

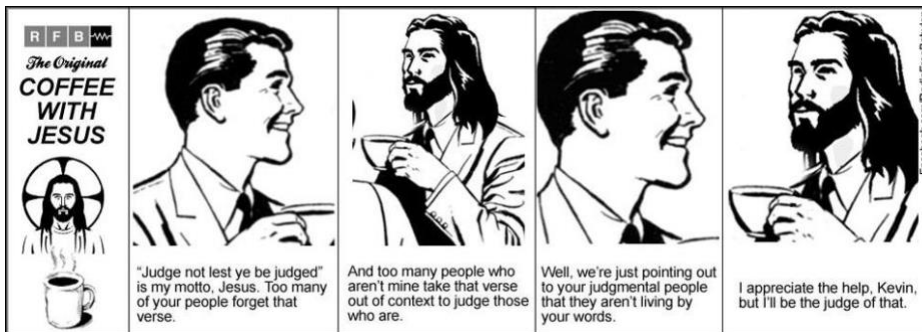
09 Judging Others - Jesus and Judgmentalism

Counting other people's  
**sins**  
 does **not** make you  
 a saint

- 1        *"Do not judge so that you will not be judged.*
- 2        *"For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and <sup>a</sup>by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.*
- 3        *"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?"*
- 4        *"Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye?"*
- 5        *"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.*
- 6        *"Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces."<sup>1</sup>*

Prayer

We have all been around that person. They quietly complain to others about the sermon being too long. They complain about the sermon being too short. They feel the music is too modern or they may feel that "too many old hymns are sung." They criticize the car the pastor drives if it is too old, and they criticize the car the pastor drives if it is too new. They look with a judgmental eye at everything and on everyone around them. This character often listens to a sermon trying to find a point with which they disagree. This is done with the excuse of "making sure the speaker has his doctrine right." They notice every spiritual flaw or character flaw of those around them. They are judgmental. They secretly look down on others as less spiritual than they. I have heard some of these excuse their judgmentalism by saying they had a "gift of discernment." I think they must believe there is something called a gift of criticism or something. No one can measure up to their standard. We've maybe all been guilty of been overly critical, or judgmental. Jesus is talking EXACTLY about this kind of person in this passage.

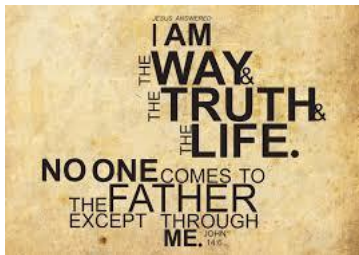


The passage today is probably one of the most misquoted passages in the entire Bible. For this generation, this is the favorite verse quoted back by non-believers to believers. They know this verse and they quote it to us. Why is this so popular? Because the world

lives in a post-modern or post-truth era. It is a world which believes in no right or wrong, and this verse has become a club to beat up people who know that the Bible gives clear standards of what is right and what is wrong. The big word in today's society is "TOLERANCE." It is the idea that every view is

<sup>1</sup> [New American Standard Bible: 1995 update](#). (1995). (Mt 7:1–6). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

equally valid. One of the worst accusations that can be hurled in today's society is that a person is "intolerant." The interesting thing is that those who claim that Christians are intolerant are they themselves intolerant of ANY belief that Jesus is the exclusive Savior of the world.



Jesus didn't say "I am A way." He said, "I am THE way, THE truth, and THE life." The world has backed Christians into corners because the world wants to tell us that we cannot discern things as wicked, wrong, or immoral. So is Jesus telling us to never judge? That means to discern and decide what is right and what is wrong. We are told to not be judgmental "as the hypocrites are" but in fact we are told over and over that we are supposed to make certain judgments about things.

John 7:24 tells us, <sup>24</sup> *Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.* This passage tells us to not judge by the way things look, but rather by a standard of righteousness.

1 John 4:1 *Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.* That is telling us to make a decision and have discernment concerning teachings that we hear.

1 Thessalonians 5:19-22 tells us, <sup>19</sup> *Do not quench the Spirit.* <sup>20</sup> *Do not despise prophecies.* <sup>21</sup> *Test all things; hold fast what is good.* <sup>22</sup> *Abstain from every form of evil.* So, how can we hold fast to what is good if we don't make a decision about what is good and what is not good?

In Revelation 2:2, Jesus is telling the church, <sup>2</sup> *"I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars."* Jesus is complimenting the church for making judgments about those who are frauds of the faith.

So, is it wrong to condemn abortion, sex outside of marriage, homosexual marriage, the pornification of American culture, and the abandonment of any standard of right and wrong? Absolutely not. But, if judgment begins with the "household of faith" then we should begin with ourselves. This morning I am going to give you a list of ten times we are actually told by scripture to make a judgment. This will be very clear for you. Then, next week, I will continue and give you a concrete list of ten times you are told by scripture to NOT make a judgment. And, I would say that blanketing both of these is the teaching that we are NEVER to be people who are judgmental and who have condemning and critical spirits.

The three rules of interpreting scripture are: context, context, and context. People who have never read the Sermon on the Mount quote this passage like they are Bible scholars. The whole of scripture tells us that we are to judge in a way that sifts truth from what is false and dark from what is light. If we do not do so, how will we know to live our lives? In verse 5, Jesus is saying we have to be judging ourselves correctly. We have to be able to see the sin in our own life, which requires judging. He says we're to deal with our own sin and then and only then do we help our friend remove the sin from his life.

I heard a teaching that equated good judging to buying fruit in the produce department. We go and carefully look at the condition of the fruit we're about to eat. We check to see if it is too ripe or too

green. We look for mold or places where insects have done their damage. We should evaluate things in our own lives in the same light.

In verse 6, this scripture goes on to say that even when preaching to an audience, one needs to discern/judge whether they are teaching dogs, swine, or sheep. The approach to truth will be different depending on the audience. So, how do we apply this to our lives? When should we be judging and when should we not be judging? What does biblical judgment look like?

**Ten actual cases where you know it is okay to judge, and where you should think of "judging" as making a decision as to whether something is right or wrong:**

- 1. When we examine ourselves** - We need discernment to see the sin in our own life. We need to make a decision about whether what we are doing and thinking is right or wrong. We need the Holy Spirit to show us the "planks" in our own life. That is the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Today we will take communion, and scripture tells us that that is a time to examine ourselves, *"<sup>27</sup> Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. <sup>28</sup> But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup."* (1 Corinthians 11:27; 2 Corinthians 11:5). *"<sup>5</sup> Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?"* (2 Corinthians 13:5). So, we absolutely must judge when we examine our own faults.
- 2. When we hold each other accountable** - I love you and you love me and we love each other, so we hold each other to the standards of God's word. This is done carefully and gently. It is not our place to hold unbelievers accountable for their sin. It is our place on occasion to help one another as church members to remind one another perhaps when we're not where God wants us to be. Sandy and I help one another to be accountable so that our ministry won't be blocked by the sin or problems in our own lives.
- 3. When we evaluate who our audience is** - This very scripture tells us this morning, *"<sup>6</sup> "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces."* (Matthew 7:6). This means that we must make a decision about whom we give spiritual information to. Some secrets of God are so holy and precious they should not be shared with an unbeliever. Jesus comments that they will not appreciate the gift of what God has given you, but rather they will "trample it under their feet and tear YOU to pieces".
- 4. When we examine spiritual leaders** - Can you all imagine standing before Jesus and He asks know why we didn't examine our spiritual leaders? One of the hardest tasks I have had as an overseer/elder/pastor of this flock is to stand in judgment of the actions of some of the leaders in our church. I am commanded to do this. It is hard, but it goes with the job. The Bible tells us to "test the spirits." Jesus says "I never knew" some who cry "Lord, Lord." It is easy for some who look very spiritual to actually be practicing spiritual lawlessness. (See Matthew 7:21-23.)
- 5. When there are sins or problems in the church** - This situation requires that a judgment be made. It happens when some conduct of a church member or visitor is so contrary to scripture that it becomes a distraction or point of division in the church. I want to point out that scripture talks about this type of sin as being over the top egregious. (That means really, really bad). Jesus tells us to not tell

others about the wrong doing, but to go directly to the person himself (Matt 18:50). I would be very careful however with this because the standard here is: "what is this doing to the church?" When Paul called it out to the church in Corinth it was because a guy was in an ongoing, open, sexual relationship with his mother-in-law (I Cor. 5:1-13).

**6. When we're considering prolonged involvement with someone** - Pastors don't preach this much these days but we are to choose others only "as long as they're in the Lord." People are so lonely that they compromise this. If you have to strain to figure out if someone has a real walk with Jesus then "run Forrest run!" We can indeed discern if someone is a Christian. A decision must be made. We as believers have to discern if a prospective mate is "in the Lord." Christians practice righteousness and love. In 2 Corinthians 6, Paul commands us to "not be bound together with unbelievers" so we have to discern and judge whether someone is a believer or not. This doesn't just extend to sexual or marital intimacy, but also to those with whom we are intimate with our feelings, emotions, dreams, plans, business, etc.

**7. When we shepherd others** - Paul tells pastors to, "shepherd the flock..." We are not to "shear" the flock or take advantage over those whom we pastor. Elders/pastors, need to look over the sheep and see how they're doing spiritually. That's part of my job. <sup>14</sup> *And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone.* <sup>15</sup> *Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else." (1 Thessalonians 5:13-14).*

Some need to be rebuked. Some need patience. These all require my constant judgment. Likewise, even if you're not a pastor over the flock, you are probably pastoring someone in or outside of the body. You'll need to apply these principles to your ministry.

**8. When selecting church leadership** - 1 Timothy 3:1-13 says that the candidate for church leadership needs to be above reproach. This is for elders (pastor) and deacons. The person must be a "one woman man," hospitable, not a new convert, and having a good reputation outside of the church. "Let these be tested." Judgments and decision have to be made concerning the people we select for church leadership.

**9. When we generally distinguish good from evil and truth from error** - 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 again tells us that we to "examine." We have to make clear, discerning choices daily. We don't want to end up calling evil good and good evil as Isaiah warns. How quickly can you spot evil? Can you separate light from dark? I want to add that having a "gift of discernment" doesn't just mean you have a suspicious nature. Having a suspicious nature is generally rooted in a lack of being able to trust people. It is NOT a gift of discernment. We are ALL to exercise our spiritual discernment and judge what is of God and what is not of God. That is not a gift just given to a select few.

**10. When we evaluate whether something is Kingdom focused or world focused** - We have studied this for the last two weeks. Jesus wants us to discern and decide what is treasure in heaven, what our eyes seek after, and who or what is the thing in which we place our trust. Judgments have to be made to determine whether you and I are living in obedience with regard to what Jesus taught in chapter 6. Are you seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness? That requires a lot of self-examination.

So what did Jesus mean when He said **DO NOT JUDGE LEST YOU BE JUDGED**. Next week I'm going to give you 10 times you can know when you absolutely should **NOT JUDGE**. What Jesus is really getting after is the horrific sin of have a judgmental nature.



Jesus is addressing and exposing a judgmental attitude and spirit. He is hammering away at motives. Remember He keeps talking about "*you* hypocrites." He said back in the last chapter to not practice righteousness like the hypocrites. Then He said to not pray and fast like the hypocrites. So, He's back to addressing a different facet of the same theme. The hypocrisy is hypercritical judging.

We have to discern and make judgments all the time, but we **CANNOT DO IT AS THE HYPOCRITES** do. Jesus is talking about the perpetual fault finder who relishes seeking out and discovering the failures and flaws of others. The person who loves to find some glitch in the doctrine of a Bible teacher. The person who says, "my, my" as they look at the sins or failings of others. You see, what they're really trying to do is play God. There is only one law giver and there is only one judge. And guess what, "You're not him!"

Do not judge lest you be judged has a caution. Jesus says, "**DO NOT DO THIS!**" In the way you judge others **YOU WILL BE JUDGED**. If you're harsh with others; God will treat you harshly. If you're demanding of others; God will be demanding of you. If you're brash with others; God will be brash with you. If you're judgmental of others; God will pass judgment on you. Remember what Jesus said, "Forgive us as we forgive others...if you forgive God will forgive you but if you do not, your heavenly father will not forgive you." I know this raises all kinds of theological questions, but these are Jesus' words. Next week we will get into the heart of the matter and look at 10 occasions when we absolutely should not judge. I want to end by saying be merciful. Be kind. Be understanding. Guard your words. Whatever you dish out, you're going to get it back. We all know the Golden Rule, but I think there is also a Platinum Rule " **EXPECT TO BE TREATED BY GOD THE WAY YOU TREAT OTHERS.**"

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at [uniongrove362@gmail.com](mailto:uniongrove362@gmail.com) or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese-Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.