



The Voice Of Truth

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Is Judging Wrong?

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Many in the religious world convey the idea that judging is wrong, and that no one has the right to **JUDGE** but God. The favorite verses used are **Matthew 7:1-2** which read: "Judge not, that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged ..." The other verse is found in **John 8:7**, which reads: "... He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." These two verses are used to impart the idea that judging is wrong. But notice what John says, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment," (**John 7:24**). We are faced with a dilemma. **IS JUDGING WRONG OR RIGHT?**

A careful study of the Bible on this subject will be that God has delegated the judgment of certain matters to men. **Matthew 7:1-2** are similar to the words of James in **James 4:11-12**. Is it possible to go through life without making judgments? If we deal with others do we not have to decide something of their character? In fact, is not James himself guilty of this very thing which he prohibits? In this section of the book he uses such expressions as "Ye lust ... ye kill ... and covet ..." **James 4:2**, "adulteresses" **James 4:4**, "ye sinners ... ye double minded" **James 4:8**. James was not prohibiting the moral appraisal which is necessary in human relationships. He is concerned with

hypercritical, self-righteous, loveless judgment. This passage in James, as well as Matthew 7, does not forbid all kinds of judging.

God has delegated the judgment of certain matters to men. The New Testament gives authority to saints to judge in Christian matters (**Read 1 Corinthians 5:12-13; 6:2-4**). Jesus does not forbid the judgment of the church upon disorderly members (**2 Thessalonians 3:6**). Individual judgments we must make of wrongdoers and evil people (**Titus 3:10-11**). We judge those who teach false doctrine (**1 John 4:1**). God has delegated the judgment of certain matters to men.

Let us remember that judgment is always according to a standard. Moses and the judges of Israel were warned, "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor," (**Leviticus 19:15**). "Thus hath Jehovah of hosts spoken, saying, Execute true judgment," (**Zechariah 7:9**). The standard for Christians today is "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment," (**John 7:24**). The standard of righteousness is the commandments of God (**Psalms 119:172**). Paul, in **Romans 1:16-17**, points out that

in the gospel is the righteousness of God revealed, and it will be used at the final judgment (**John 12:48**).

Jesus stated, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," (**Mark 16:16**). If one has not believed and has not been baptized, a judgment is made upon him, the person is lost. I have the right to look in God's word and judge this to be so. I can say if you are not in the **ONE BODY, THE CHURCH** in which Christ is the Saviour (**Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:4; 5:23**), you are lost! That is what the Word of God teaches. Jesus has not promised to save any religious body other than His church!

Sadly, a dangerous attitude toward judging has developed. An attitude has developed within the church which denies that one may judge anything. What are they saying? How can we know who will be saved? How does anyone know that God won't save one who has not been baptized? We can know that not all men will be saved (**read Matthew 7:13-14**), although Christ died for all men (**Hebrews 2:9**). We know that the unbeliever cannot be saved since it is impossible for him to please God (**Hebrews 11:6**), and Jesus (**John 8:24**). We can know that all those outside of Christ are separate from Christ (**Ephesians 2:12**). We can know that those who ". . . know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus shall suffer punishment . . ." (**2 Thessalonians 1:7-9**). We can know that baptism is the avenue into Christ where salvation is found (**Galatians 3:27; 2 Timothy 2:10**). Therefore, God has drawn a line, that we recognize the fact that those in that condition are lost!

So, in answering the question, "**IS JUDGING WRONG?**"; we conclude, **NO!** We judge only in the areas authorized by God.

Serving God

By Jimmy Pettigrew

How are we to serve God? We are to serve God with a perfect heart and with a willing mind (**1Chronicles 28:9**). God deserves our service. Think of all He has done for us. He gives every good and every perfect gift (James 1:17); He gave us Christ and the cross and eternal life (**John 3:16-17**); He gave us a plan of salvation; All spiritual blessings (**Ephesians 1:3**); God is worthy of your service.

How are **YOU** serving God??? We are to serve with a perfect heart, a loyal heart! This means you are to serve Him with a heart that is attuned to His will. Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day (**1 Kings 8:61**). We are not to give half-hearted service; it makes my Lord sick (**Revelation 3:15-16**). I have seen so many so-called Christians try to hold on to God with one hand and the world with the other. Esau could not have the pottage and the birthright; we cannot have both heaven and the pleasure of sin. I want us to give God whole-hearted service, with no turning back.

Also, we are to serve Him with a willing mind. This means our service is to be voluntary, with a mind that desires only that which will please God (**Acts 20:19**). This service involves every area and all particulars of life, job, the home and vacation. It involves every human relationship. God comes before family (**Luke 14:26**). He comes before sports and entertainment.

Are you serving God right now? Are you serving Him with a perfect heart and willing mind?