

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

A Message of Hope and Fulfillment For Those Longing For God

To Judge or Not To Judge, That Is The Question

Luke 6: 37-45

Jesus continues His message to His disciples and speaks to the issue of judging. Jesus Himself, and the writers of the New Testament, have much to say about the subject of being judgmental. We are prone to misunderstand and misapply the teaching: we often judge when we ought not and we often fail to judge when we should be quite clear and discerning. Which is when?

I. Jesus' Admonition is: Do Not Judge, Do Not Condemn, Pardon (Freely) (6:37)

- A. The word judge, in its various forms, is used 62 times in 55 verses and found in Matthew, Luke, John, Acts, Paul's letters, Hebrews, James, and Peter.
- B. Depending on the context it means to be critical or to pass judgment
 1. In the sense of critical it may mean discerning or discernment
 2. In the sense of judgment it may mean to decide a matter or to pass judgment as a judge or overseer of the law.
- C. In the context of Jesus' sermon He means *do not take the role of judge to pass judgment or condemnation on another person.*
- D. He does not mean that we are to turn a blind eye toward sin, or to fail to hold one another accountable for appropriate behavior—even to the point of offering assistance to the one who is failing. See 6:39-45

II. Attitude is the Key! Humility Guided by Gentleness and Discernment

- A. Take the log out of your own eye! (See Ephesians 4:29-32) Before we ever presume to aid a brother or sister in their weakness, we must start with our own weaknesses in the light of Calvary. None of us is appointed judge; we are fellow travelers on the road out of sin's bondage.
- B. Judgment or Contempt: neither attitude suits followers of Jesus (See Romans 14:3-4 & 10-13)
 1. We can only apply appropriate correction to another's life if the problem is clearly and unmistakably identified as sin in the plain words of New Covenant Scripture.
 2. Even in legitimate correction we are not to act as a judge, but as an equally fallen brother or sister longing for restoration and healing for our companion. (See Galatians 6:1-5; Matthew 18:15)
 3. As the weaker we must take care to have no attitude of judgment.
 4. As the stronger we must cheerfully restrain our freedom for the sake of the weaker and refuse to have contempt.
- C. The unity of the Spirit is of paramount importance and fractured fellowship needs to be restored if the offense cannot be overlooked. Being non-judgmental does not preclude seeking to restore fellowship and win apology and forgiveness in an offense. (Matthew 18:16-17)
- D. Without passing judgment on motive or character, we must identify sin for what it is, call it by its name, and refuse to compromise or lower our standard for any reason. If every human being is going to stand before God's throne of judgment, the most loving thing we can do is to help them to be ready.

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.”

And He also spoke a parable to them: “A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit? A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher. Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye. For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit, nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush. The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.

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