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“Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him (to Jesus). And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, ‘This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.’” We human beings love to sort, catalog, and categorize things. Some collect and classify coins, others amass rocks, and some old ball-point pens. Observable, measurable characteristics of these objects help us group them.

We label people, too. Some folks use skin color, ancestry, apparel, bone structure, and perceived intelligence to determine the worth or acceptability of others. That’s why the Pharisees and scribes grumbled about Jesus’ dinner companions.

Modern technology gives us the skills to ascertain shades, bone density, mineral content, genes, and millions of traits. But no human being can measure the worth of another individual or another person’s mind. The Pharisees and scribes got it all wrong when they decided people’s worth. When we judge anyone, whether king, president, or peasant, we commit the same error. We also increase the certainty that God’s verdict on us will be even more harsh.

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