

## **I Know We Are Not Supposed to Judge Is An Erroneous Statement**

Like me, you have probably had someone say to you, “I know we are not supposed to judge, but...” then they go ahead and make a judgment. Have they sinned for judging, or is their statement incorrect? It is the latter, not the former. The confusion is based upon a wrong interpretation of Matt. 7:1 which says, “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” It is a bit ironic that when it comes to the matter of judging, this verse is usually the first one (maybe the only one) that is cited. Somehow John 7:24 gets lost in the mix; perhaps in one’s efforts to make himself out more pious than he really is. John records Jesus’ words: “Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgments”

Unless the Son of God has contradicted Himself, which thing He has not, the interpretation of Matt. 7:1 as, “I know we are not supposed to judge but...” is false! Don’t be guilty of saying, “I know we are not supposed to judge, because it is not true! In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is warning against hypocritical judgment by the individual who is pointing at a speck, while toting a beam. Friend, unless you have a beam in your eye, then the instruction to “Judge not, that ye be not judged,” doesn’t apply to you.

Brethren, we not only may judge, it is incumbent upon us so to do. We have to judge in order to conclude that a brother has been overtaken in a fault (Gal. 6:1) and needs to be restored. Without making a judgment that one is walking disorderly how could we withdraw from the disorderly? (2 Thess.3:6). Maybe the fact that we don’t is because we misunderstand Matt. 7:1. If we are not to judge how can we rebuke elders who sin before all? (1 Tim. 5:19,20). If we are not to judge, how are we to conclude that one is bringing something other than the doctrine of Christ and consequently must not be invited into the house? (2 John 9-11). Among the conditions of men in the last days described by Paul to Timothy is: “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived” (2 Tim. 3:13). How can we have any real knowledge of such things unless we make the judgment that one is a seducer or an evil man? In the same seventh chapter of Matthew, Jesus shows us Himself that He is not teaching us, “I know we are not supposed to judge, but...” In verse 15 He said, Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves” (v. 15). How can we beware of false prophets unless we make the judgment that a false prophet is a false prophet, and a wolf in sheep’s clothing? That is right, we cannot!

Let us banish from our thoughts and from our vocabularies the concept and conclusion of, “I know we are not supposed to judge, but...” Instead, let us avoid hypocritical judgments, resist making judgments according to appearance, and instead of those, make righteous judgments.

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