

THE NORMAL CHRISTIAN LIFE

Studies in the Sermon on the Mount

Part XXXVII

“Judgment On Judgmentalism”

I. Introduction

We have come to the last of the 3 chapters containing the Sermon on the Mount and the passage where the Lord Jesus spends 5 verses on the most serious subject of judgment and judgmentalism.

A. Review: “The Most Misunderstood Command in the Bible”

Judge not, that ye be not judged.

Matthew 7:1

1. We spent most of our last time together correcting the current misconception in the church that Jesus was commanding Christians to make *no* judgments of anything or anyone or at any time.

2. But we proved this cannot be the right meaning:

- In v.6 He warns us not to give what is holy unto dogs or to cast our pearls before swine; which requires us to make a judgment!
- In v.15, He warns us to “beware of false prophets”, which requires us to make a judgment
- In v.20 “By their fruits you will know them”, so we must judge them so
- In other places where are commanded beware of false teachers and false teaching, which requires us to make a judgment?
- Over in John’s gospel He says...

Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

John 7:24

3. We spent all this time telling you what “Judge not” does not mean because we are living in a culture that wants to shame the church into silence using the words of Jesus!

***I saw a t-shirt that said; “Judge not lest ye be Judy.”**

4. So if “Judge not” does not mean “Judge not, never ever...what *does* it mean? The next 4 verses tell us.

II. So What Does It Mean?

Matthew 7:1-5 NLT

"Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. For you will be treated as you treat others.*

The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged. "And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye* when you have a log in your own? How can you think of saying to your friend, 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye?

Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

Matthew 7:1-5 NLT

Jesus is not commanding us not to judge. He is...

A. Pronouncing Judgment Against Judgmentalism

1. The dictionary says...

“judgmentalism”

The quality or state of being too willing to criticize the actions and behavior of others and say they are wrong.

The Open Dictionary

a. Judgmentalism is a “critical spirit”, being quick to find fault, which is a serious sin.

These words of Christ do not contain an absolute prohibition from judging, but are intended to cure a disease, which appears to be natural to us all. We flatter ourselves, and pass severe censure on others. This vice is attended by some strange enjoyment: for there is hardly any person who is not tickled with the desire of inquiring into other people's faults.

John Calvin

2. How much of the modern 24/7 “news” media is not news; it’s about finding fault and judging others. .

3. And even those of us who follow Jesus can move into judgmentalism when we are quick to see the sins of others to the point where we can’t see our own.

Our own sins ought to appear greater to us than the same sins in others: that which charity teaches us to call but a splinter in our brother's eye, true repentance and godly sorrow will teach us to call a beam in our own.

Matthew Henry

a. The Lord is warning us to stop trying to remove splinters from the eye of another when we haven’t dealt with the log in our own eye.

4. But judgmentalism is more than being critical; it is sitting in judgment of another where we actually condemn the person.

“He is not telling us that we are not to make these assessments based on judgment, but He is very concerned about the matter of condemning.”

David Martyn Lloyd-Jones

a. The Christian must make judgments; but there’s a danger...

“To walk by faith means to walk on a knife edge. You can fall on this side or that; you have to keep on the dead center of truth, avoiding the error on the one side and on the other.

“So that while we say that it does not mean the refusal to exercise any discrimination or judgment, we must hasten to say that what it does warn against is the terrible danger of condemning, of pronouncing judgment in a final sense.”

David Martyn Lloyd-Jones

5. Testimony: I have observed that judgmentalism is a bigger trap for the mature believer than for the new believer. The more we love God and know what the Bible says, the more likely we are to fall into this particular sin.

“A taste of righteousness can be easily perverted into a pervasive sense of self-righteousness and judgmentalism.”

R. Kent Hughes

a. The Pharisees knew the Bible by heart; but they used it to set themselves up as judges of others.

“I’ve been quick to spot in other people rigid, authoritarian attitudes and statements I don’t like very much...What I didn’t realize is that I was stuck in my own judgmentalism.”

Terry D. Cooper, *Making Judgments Without Being Judgmental*

6. An example for me is watching politics on TV; especially listening to people who consistently support things contrary to the Word of God: abortion, socialism, big government.

a. Is it wrong to be able to discern politics that are anti-biblical?

No! But sometimes I don’t stop there. I slip into judging the person’s soul. Thoughts come into my mind: “I can’t stand that person”! “What a reprobate!”

“All they want is power!” Then I realize I’ve moved beyond judging what they do or say into judgmentalism, where I judge who they *are*. That’s when I realize I’ve moved into a seat of judgment that belongs only to God.

This spirit really manifests itself in the tendency to pronounce final judgment upon people as such. This means that it is not a judgment so much on what they do, or believe, or say, as upon the persons themselves. It is a final judgment upon an individual, and what makes it so terrible is that at that point it is arrogating to itself something that belongs to God.

David Martyn Lloyd-Jones

7. There’s a difference between judging a person’s sins and judging the person!

a. It is possible to “Hate the sin, love the sinner”. Isn’t that what God does?

b. God hates sin because He is holy. But God loves sinners because He is merciful. So...as one of the Puritans said...

We are warned against unmerciful judgments. Danger arises from attributing motives. We must beware lest we ignore the possibilities of good even in a bad man. Be as merciful as you can be to the sinner.

The Biblical Illustrator

8. Testimony: There are people who love God and go to church every Sunday, but they see themselves as having a great gift of discernment. They believe they have the gift of being able to spot sins in others or to know what’s behind what people do. But what they really have is a spirit of judgmentalism.

a. But true discernment of sins in others is not for judgment, it’s for prayer!.

“Discernment is God’s call to intercession, never to faultfinding.”

Corrie Ten Boom

b. If you really have the gift of discernment, don't use it for judgment, consider it a call to prayer.

III. Motivation For Merciful Judgment

A. Judge Not Lest Ye Be Judged

1. Why?

The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.

Matthew 7:2

2. This one verse alone can deliver us from judgment for judgmentalism. If I truly believe that God will judge me on the basis of how I judge others, I need go no farther.

“If we presume to judge others, we may expect to be ourselves judged. He who usurps the bench, shall be called to the bar.”

Matthew Henry

3. I need mercy every day! But if I withhold it from others, God will withhold it from me!

With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful...

Psalm 18:25

4. This reminds me of the “Golden Rule”, which comes a few verses later...

“Do unto others as you would have the do unto you.”

Matthew 7:12

5. Go easy in your judgment of others; God is watching.

B. One Last Instruction

"And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye* when you have a log in your own? How can you think of saying to your friend, 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

Matthew 7:3-5 NLT

1. Jesus says that when we see sin in others, the first thing we are to do is to deal with the sin in ourselves.

a. This was the sin of the Pharisees; they considered themselves master judges of the law; quick to point out the faults of the people while missing the sin of pride and judgmentalism in their own soul.

2. None of us are qualified to try to help others see their sin until we've fully acknowledged our own.

3. There IS a place to help others with their sin; but ours comes first...

or else we end up as the "pot calling the kettle black!"

C. Conclusion

1. There is a difference between judgment and judgmentalism.

2. We must judge; but we must not be judgmental.

3. We who have received mercy but be ready to show it to others.

What would become of us, if God should be as exact and severe in judging us, as we are in judging our brethren; if he should weigh us in the same balance?

We may justly expect it, if we be extreme to mark what our brethren do amiss. In this, as in other things, the violent dealings of men return upon their own heads.

Matthew Henry

Communion

“A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.”

1 Corinthians 11:28

Closing Prayer for Forgiveness

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