

February 23, 2020  
HEAVEN ON EARTH – Part 5  
**“Choose Wisely”**

Without even thinking we often make snap judgments about others, often based on first appearances, and yet not a one of us wants to be on the receiving end of that.

Matthew 7:1 (NIV): “Do not judge, or you too will be judged.” Matthew 7:2-5

**TYPES OF JUDGMENT THAT ARE ALWAYS WRONG**

- **Superficial Judgment**  
Jesus: “Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment.” (John 7:24 NIV)
- **Hypocritical Judgment**  
Romans 2:1 (NIV): “You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.”
- **Harsh, Unforgiving Judgment**  
Jesus: “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.” (Matthew 5:7 NIV)
- **Untrue Judgment**  
Proverbs 19:5 (NIV): “A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who pours out lies will not go free.”

These kinds of judgments reveal a weakness in us, the reality and power of sin working in us.

These kinds of judgments have nothing to do with living in the Kingdom of Heaven.

An obvious conclusion many draw from what Jesus says here verse 7:1 is that judgment is *always* wrong.

What Jesus says in verses 13-20, at one level, seems to challenge what he said at the beginning of the chapter.

*How* do we discern the right road, the true prophet or the good tree, unless we examine them and *make judgments*?

We use Scripture to interpret Scripture, in order to see the overall big picture.

**What Jesus is warning about is making hypocritical judgments**

**Jesus:** ““Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment.”” (John 7:24 NIV)

**Jesus doesn’t tell us not to judge, but not to judge by “mere appearances.”**

**Jesus:** ““A tree is identified by its fruit. ...”” (Matthew 12:33 NLT)

## **HOW DO WE MAKE GOOD AND RIGHT JUDGMENTS?**

**Jesus:** ““<sup>27</sup>And [the Father] has given [the Son] authority to judge everyone because he is the Son of Man. <sup>28</sup>Don’t be so surprised! Indeed, the time is coming when all the dead in their graves will hear the voice of God’s Son, <sup>29</sup>and they will rise again. Those who have done good will rise to experience eternal life, and those who have continued in evil will rise to experience judgment. <sup>30</sup>I can do nothing on my own. I judge as God tells me. Therefore, my judgment is just, because I carry out the will of the one who sent me, not my own will.”” (John 5:27-30 NLT)

### **1. The Kingdom of Heaven is the standard for right judging.**

**Matthew 6:33** (NIV): ““But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.””

**We have to keep ourselves immersed in spiritual practices which keep us in sync with God’s Kingdom.**

**Jesus:** “... ‘I am the way and the *truth* and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’” (John 14:6 NIV – *emphasis added*)

**1 Kings 8:39** (NLT): ““...you alone [O LORD God] know each human heart.””

### **2. We apply judgments in love.**

**Ephesians 4:15-16** (NLT): “<sup>15</sup>... we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. <sup>16</sup>He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”

**Truth is objective, measured against Jesus himself, who is the “truth.”**

**Love is our motive, which means to choose to accept someone for who they are and sacrificially work for their good.**

**We cannot hold non-believers to the same standards as believers.**

**3. The goal of judgment, especially regarding Christians, is restoration.**

**Hebrews 10:30** (ESV): “For we know him [God] who said, ‘Vengeance is mine; I will repay.’ And again, ‘The Lord will judge his people.’”

**Galatians 6:1** (NLT): “Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself.”

**The danger is speaking, but not speaking the truth *in love*, so that we show we’ve fallen into temptation and find ourselves being judged.**

**Matthew 18:15-17** (NLT): “<sup>15</sup>If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. <sup>16</sup>But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. Then if he or she won’t accept the church’s decision, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector.”

**Next Week: Who Has Authority in Your Life?**

Get the *Life Journal* Bible Reading Plan at [gateway-community.org/Find-it](http://gateway-community.org/Find-it)

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