description

Zac Poonen addresses the behavior of the Pharisees who sought to trap Jesus with their questions, particularly regarding the lawfulness of divorce. He draws parallels to modern-day believers who, instead of seeking truth, aim to catch others in their words to accuse them. Poonen emphasizes that true love involves interpreting others' words charitably, unlike the Pharisees who misrepresented Jesus' teachings. He encourages listeners to follow Jesus' example of not judging hastily based on appearances or hearsay.

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## Transcript

Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?" (Matthew 19:3).

Pharisees seek to catch people in something they say in order to accuse them before others.

They may even ask you questions to try and trip you up. We read in Matthew 22:15 that "the Pharisees plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said". (See Luke 11:54 also).

I have had similar experiences too. At times, believers from some churches (who are convicted by what I preach and who want to accuse me of preaching heresy) have visited me and asked me questions in order to catch me in some word that I may say. They are not interested in being free from sin in their lives but only in finding some fault in others. This is exactly how the Pharisees were. They would take Jesus' words out of context and accuse Him of heresy. Modern-day Pharisees have twisted my words too in a similar fashion..

If we love someone, we will always place the best construction on anything he says. We will say, "Perhaps I misunderstood what he said. Perhaps he was joking", etc., A Pharisee however will never make such an allowance for anyone. It is written of Jesus that "He would not judge by what His ears heard or by what His eyes saw" (Isaiah 11:3). This is the example that every godly man will follow.

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