

“Judge not, that you be not judged”

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Introduction: There are few passages as often misapplied and disobeyed as this one!

- A. We need to know and understand the meaning of this passage because our relationship with God is at stake! **(Jn 12:48; Jas 2:13)**
 - 1. This passage does not eliminate God’s standard that He will use at the judgment! We need to know this!
 - 2. God has never intended for man’s heart to be the standard!
(Num 15:39-40; Deut 12:8)
 - 3. Some have used this passage to avoid proper scrutiny!
- B. This is a passage that is easily and commonly violated by even strong Christians.
 - 1. We often make snap judgments based upon whim and emotion.
 - 2. It is so easy to write another man off and pat yourself on the back!
 - 3. How can we so easily fall into the snare that captured the Pharisees?
(Lk 18:9-11)

I. The basis and motive of righteous judgment

- A. The world hates righteousness and the standard it holds forth. **(Jn 3:19-21)**
 - 1. Most people do not wish for anything to stand in the way of their fulfilling the worldly goals in their hearts.
 - 2. Also people want the “support” of others in their actions. They do not want to go alone or even sense any opposition.
 - 3. This is why many attack the Christian as they live for the Lord. **(1 Pt 4:3-4; 2:11-12)**
 - 4. Do you want to be a Christian? Be ready. Listen to our Lord! **(Jn 15:18-25)**
- B. There are circumstances where the Christian must speak out!
 - 1. In reaching the lost we must identify who Jesus is and how to be right with Him. **(Jn 8:24)**
 - 2. This also involves the identification of sin and the consequences of it.
(Lk 3:7-14)
 - 3. There is a primary responsibility to teach God’s standard and let others apply it to their hearts. There are also times of specific rebuke! **(Mt 15:9-13)**
- C. There must be only one motive for righteous judgment --- love of the souls of others.
 - 1. It is not easy to “disrupt” the lives of others with “bad news” they do not know along with the marvelous “good news” of the gospel! **(Rom 1:16-18)**
 - 2. Because we know we cannot remain silent. We judge the world in a new light!
(2 Cor 5:13-17)
 - 3. Everything we do is for the others good. With this spirit we can take the hurtful words and actions that are thrown our way! **(2 Tim 2:24-26)**
 - 4. Is this why we seek to learn about evangelism?

II. How Satan ensnares the “righteous”

- A. Often knowledgeable and experienced Christians get caught up in a sinful judging.
(Mt 7:1-4)

1. This is a kind of judging that proceeds from the wrong kind of heart.
 2. It is not a fair judging since God threatens to turn the same standard on us!
 3. This man cannot see himself and attempts to fool others as to who he is, thus he is a “hypocrite.”
- B. Satan’s goal is to blind us to our spiritual need and condition. **(2 Cor 4:3-4)**
1. A common motive for sinful judgment is pride. **(Lk 18:9-11; Mk 15:10)**
 2. If one is “never wrong” then that one is full of pride.
 3. Like Satan, these ones use accusations to get their way with others.
- C. Consider the unreasonableness of the harsh judgments of these people.
1. People are attacked by arbitrary and changing standards. Often the true motives of the attacks are concealed to others. **(Lk 7:33-35)**
 2. Even when one knows the truth these tactics can be used when pride takes over. **(1 Cor 8:1-2)**
- D. Good people are tempted to make snap judgments based on emotion.
1. Jesus warns us to use facts and principles in our judgment. **(Jn 8:24)**
 2. It is far too easy to put the worst interpretation on matters or to assume something that we do not know! What does love do? **(1 Cor 13:4-7)**
 3. How many of you has a discussion about your relatives after a reunion? What kind of judgment did you make? (Ex. Barber shop)
 4. Some people’s “evangelism” is a barrage of accusations designed to discredit others and praise those who submit to men. (Ex. Discussion list)
 5. The worst treatment I have received has come from those who say: “Judge not!!!”

III. Safeguards to righteous judgment

- A. Watch your heart. **(Mt 12:33-37)**
1. We need to constantly question our own motives.
 2. Those with wisdom, experience and knowledge are vulnerable! **(2 Cor 12:7)**
- B. Watch your tongue. **(Jas 3:2-6)**
1. If you use e-mail watch your words!
 2. There is a difference between struggling with your thoughts and speaking them!
- C. Do not judge in isolation or in a crowd!
1. It is so easy to develop handy scenarios to explain others we have little contact with! (Ex. Coming out of liberalism)
 2. It is easier to follow a crowd who rushes to a conclusion. **(Josh 22:10-12,13-15)**
 3. It is much harder to show courage and act as a Christian! Most easy answers about others are wrong! (“Walk a mile in my shoes”)
 4. Pagans sometimes have a greater sense of fairness than those who claim to know God! **(Acts 25:16)**
- D. Seek the council of those who love God. **(Prov 11:14)**
1. You may not always see the force of your words or your own blind spots! (Ex. E-mail, debate)
 2. When you act with wisdom and love there will be proper action!

Conclusion: What will the judgment day be like for you? **(Jas 2:13)**