

## GOD IS THE ONLY JUDGE – SHOULD WE JUDGE ANYONE ?

*In the last days we are discovering and exposing yet more of the deceptive reasoning of the enemy. "Let's not judge anyone", "We are not to judge". Have you heard these words ? The most common, perverted use of these words today is in counteracting the application of truth to a particular individual's life. It is often a defense tactic against a verbally expressed character evaluation. We need not be misled because the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy give clear instruction about judging others.*

If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment , ***that [the judges ] may judge them***; then they shall justify the righteous, ***and condemn*** the wicked. Deuteronomy 25:1

For all manner of trespass, [whether it be] for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, [or] for any manner of lost thing, which [another] challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; [and] ***whom the judges shall condemn***, he shall pay double unto his neighbour. Exodus 22:9

*Notice that judges had authority to condemn. Even to this very day judging is associated with condemnation or condemning someone. Jesus counseled against this type of judging that involves condemning others.*

Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned : forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Luke 6:37

*The apostle Paul also understood this relationship between judging and condemning.*

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. Romans 2:1

The Pharisees were of this class. They came forth from their religious services, not humbled with a sense of their own weakness, not grateful for the great privileges that God had given them. They came forth filled with spiritual pride, and their theme was, "Myself, my feelings, my knowledge, my ways." ***Their own attainments became the standard by which they judged others.*** Putting on the robes of self-dignity, they mounted the judgment seat to criticize ***and condemn***. The people partook largely of the same spirit, intruding upon the province of conscience and ***judging one another in matters that lay between the soul and God. It was in reference to this spirit*** and practice that Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." That is, do not set ***yourself*** up as a standard. Do not make ***your opinions, your views of duty, your interpretations of Scripture, a criterion for others and in your heart condemn them if they do not come up to your ideal.*** Do not criticize others, ***conjecturing as to their motives*** and passing judgment upon them. {MB 123,124}

*However, when we look again in the Scriptures, we see that our Savior did endorse the principle of judging; He endorsed the principle of judging righteously.*

Judge not according to the appearance, but ***judge righteous judgment*** John 7:24

*Many people in churches today, have overlooked this verse or have chosen not to give it much consideration. Some are innocently ignorant of its existence in the Bible. Yet, it is here in the word of God and is a positive command from the Savior Himself that we should judge and do it righteously. In fact, we can read in the Scriptures where Jesus used the word hypocrite to describe those who do not judge rightly.*

***[Ye] hypocrites***, ye can ***discern*** the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not ***discern*** this time? Luke 12:56

Yea, and ***why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right***? Luke 12:57

*In the first verse above, we gain a clearer understanding of the kind of judging that Jesus endorsed. Twice in Luke 12:56, we see that the word discern is used to highlight the question that our Lord asks the hypocrites. According to Christ, discern means to judge what is right.*

*Judging what is right is only possible if one is capable of distinguishing it from that which is wrong. The principle of discerning and judging righteously is confirmed throughout Scripture.*

Open thy mouth, ***judge righteously***, and plead the cause of the poor and needy. Proverbs 31: 9

***Judges*** and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and ***they shall judge the people with just judgment.***

***Thou shalt not wrest judgment***; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. Deuteronomy 16:18,19

And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear [the causes] between your brethren, and ***judge righteously*** between [every] man and his brother, and the stranger [that is] with him.

Deuteronomy 1:16

Ye shall ***do no unrighteousness in judgment***: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: [but] ***in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.***

Leviticus 19:15

To do justice ***and judgment*** [is] more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice. Proverbs 21: 3

The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of ***judgment*** Psalms 37: 30

***Blessed [are] they that keep judgment***, [and] he that doeth ***righteousness*** at all times

Psalms 106:3

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*After sharing very little information about the characters of 2 debtors, Jesus asks Simon to make a judgment about them. Notice how our Savior validates the principle of judging people rightly.*

Luke 7:41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

Luke 7:42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

Luke 7:43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that [he], to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, ***Thou hast rightly judged.***

Heavenly Father, forgive us for judging un-righteously and help us to open our mouths and judge righteously. Help us to discern what is right and to evaluate our own characters and the characters of others by Your opinions, Your views of duty and Your interpretations of Scripture.

In Jesus name, Amen.