

January 9th – Judge Not

*“Judge not, that you be not judged.”
(Matt. 7:1)*

A few decades ago, if you were to ask most Americans to quote one verse of Scripture, they probably would've quoted John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world...”. As a child I can distinctly remember seeing “John 3:16” on poster boards and signs at sporting events all across America. I don't see John 3:16 plastered across our culture quite like I used to. Instead, the verse most Americans would probably quote would be today's verse – “Judge not, that you be not judged.”

Why do so many people, even lost people, have this verse memorized and quote it from time to time? Because it's generally become a way of saying, “Keep your nose out of my business, and I'll keep my nose out of yours.” Is that really what Jesus intended with this verse? With this verse, Jesus was really rebuking hypocrisy. Jesus was warning against being overly concerned about the “speck” in someone else's eye, while being unconcerned about the “plank” in our own.

It is certainly true that we should not pass judgment on things we have not investigated, especially if there is sin on our own doorstep. Christ commands us to deal with our own sins, “then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.” With that said, we must judge the words and works of others as we seek to live for Christ. Later in this chapter, Jesus said, “you will know them by their fruits” (Matt. 7:16). Premature judgment is a sin, but careful consideration is a must.