



A just weight
and balance



are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- Judge Not!
- Matthew 7:1-3

- Those engaged in immoral behavior frequently quote this verse when attempting to defend their sinful lifestyle.
- Certain religionists quote it when being challenged to prove that their questionable practices are backed by biblical authority.

• From the “
Bible belt”

to

Hollywood,

Matthew 7:1

is ripped from its context and
bellowed as
some kind of scare tactic.

- Jesus said,
*‘Judge not,
that you be not judged.’*
- **Allegedly meaning that**
we cannot pass judgment
on anyone at anytime.

- **Matthew 7:1**

is not only among the most frequently quoted verses in the Bible, but also is one of the **most abused verses in all of Scripture.**

- Some have tried to get so far away from it's original meaning that they've gone to the opposite extreme, which is permissiveness.
- Meaning we cannot judge in any case or in any setting, and especially don't try to tell me I'm doing anything wrong.

- An interesting situation arises, though, when somebody takes this position.
 - They believe that you can't judge anyone else as being right or wrong and you have no right to condemn the way anyone is living.
- If you are doing that, you are wrong and that you shouldn't live that way.
 - Thus they practice the very thing they claim is wrong for others.

- Their motto is "live and let live."
- Never condemn a sin or doctrine because to do such is judging, and that would be "narrow mindedness".

- Christ is not telling us to avoid evaluating people or not to use our God-given wisdom.

- 1 John 4:1 (KJV)

- ***Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.***

- The world is full of false Christians and even ministers of Satan.
- **2 Corinthians 11:13-14** (KJV)
- 13 ***For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.***
 - 14 ***And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.***

- What Christ is condemning is harsh judgment and unjust criticism of others' motives.
- Every believer has the obligation to test others by their fruits.
 - Matthew 7:15-20 (KJV)
- 15 ***Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.***
- 16 ***Ye shall know them by their fruits.***

- But no Christian should ever judge motives.

- 1 Corinthians 4:5 (KJV)

*Therefore judge nothing before the time,
until the Lord come, who both will bring
to light the hidden things of darkness,
and will make manifest the counsels of
the hearts: and then shall every man have
praise of God.*

- Romans 14:1

*Welcome those who are weak in faith,
but do not argue with them
about their personal opinions.*

(GNB)

- Throughout the Sermon on the Mount **Jesus repeatedly criticized** the Jewish **scribes** and **Pharisees** for their self-righteousness and abuse of the Old Testament.

- Near the beginning of His sermon, **Jesus stated:**

“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven”
(Matthew 5:20).

- The unrighteousness of the scribes and Pharisees was at the heart of the Sermon on the Mount.

- Jesus wanted His audience to understand that **self-righteousness would not be permitted in the kingdom of heaven;** rather, it would lead to **“condemnation”** in hell (Matthew 5:20-23).

- A follower of God must be “*poor in spirit*” (5:3), not filled with pride.
- Must *love his enemies*, not hate them (5:44).
- Must *do good deeds*, but only to please God, not men (6:1-4).

- The scribes and Pharisees were guilty of wearing “*righteousness*” on their sleeves, rather than in their hearts (Matthew 6:1-8).

- It was in the midst of such strong public rebuke that Christ proclaimed:

- *Judge not,*
that you
be not judged.

- In Matthew 6:1-4,
Jesus instructed us
not to do
charitable deeds...
“*as the hypocrites do*”
(to be seen of men).

- Matthew 6:5-8,

Jesus told us
not to pray...

“*like the hypocrites*”

(to be heard of men).

- Likewise, in Matthew 7:1-5, Jesus was teaching us that judging another is wrong... when that judgment is hypocritical.

• In
Matthew 7:1-5,
did Jesus
condemn all judging
or did He condemn
only
a certain kind
of judging?

- **Matthew 7:5**
provides the answer.
- After condemning unrighteous judgments (7:1-4).
- Jesus instructed a person to
 - “**first remove the plank from your own eye,**
 - ***and then you will see clearly***
 - ***to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.*”**

- He was saying,
in essence,

Get your life right first.

- Then,
in love,
address
your brother's problem.

- This is consistent with what Paul wrote to the church at Philippi:

“Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others”
(Philippians 2:4).

- God never intended for Christians to be recluses.
- He gave us the responsibility of helping others by lovingly correcting them when they sin.

- He was saying,
when you judge,
judge righteously.
- And do it without hypocrisy.
 - John 7:24 (KJV)
**Judge not according
to the appearance,
but judge righteous
judgment.**

- Incidentally,
Jesus had already
judged the Pharisees.

- He obviously was
not teaching
that we should
never judge anyone.

- Have you noticed that Jesus said earlier “do not lay up treasure” and then turned around and said “lay up treasure”?

- And in today's lesson he says

- “Don't judge”

- and then says “judge”.

- Why this double talk?

- He is giving instruction for life

Have you noticed that when you
buy an item that requires some
assembly that the instructions are
the same for everyone?

What if the instructions said,

**“Just put it together
however it suites you”**

That's the way some
want to live their life.

- In fact, in the very next verse after His statements about judging, Jesus implicitly commanded that His followers make a judgment.

- He said:

***“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).

- Disciples of Christ must judge as to who are “dogs” and who are “hogs.”
 - Otherwise, how can we know when not to give that which is “holy” to “dogs”?
- Or how can we know when not to cast our “pearls” before “swine”?

- Jesus said we must judge between those who are “worthy,” and those who are like dogs and pigs (Matthew 10:12-15; Acts 13:42-46).

- Jesus repeatedly stated that His disciples must make judgment calls.

- How can we
“watch out”
for false prophets
if we cannot make
judgments as to
who the false prophets
are?

- According to Jesus, determining the identity of false teachers involves inspecting **“*their fruits*”** and making judgments...
- **Righteous judgments.**

- **It's nice to have**
a verse to prove
what you already
want to believe.
- And I think that's how
Matthew 7:1
is often used.

- It has been used to convey the idea,

*You live your lifestyle
and I'll live mine.*

- **But tell me how to live,**
and certainly don't try to
impose your standards
of morality on me."

- “*Judge not that
you be not judged*”

is spouted by a lot of people
who have no earthly idea
what Jesus meant by that.

- And I venture to say that
the people who quote this verse
the most are the ones who
understand it the least.

- One of the key verses in understanding it is

Matthew 5:20:

"For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees,

- ***you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."***

- We must have a different kind of righteousness from than the scribes and Pharisees.
- They wore theirs on their sleeves;
it was superficial.

- In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus deals with two different extremes of the problem of human judgment.

- The first extreme is a harsh and critical spirit.

- The second extreme is permissiveness.

- # 1 Don't Judge
(Matthew 7:1-2)

- ***"Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you."***

- As Jesus looked at the religious situation of his day, he saw that judging others had become a great religious problem.
- The Pharisees and scribes sat in the place of the critic.
- They were quick to pass judgment on those who didn't live up to their expectations.

- When Jesus was in the house of Simon the Pharisee, a woman anointed his feet,
 - Simon said,
"This man, if he were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner."
(Luke 7:39).

- The Pharisees,
in their self-righteous
arrogance,
had created a special
class of people called
"sinners,"
as if they themselves
were not such.

- The Pharisees were used to judging others self-righteously.
- Jesus said there are problems with that kind of judging.
 - It's
 - overly critical,
 - nit-picking attitude,
 - digging and searching for faults,
 - always suspecting the worst.

- So Jesus says that
“*we are not to judge*”.
- He’s not talking about the
judgment in a courtroom.
- He’s not talking about judging
open and obvious sin.
- He’s not talking about
judging false teachers.

- What he is talking about is a hasty, unloving, "holier than thou" type of attitude.
- We sometimes call this "jumping to conclusions".
- It's at the very heart of gossiping and rumor-bearing.

- Jesus wasn't saying we should never measure people with some discrimination.

- Jesus is not asking us to suspend our critical thinking powers.

- **But He is asking us
to renounce
the
presumptuous
ambition
to play God.**

- That's what drives this overly critical attitude:
 - a belief that I can see as God sees.
 - I can see your motives.
 - I know what you're thinking.
 - I know all about you.
 - That's what Jesus wants to eliminate.

- Whenever we make a judgment, we do so based on what we have seen and sometimes that's not enough to provide the whole picture.
- Human judgment is limited to the information we have at hand and that may not be enough to make an accurate judgment.⁵⁸

- God once made the point that
"Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."
(1 Samuel 16:7).
- Only the Lord knows all.

- It was in response to this sort of critical attitude that Paul responded,

"With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you.... In fact, I do not even judge myself....But he who judges me is the Lord.

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes."

(I Corinthians 4:3-5).

- We can't know everything in everybody else's mind.
- I can't read all your motives.
 - I need to give you the benefit of the doubt.
- That's what Paul meant when he said in I Corinthians 13 that love "believes all things"
 - love believes the best.
- But above all, I shouldn't be going around trying to find faults in your life.⁶¹

- Notice that self-righteous judgment has a boomerang:

- ***"For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."***

- In other words:

If you start throwing out this critical spirit on other people, **it'll come back.**

- # 2 Searching For Specks
(Matthew 7:3-5)

- *"And why do you look
at the speck
in your brother's eye,*
- *but do not consider
the plank
in your own eye?"*

- There's another problem with wrongful judging.
 - Not only was it overly critical, but it was also hypocritical.
 - It was two-faced.

- We like to look at people with bifocals.
- We use the bottom part to see ourselves,
and it has kind of a rosy tint to it.
- We tend to look past any shortcomings.
 - But the top part we use to look at others.
 - And that's the hypocrisy Jesus was denouncing.

- It's like the parable in **Luke 18** where a **Pharisee** goes to the temple to pray.
 - The Pharisee looks through the top part of his bifocals and says, **"Oh my! I'm glad I'm not like that scumbag out there."**
 - And then he looks through the bottom part and says to God, **"You are just so blessed to have me on your side."**
 - That's the kind of judging Jesus condemned.

- We're not qualified to sit in judgment on others because it's impossible to be impartial as we're influenced by our own imperfections.
- Jesus here uses the graphic example of a plank of wood and a speck of dust.

- Even though we are unqualified, we still judge.
 - And for selfish reasons; it makes us feel better.
 - It makes our sin seem not so bad after all.
 - Jesus warns that we've got to clean up our own act before we tamper with the lives of others.

- Jesus wants us to be aware that we are all sinners.

- Rom 3:23

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

- And we're to work together as a family to overcome our sins.

- But ultimately,
the only sins over which
I have control
are my own,
and those are the ones
that should command
my greatest attention.

- We can see so well the things in others' lives that we want to pick on, but Jesus said we're usually being overly critical and hypocritical when we do it.

- But it's important for us to notice that he didn't stop there.
 - Rather, he gave us the responsibility of helping our brother: "First *remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye.*"
(Matthew 7:5).

- First Jesus says,
**"Don't judge,
don't condemn."**
- Then, in the same
breath, he says,
**"Make certain
judgments concerning
people and behavior."**

- How can these two positions be reconciled?
 - The two positions actually complement and limit each other perfectly.
 - In the first statement Jesus condemns the critical, holier-than-thou, jumping to conclusions sort of judgment that the Pharisees were known for.

- In this second statement,
Jesus acknowledges
the need for making decisions
concerning people
and behavior that is
detrimental to our
Christian lives.

- You can take a pig and put him in a bathtub.
 - You wash him, floss his teeth, mousse his tail, do whatever you want.
 - Then you put him back outside, and you know where he'll go?
 - Right back to the mud.
 - Jesus was saying there are people like that.
- These words are harsh, but his point is that we shouldn't waste spiritual treasures on those who have no spiritual interest.

- In Matthew 10,
Jesus sent some disciples out
and he said,

"Look. When you go into a town, and they don't have the time of day for you, shake the dust off your sandals and get out of there."

- Some people are spiritual pigs and dogs.

- Paul received some rough treatment in Corinth on his **2nd** missionary journey,
- "But when [the Jews] opposed [Paul] and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them,
'Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean.
From now on I will go to the Gentiles.'" (Acts 18:6).

- We've got to use that kind of discernment and not waste spiritual treasures on people who will just trample them.

- There are some people who **have no spiritual interest.**
 - They will trample the precious things **we hold dear to our heart.**
 - And Jesus said to use some discernment **in these situations.**

- There are three great reasons why no man should judge another.

- (# 1)

We never know

all the facts

or the whole person.

- No one knows

the strength

of temptations

anyone faces.

- There is a kind of crystal called Labrador spar.
 - At first sight it is dull and without lustre;
 - but when the light strikes it in a certain way it will sparkle with flashing beauty.
 - People are like that.

- (# 2) It is almost impossible for anyone to be strictly impartial in their judgment.
- We are easily swayed by instinctive reactions to people.

- It is told that sometimes, when the Greeks held a particularly important and difficult trial, they held it in the dark so that judge and jury would not even see the man on trial, and so would be influenced by nothing but the facts of the case.

- Only a completely impartial person has a right to judge.
- That is not within our human nature.
- Only God can judge.

- (# 3)

It was Jesus who stated
the supreme reason

why we should
not judge others.

- No of us are
perfect enough
to judge another.

- Only the faultless have a right to look for faults in others.

- Monday morning quarterbacks make perfect judgment calls.
- The world is full of Monday morning quarterbacks.

- All of us have been guilty of or suffered from someone's misjudgment;
- And yet the strange fact is that there is hardly any commandment of Jesus which is more consistently broken and neglected.

**Doors of the church
are open.**

Spirit & Bride Say

“Come”

Revelation 22:17

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