JOSHUA

The Cost of Assuming the Worst

JOSHUA 22

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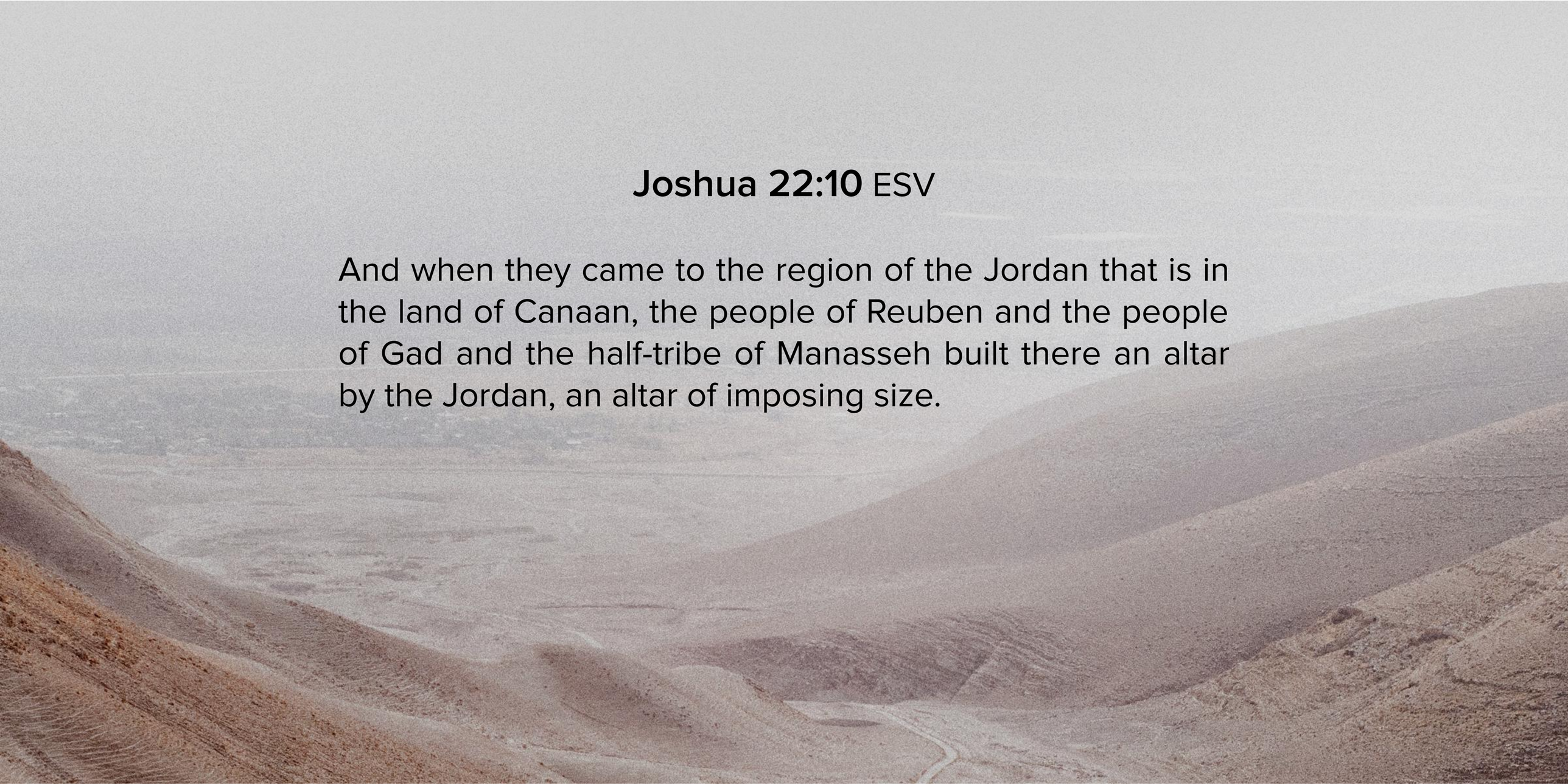
Joshua 22:1-3 ESV

At that time Joshua summoned the Reubenites and the
Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, [2] and said to them,
"You have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD
commanded you and have obeyed my voice in all that I
have commanded you. [3] You have not forsaken your
brothers these many days, down to this day, but have
been careful to keep the charge of the LORD your God."

Joshua 22:6, 9 ESV

6 So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

9 So the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh returned home, parting from the people of Israel at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the land of Gilead, their own land of which they had possessed themselves by command of the LORD through Moses.



Joshua 22:10 ESV

And when they came to the region of the Jordan that is in the land of Canaan, the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by the Jordan, an altar of imposing size.

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Deuteronomy 12:13-14 ESV

“Take care that you **do not offer your burnt offerings at any place that you see, 14 but at the place that the LORD will choose in one of your tribes**, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.”

Joshua 22:11-12 ESV

And the people of Israel heard it said, “Behold, the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh have built the altar at the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region about the Jordan, on the side that belongs to the people of Israel.” **12** And when the people of Israel heard of it, the whole assembly of the people of Israel gathered at Shiloh to make war against them.

Joshua 22:11-12 ESV

And the people of Israel heard it said, “Behold, the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh have built the altar at the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region about the Jordan, on the side that belongs to the people of Israel.” **12** And when the people of Israel **heard of it**, the whole assembly of the people of Israel gathered at Shiloh to **make war against them.**

Joshua 22:13-14 ESV

Then the people of Israel sent to the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, **Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest**, **14** and with him ten chiefs, one from each of the tribal families of Israel, every one of them the head of a family among the clans of Israel.

Joshua 22:16 ESV

“Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD, ‘What is this breach of faith that you have committed against the God of Israel in turning away this day from following the LORD by building yourselves an altar this day in rebellion against the LORD?’”

Joshua 22:24-25 ESV

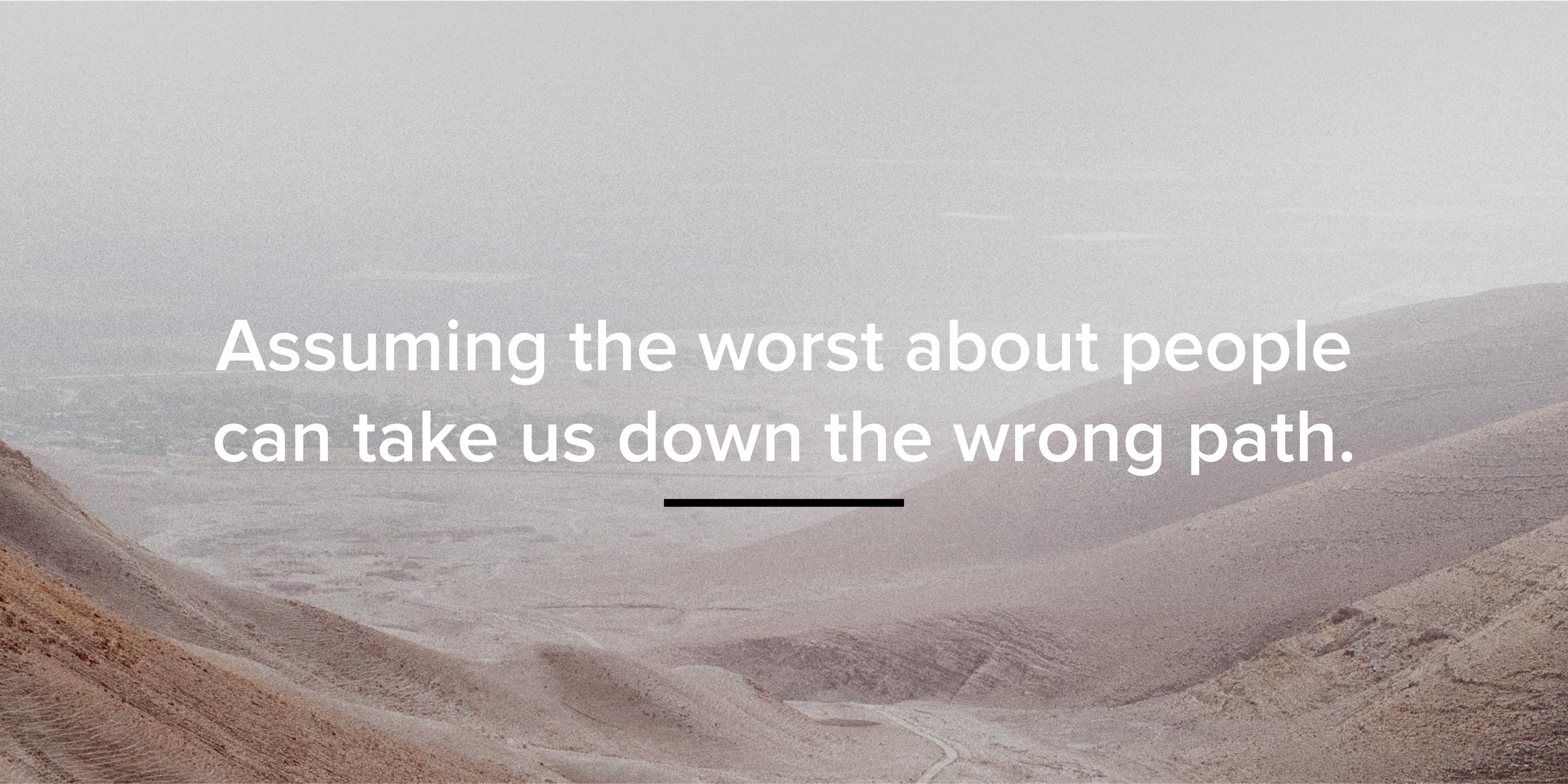
“No, but we did it from fear that in time to come your children might say to our children, ‘What have you to do with the LORD, the God of Israel? **25** For the LORD has made the Jordan a boundary between us and you, you people of Reuben and people of Gad. You have no portion in the LORD.’ So your children might make our children cease to worship the LORD.”

Joshua 22:26-27 ESV

“Therefore we said, ‘Let us now build an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice, **27** but to be a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us, that we do perform the service of the LORD in his presence with our burnt offerings and sacrifices and peace offerings, so your children will not say to our children in time to come, “You have no portion in the LORD.”’”

Joshua 22:30 ESV

When Phinehas the priest and the chiefs of the congregation, the heads of the families of Israel who were with him, **heard the words that the people of Reuben and the people of Gad and the people of Manasseh spoke, it was good in their eyes.**


Assuming the worst about people
can take us down the wrong path.

When we assume the worst about people...

We think we know other people's motives, but we don't.

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We commit the sin of failing to love our neighbors as ourselves.

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We undermine the unity of the Church.

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We undermine the unity of the Church.

We believe things that are not true.

When we assume the worst about people...

We think we know other people's motives, but we don't.

We commit the sin of failing to love our neighbors as ourselves.

We undermine the unity of the Church.

We believe things that are not true.

It leads us to a false gospel of self-justification.

Rather than assuming the worst about people...

Listen.

Ask! Seek to understand.

Give them the benefit of the doubt.

Extend grace to them, just as God has extended grace to you.