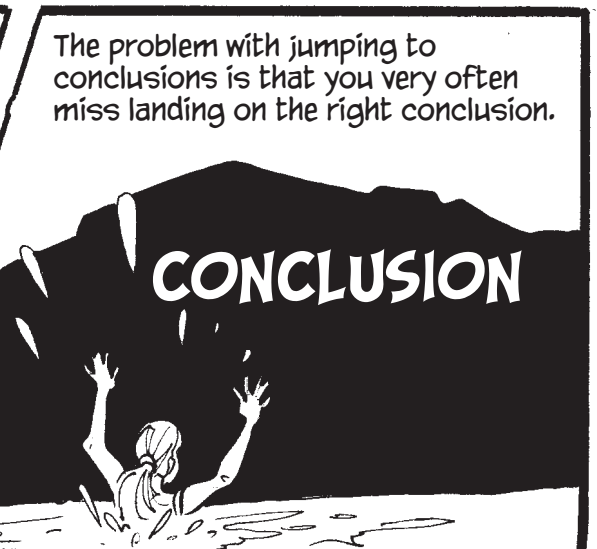
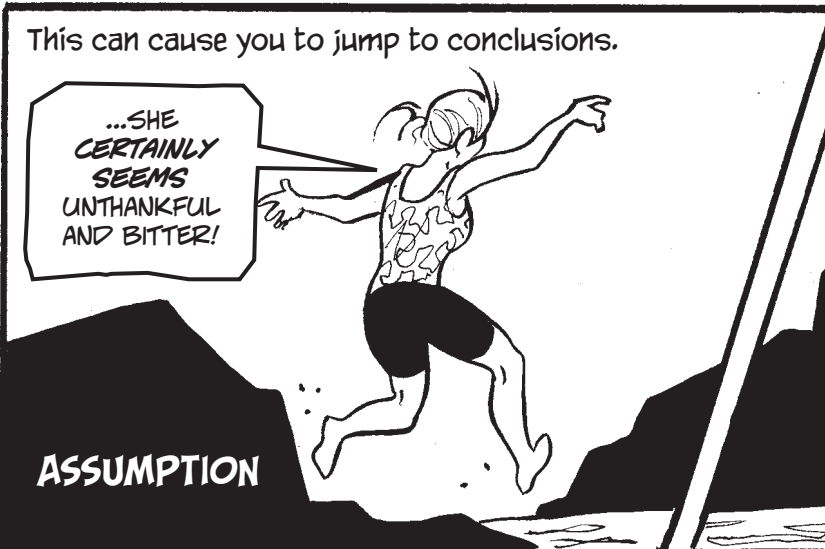
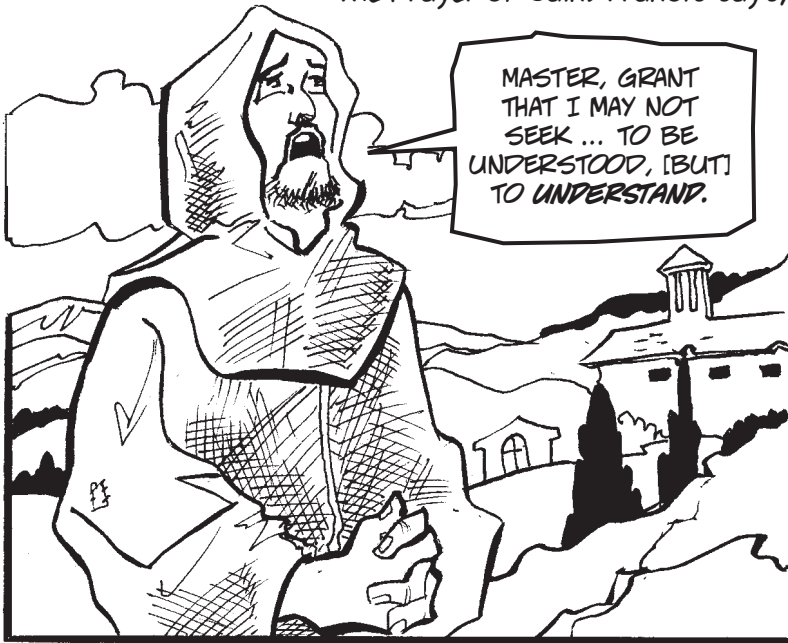


But to Understand

The Prayer of Saint Francis says,



It's easy to assume that something someone did or said was stupid, arrogant, or unkind because we don't understand the person's motives.



It is much tougher to take the time to find out the reasons behind a person's actions or attitudes.

ER ... MISS, I WANT TO APOLOGISE FOR SNAPPING AT YE LIKE THAT. YE SEE, I HAD JUST GOT A CALL FROM ME 'USBAND ... HE'S BEEN LAID OFF.



It means you have to step out of your own shoes—your own understanding, experiences, likes and dislikes—and into someone else's.

OUCH!

A CASE IN POINT...

The Bible says to "judge not." But sometimes it may seem like people deserve to be judged, because you'd never do the things they do. Most likely when you see a flaw in someone else, the last thing you're thinking is "Well, I'm not perfect either. ..."



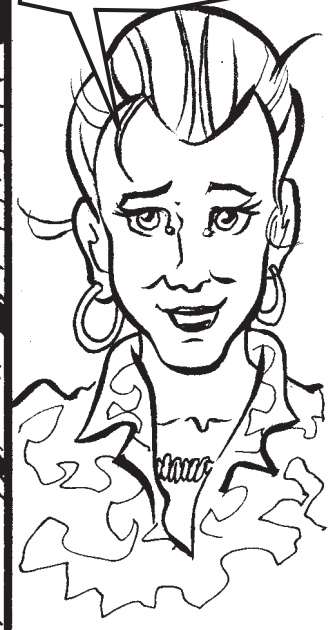
But while you know (technically) that you're not perfect yourself, that's often quickly forgotten when you're confronted by the seeming imperfections of others.

HOW DOES SEAN GET AWAY WITH BEING SO RUDE?

WHO THE HELL ARE YE STARIN' AT?

UMM ... I'M S-SORRY.

BUT WHAT IF YOU WERE PERFECT. WOULD YOU THEN BE IN A PLACE TO JUDGE?

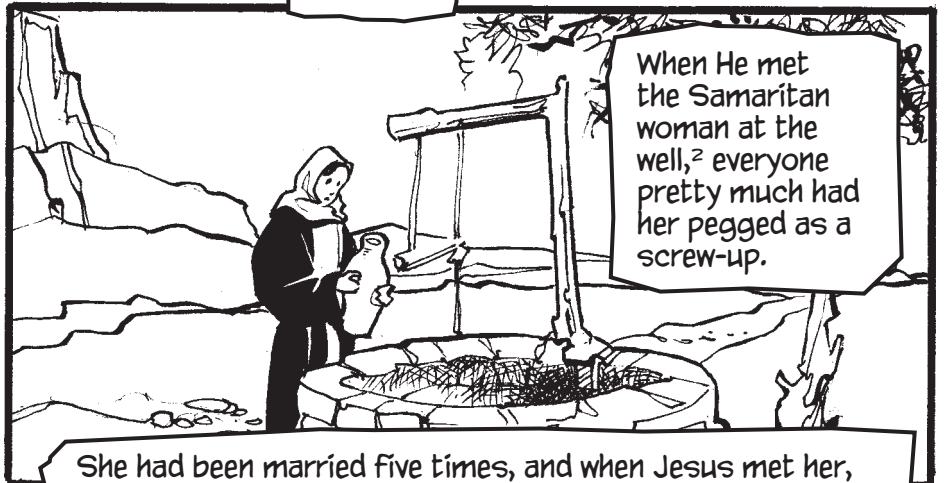


There was one perfect guy.

He never sinned—never has and never will. If anyone's in a position to judge, He is. Of course, that person was Jesus.

So how did He deal with other people and their screw-ups? What kind of example did He set for dealing with all those less-than-perfect people?

LET'S TAKE A LOOK.



When He met the Samaritan woman at the well,² everyone pretty much had her pegged as a screw-up.

She had been married five times, and when Jesus met her, she was living with a guy who wasn't her husband at all, which went against the customs of that day, and according to the law she "deserved" to be judged by others.

This woman was likely a popular topic for the town rumor mill.

Perhaps people whispered and cast judgmental glances as she passed by.

Instead of getting to know and understand her, others shunned her.



When they looked at her, all they saw were the labels they had placed on her.

Perhaps that's why she was at the well in the midday heat when no one else would be drawing water—she figured she could get water in peace.



He knew there was more to her than that, and He chose to look past her mistakes.



³ ALL DIALOGUE FROM PAGES 4-5 ARE TAKEN FROM JOHN 4:10-42 KJV.

He saw all she was and all she could be.

BUT THE HOUR COMETH,
AND NOW IS, WHEN THE
TRUE WORSHIPPERS SHALL
WORSHIP THE FATHER IN
SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH: FOR
THE FATHER SEEKETH SUCH
TO WORSHIP HIM.

Obviously, Jesus
understood her well
enough to be able to
reach her on her level,
because she ran back
to tell the whole town
about Him.

She had known Jesus not
even a day, but she trusted
Him enough to point to
Him as the Savior.

COME, SEE A MAN,
WHICH TOLD ME ALL
THINGS THAT EVER I
DID! IS NOT THIS THE
CHRIST?

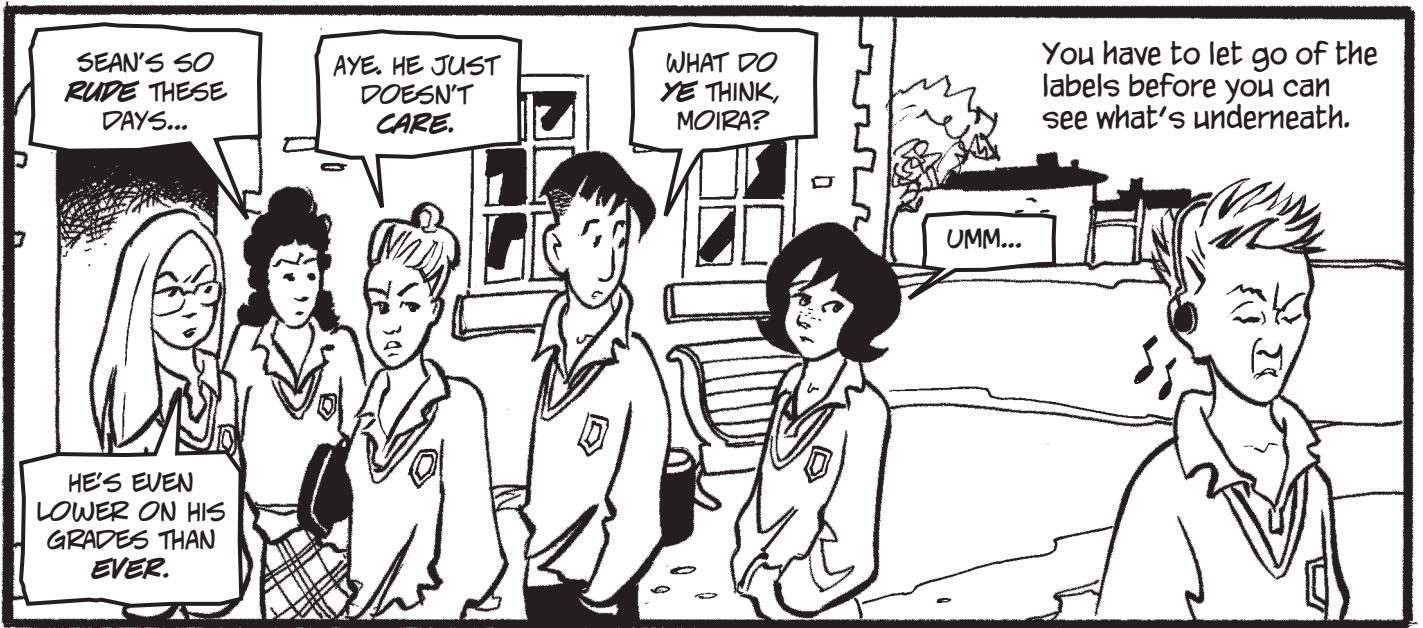
Because Jesus truly
understood her, He was
able to reach not only
her but many others in
that Samaritan town.

NOW WE BELIEVE, NOT BECAUSE
OF THY SAYING: FOR WE HAVE
HEARD HIM OURSELVES, AND KNOW
THAT THIS IS INDEED THE CHRIST, THE
SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.

Romans 14:13 says to:

“Stop passing judgment on one another.”⁴

You'll never understand others when you're judging and labeling.



When you take time to really understand someone, you'll find it much harder to judge them.



⁴New International Version