



The Voice Of Truth

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Don't Be "Judgmental"

by Larry Ray Hafley

Some have judged that it is wrong to be "judgmental." Like the women who argued with me that it is "wrong to argue the Bible," non-judgmental folks are quite judgmental when they judge us for judging!

Certain types of judgment are forbidden. (1) Hypocritical judgment is condemned (Matt. 7:1-5). (2) Surface judgment, judgment according to appearance and not according to objective fact, is forbidden (Jno. 7:24). (3) Judging a matter before one hears it is shameful and foolish (Prov. 18:13).

Some judgment is commanded – "judge righteous judgment" (Jno. 7:24). "Judge in yourselves" (1 Cor. 11:13). "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Josh. 24:15). Immediately after forbidding selfish judgment, Jesus said, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine" (Matt. 7:6). How can one determine if one is a hog or a dog without making a judgment? How can one "Beware of false prophets," without judging that one is a false prophet (Matt. 7:15)?

God has made us creatures of judgment. We employ judgment in every aspect of life. "Is this food good for me?" "Should I buy this? Can we afford it?" "Do I trust her to baby sit the children?" "She married the wrong man." All of life is based on making judgments. It is the way God made us!

If religious faith, with its moral and spiritual values, is without judgment, it is the only area wherein judgment is not exercised. If one's faith is beyond judgment, there can be no "right" or "wrong" religion. You believe in a multiplicity of Gods? "No problem, for we are not judgmental about such issues!" You don't believe in God? "Fine!" You accept Jesus as a great moralist but not as "God manifest in the flesh"? "Hey, great! We believe he is the Son of God, but who are we to judge you?"

If it is wrong to be "judgmental," is it right to judge that your unbelieving neighbor is lost and that we must try to reach him? If it is a sin to be judgmental about the church of which one is a member, why is it not sin to be "judgmental" about the gods in which a pagan believes? If we should not be "judgmental" about one's adulterous marriage, should we likewise be "non-judgmental" about a native's polygamy? What is your "judgment" about such questions?

Let none say that we are setting ourselves up as "judges." (Must one not set himself up as a judge to make such a charge against us?) God is our judge (Jas. 4:12). However, in accordance with the teaching of the word of God, we must make judgments about the course of our life before him – "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21). One is not a judge when he determines that some are teachers of error, for one must "try" or test the teachers whether they be of God (1 Jno. 4:1, 6). Again, we are commanded to make such

judgments based on the word of God. In Revelation 2:2, the Lord commended the church for being “judgmental” of those who lied and said they were apostles. Likewise, we are not being sinfully “judgmental,” when, after a study of the Bible, we determine that the Pope is not the apostle he claims to be (2 Cor. 11:13-15).

The question we have raised deserves an answer. Will someone answer them without being “judgmental” of us?

What Do I Owe My Congregation?

I Owe It My Loyalty. I must help carry out every good work it undertakes.

I Owe It My Dependability. I am depending on it for many things it does in my behalf. It is not fair and right for me to depend on it and not be such that it cannot depend on me.

I Owe It My Financial Support. It takes money to operate the church and preach the gospel. My home congregation has first call on my financial ability. The expenses go on whether I am there or not, so I should make up my contributions when absent.

I Owe It My Presence. If everyone stayed home there would be no church services.

I Owe It The Influence Of A Godly Life. The life I live either helps others to obey the gospel or makes it harder for them. How I live affects the work of the church and salvation of the lost.

**We cannot do everything we want to do,
But we should do everything God
Wants us to do.**

**Sin will take you farther than you ever wanted to go,
Keep you longer than you ever wanted to stay
And cost you more than you ever wanted to pay.**

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17; John 6:45; 17:3

Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24

Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30

Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10

Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Pet. 3:21

Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17