

## Matthew 7:1-5 – Judge Not

Turn with me to the most mis-quoted and mis-understood verse of the New Testament in our modern culture. Here is one of my fears. When we start to dig into judging, my fear for this is that we will leave here motivated to just start throwing judgment out. That is NOT AT ALL what I am trying to accomplish. However, I want us to be aware of judging, the Biblical standard of it and where we stand on the issue. But please! Let us be mature believers in this process for judging in an unscriptural way will do nothing toward that which judging really should accomplish.

- I. The most mis-used passage – Matthew 7:1
  - a. This is used to silence critics in a wrong way
  - b. This is used to try and justify actions that are clearly wrong
  - c. This is used to shame those who disagree into silence when a voice is needed.
- II. The standard of judgment – Matthew 7:2
  - a. This verse is also used in connection to the first verse
  - b. You cannot judge me because you will be judged. It is almost as if they think now, they are invincible and impervious to judgment.
  - c. What is meant in this passage?
    - i. If I cast a judgment on someone and I am doing the very thing that I am condemning others for doing...the standard that I set on them is going to be the same standard that I have set against me.
    - ii. Therefore, I need to be without sin to cast the stone first...at least this is what they are trying to say.
    - iii. None of us are without sin. So how does this work?
- III. Jesus hits it very hard – Matthew 7:3-4
  - a. Jesus is asking how we can look at the speck in your brother's eye while having a plan in our own?
  - b. Let me illustrate, but first, I need a volunteer (randomly call up someone and then (put on the mask)
  - c. Now, I do see that you have something in your hand...and...Oh Look...In your eye as well. I can get that right now. Stand still.
- IV. What is Jesus really saying here? – Matthew 7:5
  - a. Jesus, in the first verse is not saying, "Never Judge anything". If this is the case, then Jesus will be a Hypocrite
    - i. He Judged cities because they knew the truth – Matthew 11:21-24
    - ii. He judged the Pharisees very harshly– Matthew 23
    - iii. He will judge individuals – Matthew 7:22
  - b. Jesus tells us to Judge
    - i. Look at Matthew 7:5
    - ii. There is the requirement for us to remove our beam FIRST before we...notice... remove the speck
    - iii. That removing of the speck is JUDGING.

- V. What is the truth then of Judging?
- a. Some basic truths
    - i. First, Jesus gives us the standard upon which we judge - John 7:24<sup>1</sup>
      1. We are to judge with righteous judgment
      2. This supersedes anything that may look good or that is good.
    - ii. We WILL be judges and it is expected – 1 Corinthians 6:3<sup>2</sup>
    - iii. Jesus has called us to judge – Matthew 7:16-20
    - iv. We are called to JUDGE a sinning brother – Matthew 18:15-20
    - v. The idea that we are never to judge is FOREIGN to the Bible.
  - b. How do we judge
    - i. When we are doing wrong?
      1. As I said, we are all sinners.
      2. Jesus dealt with this – John 8:7<sup>3</sup> (I believe the very people here were guilty of adultery. They knew who she was. They knew where she would be and they knew when to catch her.) I bet they also were part of her activities as well.
      3. If we are wrong in a matter, we must do as Jesus said...Take out our beam.
        - a. This means we go for forgiveness before we share the truth– Psalm 51:7-13
        - b. We make sure that we have a clean conscience with God first – Psalm 51:2
        - c. We cannot judge anyone if we are doing the thing they are doing. Because then we are forcing on them a standard that we ourselves are not willing to live up to.
          - i. The Pharisees did this – Matthew 23:4<sup>4</sup>
          - ii. There is a charge to self-evaluate – Romans 2:21-24
    - ii. When we are doing right
      1. In this instance, if we have a clear conscience before God, we are in a place to judge.
      2. Judgment should be handled as a mature Christian.
      3. There must be a call to repent
      4. It must be handled Biblically.
        - a. This is paramount
        - b. We MUST, MUST, MUST follow Matthew 18!
      5. We must realize when we should and should not continue.

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<sup>1</sup> (John 7:24 KJV) - "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

<sup>2</sup> (1 Corinthians 6:3 NKJV) - "Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?"

<sup>3</sup> (John 8:7 NKJV) - "So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.""

<sup>4</sup> (Matthew 23:4 NKJV) - "For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."

- a. There are times, after following Matthew 18 when believers or those in our fellowship (unbelievers) will not heed. We need to recognize that – **Matthew 7:6**
  - b. We need to turn their flesh over to Satan – **1 Corinthians 5:5<sup>5</sup>** (interesting to think that maybe there is safety in the community of believers than being a lone wolf...).
    - i. It is better to have the flesh destroyed than lose the spirit.
    - ii. This will also serve one more purpose.
  - c. We are to allow that to be used as an example to others – **Proverbs 21:11**
6. Judgment should accomplish, and the judge should desire, two things
- a. To restore the relationship between the erring brother and himself.
  - b. To restore the relationship between the erring brother and God.
  - c. If it is less than these two things...it is ungodly and please do not do it.
    - i. If there is any other reason, judging is being used selfishly
    - ii. If it is for anything less than God, it is an ungodly judgment.

Therefore, judging. Judge not! Is this right? Or are we, as believers, cornered into a position of silence, afraid of “offending” someone because they use this one verse way out of context? Let us not be afraid. If we are led by the Spirit to judge, let us do so bravely but also wisely. Let us be the judges that God has called us to be. Not as despots but as desiring to restore the relationship between others and God and others and ourselves.

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<sup>5</sup> (1 Corinthians 5:5 NKJV) - “deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”