**Is It A Sin To Judge Others?**

Jarrod Jacobs

There are many today who say that we cannot “judge” another person, religiously. Those who say we cannot judge claim that to judge another is a violation of Matthew 7:1. In this passage, Jesus said, “Judge not, that you be not judged.” Yet, does this mean that Jesus condemned all judging? What is interesting to me is that judging seems to be accepted by people in other areas of life, just not in religion. Why is this? In my observation, I find that those who are opposed to “judging” in religion, are often the people who have been “cut to the heart” by the gospel and did not like it (Acts 2:37)! Let us learn the truth about judging. Does God prohibit man from making any kind of judgment? Let us study the Scriptures and see.

Beginning in Matthew 7:1-6, a careful reading of this Scripture shows us that Christ did not condemn or prohibit all judging. Let us read this section together.

“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see 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, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye. Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.”

When we read this Scripture, it is evident that Jesus was not condemning every form of judgment. Rather, He was condemning *hypocritical* judgment! He told the one with the log in his eye to remove it so *he could see clearly enough* to help his brother with the speck in his eye. Jesus did not say, as many people imply, that the one with the log in his eye should just worry about that problem and never approach his brother about his problem. Jesus was saying to get one’s life corrected first and then he can help (i.e., judge) others with their problems. To show that Christ was not forbidding every form of judgment, please read Matthew 7:6, and ask yourself how a person can tell a dog from a hog or the holy from the unholy without judging? Jesus said a tree is known by its fruit (Matt. 7:15-16). How can one tell grapes from figs, or thorns from thistles without judging? Jesus said in John 7:24, “… judge righteous judgment”. Was He contradicting Himself? Of course, not!

Further, when we read of the preachers and teachers of the first century, we read where they made judgments often. John the Immerser called the Pharisees a “brood of vipers”. He also gave commands as to how they could prepare for the Messiah (Lk. 3:7-14). Peter judged the Jews when he told them that they had crucified the Son of God (Acts 2:23, 36). Paul wrote that some had “erred/swerved from the truth” (II Tim. 2:17-18). Did these men disobey Matthew 7?

The Bible says we are to “test the spirits” (I Jn. 4:1). This means put them to the test, or on trial! Not only did John tell folks to do this, but he also made a judgment in saying that there were false teachers already at work! Was he in sin?

Before someone protests by saying, “But, that was Jesus” or “That was the apostles and they are different”, let me remind you of I Corinthians 11:1 and I Peter 2:21-22. We must act as Christ and the apostles if we are to do what is right. Therefore, let us not twist Scripture. Christ condemned hypocritical judging. Let us *“judge righteous judgment”* (Jn. 7:24)!!

*-- You are invited to visit with the Caneyville church of Christ. Times of services: Sun.: 10:00 am, 10:45 am, 5:00 pm; Wed.: 7:00 pm. Website: http://caneyvillechurchofchrist.com Tune in to our radio program on 99.9 FM at 10:30 am and 1570 AM at 8:30 am, Mon-Fri. Questions? Call: (270) 589-4167*