

Judging

- How many people have you ever heard say “You’re not the judge!” or “I thought you, as a **Christian**, weren’t to judge people! Well you must be a hypocrite then!” or “Doesn’t the Bible say we aren’t to judge anyone?” Some take Paul’s letter to the **Corinthians** (*1 Cor 5:12*) as their go-to verse to make their point, but take it out of the context it was originally in. He was referring to the act of withdrawing fellowship from “anyone who bears the name of brother” (*fellow Christian*) and then goes on to ask how such judgment would have any authority on those outside the body of **Christ**. We can’t “go out of the world” (*v. 10*) and completely separate ourselves from the non-**Christians** who need the gospel. We are to separate from those among us who are unruly and not “walking in the truth” (*2 Jn 1:4*).

1Co 5:12 For what have I to do with judging (*Gk.2919- punish*) outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? 13 God judges (*Gk.2919*) those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."

- Obviously we aren’t **THE Judge** and we’re not to be “self-righteous” as what we’re often accused of as being by non-believers because we know where our righteousness originates. These are usually statements spoken by a **Biblically** uninformed, worldly individual that may have been caught in a transgression or who was made to feel some sort of guilt when they understand the moral standard by which every **Christian** is supposed to live. That is, if they **know** where we stand on the moral issues of the day.

Luk 18:9 And He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

- even as this publican- A publican was a Jew that was hired by the Roman government to collect taxes from his own countrymen. Sadly, there were those who exacted more than what they were supposed to, and the Roman government really didn’t care as long as it got what it required of those under its rule. But every Jewish tax gatherer, even those who only collected what was fair, was lumped into the same group as all those who cheated them. Obviously, the publican in Jesus’ parable was one of the fair ones. But the pompous Pharisee used this humble man, who may have worked for the Romans as his only choice to take care of his family, when judging **himself** to be righteous making a comparison to his **own** status and bragged about his **own** works as though they were what would justify him before God.

Luk 18:13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbles himself shall be exalted.

- There are many people who feel that as long as they are “good”, according to the world’s definition, that makes them good to go in God’s sight. Their naïve “self-righteousness” gives them a pompous attitude like the Pharisee in Jesus’ example, but because **Christians** have a basis from which to draw our moral standard from, we are the ones who are often called the “self-righteous” of the world. When an immoral person realizes

their shame, unless of course “their conscience (*is*) seared with a hot iron” (1 Tim 4:2) they are then likely to go on the offense by using degrading tactics as their weapon of choice. All their decisions are based on their own human nature and the desires to satisfy “self”. But every Christian is to base every decision with a “what sayeth the Lord” attitude that can only be nurtured with a daily consumption of the word of God. If Jesus sought the will of His Father in order to please Him, who are we to look for our inspiration anywhere else?

Joh 5:30 I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek **not** Mine **own** will, but the will of the Father Who hath sent Me.

- The standard in which we are to judge then should have its ultimate origin from whence Jesus received His.

Joh 8:15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. 16 And yet if I judge, My judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me.

- Man judges by appearance whereas Jesus’ first visit as God’s Son wasn’t to judge anyone. He came to give His life to save man. Someone might say “Who are you to judge when we’re all sinners and have done worse at least one time or another.” Maybe so, but is that how they would justify some immoral activity, some sophomoric attitude toward sin? There comes a time when we, especially as Christians, are to leave the past behind and grow up, increase in our understanding in order to discern what’s right and what’s wrong.

Heb 5:13 For every one that useth milk *is* unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern (*Gk.1253- judicial estimation*) (*to have the ability to judge right and wrong*) both good and evil.

- Though we can’t expect people in the world to be Christ-like we definitely are to expect it from each other, especially when it comes to making judgments on whatever issue. And that’s when we certainly are to “judge righteous judgment” according to His word.

Joh 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but **judge righteous** (*Gk.1342- equitable [in character or act]; by implication innocent, holy*) **judgment** (*Gk.2920- by extension a tribunal; by implication justice [specifically divine law]*). As the saints of God we are then to make our decisions based on a just, moral character.

Jas 2:1 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons. 2 For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; 3 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: 4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are **become judges** of evil thoughts?

- Judge-*Gk.2919- to distinguish, that is, decide; by implication to try, condemn, punish.* Each gloss in the Greek is to be understood in the context in which the word “judge” is used. But according to Jesus, **all** judgments we make are to be from the standpoint of being of an innocent character ourselves and thus holy. We might **think** someone is a morally bad person but just because someone might look on the **outside** to be dirty or

wicked, it's what's **inside** that counts. We see the outer person but **God** sees the heart. And we can't judge another for something we ourselves are presently guilty of either. If we judge another's sin harshly, we'll find that our own sin will be judged in the same manner.

Mat 7:1 Judge not, that ye be not judged. **2** For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. **3** And why beholdest thou the mote (*Gk.2595- a dry twig or straw*) that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam (*Gk.1385- timber*) that is in thine own eye? **4** Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye? **5** Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

- In this passage **Jesus** wasn't saying that we aren't to judge, to make a distinction between right and wrong, but that we are not to harshly condemn others when we ourselves might be guilty of an even more serious offense; the way in which we approach another person, in what might turn out to be, their lack of understanding. We are first to understand the matter, get our attitudes in check and **then** approach the situation knowing that we also are subject to failures.

Rom 2:1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest (*Gk.2919- to condemn*): for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest (*Gk.2632- to sentence*) thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. **2** But we are sure that the judgment (*Gk.2917- decision*) of **God** is according to truth against them which commit such things. **3** And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of **God**?

“The Jews were aware of God and the truth, but at least some of them chose to live like the Gentiles. The Jews who made this choice believed God would somehow overlook their sinful lives and choices.”
Brad Price

Gal 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. **2** Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of **Christ**. **3** For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

- To be the spiritual of any congregation doesn't mean to be above others on a higher level of **Biblical** intelligence or favor with **God**. We “are all one in **Christ Jesus**” (*Gal 3:28*). It simply refers to those who are not guilty of the same fault that overtook the one being addressed. It goes back to **Jesus'** teaching on removing the splinter in another's eye when you can't see through the plank sticking out of your own. You just can't do it. Only those who are spiritual will have the proper humility to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness because judgment requires self-discipline and only with such restraint, a proper, **Biblical** decision (*i.e., judgment*) can be carried out.

1Pe 4:1 Forasmuch then as **Christ** hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind (*Gk.1771- moral understanding*): for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;* **2** That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of **God**. **3** For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the **Gentiles**, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings (*Gk.4224- drinking bout*), and abominable idolatries: **4** Wherein they think it

strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you*: 5 Who shall give account to **Him** that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. 6 For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to **God** in the spirit.

- **Peter**... “was addressing those who were suffering persecution. It was natural, in such a connection, to refer to those who had died in the faith, and to show, for their encouragement, that though they had been put to death, yet they still lived to God. He therefore says, that the design in publishing the gospel to them was, that though they might be judged by people in the usual manner, and put to death, yet that in respect to their higher and nobler nature, the spirit, they might live unto God.”

Albert Barnes

**Rom 6:7 For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8 Now if we be dead with Christ (baptized into Him), we believe that we shall also live with Him: 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him.*

- All faithful **Christians** will be persecuted in one way or another. Death, to the faithful saint, removes us from a temptation filled environment to sin and we know that everyone can be tempted and “sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (*Jam 1:14-15*). But while we live in this carnal setting we need to be firmly established in the truth. But truth without love is a fish out of water.

Eph 4:14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But **speaking the truth in love**, may grow up into **Him** in all things, **Who** is the head, *even Christ*: 16 From **Whom** the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

- Sometimes there are those who accuse our speaking the truth in love as though we’re making some sort of pompous, self-righteous judgment against something they’re doing. Nothing could be further from the truth, if in fact we **are** concerned for their eternal soul and not just trying to show off. Our focus should **always** be on another’s salvation and not our own arrogant use of **Biblical** knowledge. There are many congregations that suffer from having in their midst individuals who have come to their own conclusions on **Biblical** matters of opinion and have taken those opinions and made them matters of salvation. Ultimately, they have become “unrighteous” judges. But how are we, as an autonomous group of **God’s** people, to make judgments on matters whether small or large within the congregation? The answer comes from the extreme example **Paul** gave when members at **Corinth** were taking each other to court.

1Co 6:1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust (*Gk.94-heathen*), and not before the saints? 2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

- The **Corinthian** church must have been “**sue happy**” and were taking each other to court even over the smallest matters. They were making a mockery, not only of the judicial system of that day but, by shamelessly disgracing the church in a public way. There may have been matters that only the courts could decide, but the brethren at **Corinth** were taking such pathetic cases to the court of the unjust that **Paul** had to rebuke them for it.

Paul did understand the need for the court system and the laws of the land when he wrote to the Roman church (*Rom 13:4*) so he's not referring to a crime being committed there at Corinth. If one was he would have had no problem dealing with a member, even himself, by incorporating the God ordained system of justice to do so.

Act 25:11 For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar.

- Speaking of civil justice...

Rom 13:4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

- But how could a worldly non-believer outside the church make a better judgment than a fellow believer from within the body of Christ? If the saints are to have a better understanding between what is just and what is unjust, how then can the world judge in matters that **should only** be settled **between us** according to the Bible? That being the case, how is it that the saints at Corinth were going to outsiders to make determinations that should have been obvious when referencing the word of God to make them? Answer: because their own decisions, that would have been made from within, weren't according to their own desires.

“Matters of least consequence - matters of little moment, scarcely worth naming compared with the great and important realities of eternity. The “smallest matters” here mean, the causes, suits, and litigations relating to property, etc.” Albert Barnes

- Even Paul was willing to pay the price of another's transgression when he wrote to Philemon concerning Onesimus.

Phm 18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account;

- Paul then went on to show how Christians are called to an even higher level when it comes to judging.

1Co 6:3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

“If Christians who have never seen God are able to stay faithful during their lives, then the angels who were in God's presence and chose sin anyway will have no excuse for their rebellion.” Brad Price

1Co 6:4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

- Judging on a spiritual level is of so much more importance than judging the things pertaining to this life, if in fact we are able to do so. How insignificant the temporal matters are to the eternal that Paul would tell the Corinthian brethren to have those of the church there who were at the bottom of the totem pole, spiritually and otherwise, to decide matters that should never be settled in a public courtroom. If in fact it had to come to that.

1Co 6:5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? 6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. 7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves to be defrauded?* 8 Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud (*Gk.650- to deprive*), and that *your* brethren.

- Earlier in this letter to the **Corinthians Paul** dealt with their pride of having such wisdom among them. (*1:19-20, 25-27; 3:18-20*) Here he asks them what happened to that wisdom that they were so proud to have in their midst that they couldn't even judge such an insignificant matter. The problem was that nobody wanted to be cheated. Their pride wouldn't let that happen! **"That's not fair!"** Even in matters of insignificance where life and death or livelihood were not even being considered. When **Paul** stated there is utterly a fault among them he was saying that no matter who would have won in a worldly court before worldly judges, they all still lost!

"Suing a (fellow) Christian is a lose-lose proposition!"

Brad Price

- The **Greek** word for fault (*Gk.2275*) is *a deterioration*. Such failures in **Biblical** understanding and thus communication will almost always bring a congregation to destruction. Or at the very least, a deterioration of fellowship and the love of **Christ** between the membership involved. At that point, no matter who was fair and who was not, nobody wins. Nobody gains. And how fair was it for **Christ** to leave the riches of **Heaven?** Wasn't **He** also deprived so that others could gain from **His** loss?

2Co 8:9 For ye know the grace of our **Lord Jesus Christ**, that, though **He** was rich, yet for your sakes **He** became poor, that ye through **His** poverty might be rich.

- So what was it that one member was depriving of another that was so important? Isn't that the sin of covetousness? Remember the parable **Jesus** taught when one man didn't feel he got his **"fair share"** of an inheritance? **Things** we want and may even work long hours to possess cannot compare to **"the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him"** (*Jas 1:12*). Notice what happened to the man who built bigger barns to store his grain. He didn't plan to take care of his eternal soul.

Luk 12:20 But God said unto him, *Thou fool*, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those **things be, which thou hast provided?**

- When **Jesus** came the first time it wasn't to judge the world. **He** came to give an example of what true love is; by dying a cruel death in order, not only as **"the propitiation for our sins"** and **"of the whole world"** (*1 Jn 2:2*), but to get the attention of all who seek the truth.

Joh 12:47 And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. 49 For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father Who sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. 50 And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak.

- Although His first visit in the flesh was to save mankind, His second visit will be to judge the world according to the word that He left us. And we will all be judged according to how we judge our own works and everyone else's according to what His word teaches. Will you be ready? Do you know what to do in the meantime?

Act 1:4 And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Act 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Act 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. 5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

Act 2:13 Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. 14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: ...

Act 2:22 ... Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: 24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it.

Act 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. 37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

- After their interruption, answer to their question and Peter finishing his sermon...

Act 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

- If Peter's words convicted that initial crowd of three-thousand souls then to be saved, those words can save even today. As Paul was also told, you too need not wait ...

Act 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the **Lord**.

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