



## Hard Sayings Part 1

July 9, 2023

The Gospel of Saint John 6:59-65, <sup>59</sup>Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum. <sup>60</sup>When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” <sup>61</sup>But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this? <sup>62</sup>Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? <sup>63</sup>It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. <sup>64</sup>But there are some of you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) <sup>65</sup>And he said, “This is why I told

you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”

May the Lord add His Blessing to the Reading and the Hearing of His Word today, in Jesus Name! Amen!

“This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” There are many hard sayings through the New Testament that Christ Himself taught but more often than not, we don’t want the hard teachings of Jesus. Rather, we desire the fun-loving Jesus that would never offend, demand anything of us or dare to correct us. Friends, Jesus taught Hard Things and if we are Followers of Christ then we must know, embrace, and submit to these hard things. And if we refuse, then are we truly His followers? Thus our first question to ask and seek an answer to...

## 1. What did Jesus Teach concerning Judging Others?

One of the most abused and misquoted texts of the record of the Words of Christ is found in The Gospel of Saint Matthew 7:1-5, “Judge not, that you be not judged. <sup>2</sup> For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. <sup>3</sup> Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?<sup>4</sup> Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in

your own eye? <sup>5</sup> You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.”

Judge Not... Is that what it said? We shouldn't judge others?

Friends, this is a perfect textual example of taking one verse and building an entire doctrinal stance off of it by twisting the meaning and removing it from the contextual relationship formulated by all 5 verses working together and not individually. Honestly, if I may suggest, the best way of properly understanding this stanza of text is to literally read it in reverse. The principal of this text is righteous judgment without skewed or perverted judgment tethered with critical or self-righteous spirit!

Church, we all have specks in our eyes; we all have areas that need tidying up or fixing. The desire to help your brother get the speck out is right so long as your vision of yourself and them are right. The goal is to help them; not subjugate them by means of using their speck to elevate yourself! As noted in verse 5, get your own log out first in so that you can see clearly to help your brother! Friends, the context of this text was not Christ telling His disciples to not judge but rather to do so with a right heart and with truth; not with perversion and manipulation. Jesus never told us to not judge but rather to judge not through the lens of skewed or perverted judgement. Thus our Second question to consider...

## 2. What Does It Mean To Judge Righteously?

As I stated earlier, Jesus never told us to not judge but rather to judge not through the lens of skewed or perverted judgement. Furthermore, how can we judge righteously when we ourselves are guilty the very thing we are condemning? This is the epitome of unrighteous judgment! The

Apostle Paul spoke to this very topic found in his letter to the Church at Rome: Romans 2:1-11, “Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every

one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.

<sup>2</sup>We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. <sup>3</sup>Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice

such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? <sup>4</sup>Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and

forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? <sup>5</sup>But because of your hard and impenitent heart

you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. <sup>6</sup>He will render to each one

according to his works: <sup>7</sup>to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; <sup>8</sup>but for those

who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,

there will be wrath and fury. <sup>9</sup>There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, <sup>10</sup> but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. <sup>11</sup>For God shows no partiality.”

Church, unrighteous judgment is based upon the abuse of power to condemn others on the basis of an act that we ourselves are guilty of doing. To condemn others for their actions but forfeiting ourselves of the penalty of our own actions of which are the same as those whom we condemned. Note the way Paul speaks to this very matter found in verses 1-3, “Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. <sup>2</sup>We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. <sup>3</sup>Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God?”

And the principle to us is the very same! What does it mean to judge unrighteously? Passing judgment on another you condemn yourself because you practice the same things!

And could it be that this is the point of what Christ was seeking to drive home in the Gospel of Saint Matthew 7:2, **“For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.”** With this text in mind, notice the grammatical structure of the first part of the sentence in verse 2, **“For with the judgment you pronounce...”**

Could the “the” in this sentence be implied to speak to righteous versus unrighteous judgment? Because in the second it transitions from the type of judgment utilized to the measure of the type chosen in judgment to be measured back to us as well. Thus, if we judge righteously with proper measure and merit, then our judgment is right and the same measure will be placed before us; the opposite can be said for unrighteous judgment.

Granted, when the topic of Judgment is discussed, ultimately the Judgment of God becomes an easy arena of discussion to transition into. There are those who claim that God doesn't judge anymore; that God doesn't curse or judge or condemn anyone but this is simply not the truth. So with this in mind, let us land upon our final question for today...

**3. Does God still Judge Mankind as well as those of His Church?**

A well-known minister and prophetic voice in America, named Jeremiah Johnson, shared the following that I thought was quite sensible in light of this topic of the Judgement of God. “Removing the active wrath and judgment of God from the New Covenant cannot be accomplished without serious intellectual dishonesty and an anti-Christ agenda that’s fueled by a desire to create and portray a “god” that is made in our image and not the God of the Scriptures.”

Church there are quite a few examples of God’s Judgment in the New Testament; some of which were judgments unto Death! For those who claim that God doesn’t judge anymore and that is an Old Testament concept alone has not devoted themselves to study of the New Testament Text whatsoever. I will provide for all of us nine specific instances in the New Testament alone where Christ took issue with a person in sin or pride or greed and the Judgment of God came upon their lives:

- John 3:36 - The wrath of God is currently and continually abiding upon all those who reject Jesus Christ as the Son of God.
- Acts 5:1-16 - Ananias and Sapphira (church members and disciples of the Apostles) are struck down dead for lying to the Holy Spirit because they lied about their financial contribution.

- Acts 12:20-24 - King Herod is struck dead by an angel of the Lord for not giving God glory when the crowds shouted, “the voice of a god, and not of a man!”
- Acts 13:8-11 - Elymas the magician is struck blind “by the hand of the Lord” for being a fraud and a son of the devil.
- Romans 1:18-24 - The wrath of God is revealed toward humanity by allowing them to reap what they sow. “Therefore God gave them over”.
- 1 Cor 5:1-13 - An immoral brother is judged and handed over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh.
- 1 Cor 11:27-34 - Believers are judged and become sick, some even die, for not judging themselves before partaking of the Lord’s supper.
- 1 Timothy 1:20 - Hymenaeus and Alexander were delivered to Satan for Blasphemy
- And finally, The Book of Revelation 2:22 - "Look! I am throwing her [Jezebel] onto a bed of violent illness, and those who commit adultery with her into terrible suffering, unless they repent of her deeds. Furthermore, I [Jesus] will strike her followers with a deadly disease, and then all the churches will know that I am the one who searches minds and hearts. I will repay each one of you what your deeds deserve." (NET) New English Translation



And Church, these nine noted points do not include the coming judgments of God upon Humanity in the Book of the Revelation! Friends a judgment day is coming for us all and my question for each of us, including me, are we judging righteously? Are we striving to remove the log from our own eyes? Are we condemning others and by such, condemning ourselves? It is time to Repent and Turn to Christ!