

The Messenger

COLDWATER CHURCH OF CHRIST

Nov 2, 2014



"Judge Not, That Ye Be Not Judged" - Part I

The title of this article comes from Matthew 7:1. How many times have you heard people quote this verse or make reference to it regarding the actions or lifestyles of others? A person, though personally expressing disagreement with homosexuality, says of those who engage in the perversion, "It's not our place to judge them." Another person, referencing those who practice and teach religious false doctrine, encourages acceptance of everyone by saying, "As long as their hearts are right, we shouldn't judge them."

When Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," did He mean that we can't make any judgments at all? Did He mean that everything in life is subjective and therefore we have no right to say something someone does is wrong? Consider for a moment the consequences of this view. If we can't make any judgments at all, then how can we hope to have any semblance of order or system of law in our world? I suppose I could here give an example of a judge trying a criminal and the judge saying, "I have no right to tell you that you're wrong so I'm letting you go." The only trouble with this illustration is that if we are not allowed to make judgments, then there would be no trial, no judge and, for that matter, no criminal because it would not be our place to judge that person's actions as being criminal. There would be no laws because laws indicate a standard of right and wrong. We must make judgments or else our society becomes lawless and completely out of control.

"But you're missing the point," someone objects. "This is not about making day to day judgments. It's about making eternal judgments. We don't have the right to tell someone that they will be lost because of their actions." Let's go back to our judge and criminal illustration. Most everyone would agree that we need earthly laws. When one breaks the law, he/she is brought before a judge. The judge... hears the case and then announces the guilt or innocence of the ..

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you... (1 John 1:5).

**VISITORS,
WELCOME!**

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Bible Class

10:30 a.m. WORSHIP

1:00 p.m. WORSHIP

Wednesday:

7:00 p.m. Bible Class

We have Bible classes for
all ages & Pew Packers
each Sunday at 12:30

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... defendant. If the judge says the person is guilty, upon what basis does the judge make that decision? Is he himself saying, "I have heard the evidence and I feel in my heart that this person should be punished"? If that's what he's saying, then our system of law has as many standards as it does judges, as each judge could determine for himself or herself what is right and what is wrong. Doesn't the judge instead say, "I have heard the evidence, and based on the law that is on the books, this person should be punished"? Yes, this is what the judge says and in so saying, he himself does not make the judgment but instead pronounces the judgment that has already been put in place by the laws of the land. Do you see where this is headed? While it's true that you and I will not make eternal judgments on others (Matthew 25:31-46), we do have the inspired standard from the One who WILL make these judgments. By warning others of the dangers of their sinful ways, we are doing no more than telling them what God has already said. Is that judging? Yes. Is that our judgment that we're pronouncing? No, it is God's judgment.

Here's a good example. Jesus said in John 8:24, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Those who reject Christ will lose their souls in eternity. That's a fact (see also Acts 4:12; II Thessalonians 1:7-9). So if I teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a Moslem, Buddhist, Jew or any other adherent to a doctrine that rejects Jesus as the Messiah, I am going to teach them the entire truth and let them know that rejecting Jesus as Christ will lead to eternal damnation. Is this true because I said so, because I made a judgment? No, it's true because God said so. It is His judgment. I am merely teaching what God has said. Of course, I must teach this truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), but I must not back down from teaching it (Acts 20:27).

"Judge not, that ye be not judged" does not have the meaning that so many today assign to it. What does it mean? The answer will be in part two of this article.



"Judge Not, That Ye Be Not Judged" - Part 2

In part one of this article, we considered the misuse of Jesus' statement in Matthew 7:1. We pointed out that the verse is not a prohibition against making judgments as some today suggest. Having made that case, let's examine what the verse does mean in its context.

Reading down through verse 5 we find that this section of Scripture deals with how judgments are made. In the context, the Lord describes a person who is hasty to highlight the faults of others while sorely neglecting his own. While he sees the tiny speck of dust in his brother's eye, he ignores the large beam that is sticking out from his. In the words of one poet who aptly expressed this attitude,

**The sins I see in other folks
Are the only ones I mention.
Any mistake that I might make
Is justified by good intentions.**

The apostle Paul would later address this same issue in Romans 2:1 when he wrote, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." He continues the thought in verses ..

... 21 through 23 of the same chapter.

Are we allowed to make judgments? Indeed we are, as long as they are righteous judgments (John 7:24). But how are we to make them? According to what Jesus said in the sermon on the mount and what Paul later wrote to the brethren in Rome, we are to first take a look at ourselves to be sure our motives are pure and that we ourselves are not engaging in the same acts of disobedience.

Again quoting Paul, Galatians 6:1 says, "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." Before we can bring back a brother who has strayed, we must look at ourselves to be sure our lives are right with God and our intentions are godly in nature. This is exactly what Jesus had in mind when He spoke the words of this article's main text.

Let's get back to that text now. What is the trouble with focusing on the sins of others while neglecting our own as the "beam head" in these verses was doing? The trouble is that without individual self-examination (II Corinthians 13:5) and personal obedience (II Corinthians 5:10), we will be lost (II Thessalonians 1:7-9). If all we can think about is the sins of others, we will overlook our own transgressions and never repent and do God's will. In short, the judgments we heap on others while neglecting to judge our own actions will themselves serve as a measuring stick of our disobedience (Matthew 7:2). As we harshly judge others to the avoidance of self-examination, we shall face the judgment of God who will be merciless to us as we have been merciless to others.

Once more we return to our text in Matthew 7. Notice in verse 5 that righteous judgment is encouraged so long as we first take a look at ourselves. "Get your own life and motives straightened out and then you will be in position to lead others away from the dangers of sin." Does this mean that we must be perfect before we can teach God's truth and show someone that they're lost? No, it does not. What it does mean is that we must carry within our hearts the most humble of attitudes when teaching God's Word. We must have the desire to see souls saved and teach them God's Word, having first looked into our own hearts to be sure that they are pure.

Matthew 7:1-5 is not difficult to understand and it's terribly tragic that it has been so abused throughout the centuries. It is a powerful passage that reminds us of the importance of not only speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), but also living the truth. "No one cares how much you know, until they know how much you care." Just as Jesus clearly recognized the hypocrisy of the

"beam head," it's amazing that those who sport these beams through their noggins today are the only ones who can't see them. Their beams of hypocrisy are incredibly evident to everyone else. Maybe this hypocrisy in Christians is the reason why so many who are lost refuse to listen to the Gospel. Perhaps they've seen this ungodly characteristic in too many who claim to be children of God.

UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

1. Nov 15: Bible Bowl at Coldwater
4 pm, Genesis 40–42
2. Nov 15: Bonfire, Hayride & Devo @Jacksons'
Directly following Bible Bowl, all invited.
3. Nov 22: Area-Wide Youth Devo @ Looxahoma

REMEMBER NOW THY
CREATOR Ecclesiastes 12:1

—Both parts written by Mike Gifford

www.soundbiblestudies.com

NEWS & NOTES

Please Pray

Wiley & Betty Tuggle; Helen Bowman.

**NetCasters
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Far East Missions**

Family & Friends

Vallie Ann Reecer, friend to Lara, breast cancer; **Cadiz church of Christ**, in tragic death of an elder, his wife, and daughter; **Arnold Smith**, Cindy Rodgers' father; **Janet Colvett**, leukemia; **Joy Angel**, Clifton's older sister, continually battles brain disease, but has new symptoms about which she is uncertain; **John Smith**, Grace's brother-in-law, colon cancer; **Andrew Jones**, friend of Weslyn's, battling cancer; **Elizabeth Baker**; **John & Anita Simpson** and family; **Paul Perkins**, Mischel's father; **Janie Brister**; **Jason Spencer**, several serious health problems; **Ray Hendrix**, lymphoma; **Carole Livsey**, Clifton's aunt, lymphoma; **Trent Childers**; **Amanda Cummings**, young mother with cancer; **Danielle Key**, young mother with cancer; **Andy's grandmother**; **Carla Carlson**; **Ava Roten**, **Brett Rutherford**; **Frankie Burfield**, cancer; **Jack Higginbotham**; **Tasha Higginbotham**; **Lauren Harrell**, breast cancer; **James Cooper**, Jan's brother, cancer; **Marie Sims**; **Renee Loya**, Parkinson's, MS, & dystonia; **Eli Williams**; **Ray Maples**; **Martha Hatfield**, Lynn's grandmother, cancer; **Virginia Johnson**, lung cancer; **Mac Owen**; **Bob Spurlin**; **Ally Jo Kelly**; **Brad & Sheri Daniel**.

Birthdays

11/5 Rachel Wilkes
11/14 Shirley Yarbro
11/14 Kara Johnson
11/18 Timothy Wilkes, Sr.
11/25 Wiley Tuggle
11/26 Virginia Sowel

Anniversaries

11/8 Jeremy & Mindy Moore

Get Involved!

Sunday Afternoon for the Savior -- TODAY
Between Services

Providence Place Devo -- Nov 9 -- 2 PM

Southaven Ladies Retreat -- Nov 7
See Jeanna Wadsworth for more details.

Youth Retreat at SLCC -- Nov 7-9
Hosted by Batesville church of Christ; \$35/person
Medical release forms were due Oct 31.

Bible Bowl -- Nov 15 -- 4 PM
At Coldwater, Genesis 40-42

Bonfire, Hayride, & Devo -- Nov 15
At Jacksons', directly following Bible Bowl

Privileged to Serve

Sunday, November 2

Morning

Prayer Before Class	Timothy Wilkes, Sr.
Announcements	Andy Ratliff
Song Leader	Jason Bayless
Lord's Supper:	
Preside	Joe Owen
	Ron Johnson
Assist	Daniel Owen
	Dalton Owen
Opening Prayer	Jerry Davis
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Closing Prayer	Billy Bland

Afternoon

Song Leader	Jason Bayless
Opening Prayer	Jim Jackson
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Lord's Supper	Joe Owen
	Daniel Owen
Closing Prayer	Jeffrey Ferrell

Wednesday, November 5

Song Leader	Jason Bayless
Prayer	Russell Wadsworth
Invitation	Clifton Angel
Prayer	Chris Martin