

## ***Stop Judging!***

*Matthew 7:1-6*

How do we relate to people who are at fault especially in their treatment of us? Generally, it is human nature to judge others while excusing ourselves. The Pharisees of Jesus day were extremely and oppressively judgmental in their condemnation of others. They love to point out the faults of others in order to tear them down and exalt themselves. Jesus rebuked them in John 7:24. In our text Jesus gives us three directions on how to conduct ourselves in regard to the faults of others.

**1. God \_\_\_\_\_ us to \_\_\_\_\_ *a critical spirit towards others***

Jesus is not forbidding all judging. Matthew 5:20-42 contrast the false practices and the hypocritical religious piety of the scribes and Pharisees with the disciples. Believers are called upon to distinguish between true and false prophets (7:15-20). Even Christ repeatedly says that they can be known or judged to be bad by their fruits (7:16, 20; cf. Matt. 15:1ff; 23:1ff; Luke 12:57; John 7:24). The followers of Jesus exercised judgment and discernment (e.g., Matt. 3:7; Luke. 3:7-14; Gal. 1:8, 9; Phil. 3:2; 1 Thess. 2:14, 15; 1 Tim. 1:6, 7; Titus 3:2, 10; 1 John 4:1; 2 John 10; 3 John 9). The Bible calls us to exercise proper judgment and discernment especially when it comes to our personal holiness and for the edification of the church (Acts 16:15, 1 Tim. 1:3; 4:7; Eph. 5:11; 1 Cor. 5:11; 2 Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17). What Jesus is forbidding is to indulge in a hyper critical spirit towards others. He is forbidding judging others harshly, severely, rashly, unfairly, destructively and even hypocritically (Rom. 14:13). Judging others and their motives is to play God (Jas. 4:11-12).

**2. God \_\_\_\_\_ us to \_\_\_\_\_ *a hypocritical behavior in our views of others***

Jesus used a simple parable to warn us about the hypocrisy of having a fault finding spirit. It is a very dangerous thing when people who profess Christ are under the dominion of some serious sin, yet act as if their lives are totally normal (James 1:23-24; Isa. 6:9-10). We need to learn to view our own sins as more wicked than the same sins in others. We need to be stricter and harder on our own behavior than the behavior of others.

**3. God \_\_\_\_\_ us to \_\_\_\_\_ *in charity in correcting others***

Jesus is teaching in verse 5 that we ought to practice loving mutual discipline. We must be careful not to evaluate uncharitably, unlovingly, unmercifully, or with a desire to hurt our brother. We are always to have a loving attitude, even towards those who have faults that have been committed against us. We must never judge our brother without first carefully noting our own spiritual condition (Gal. 6:1).

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Jesus instructs us that before we correct others, we must first examine ourselves and our motives. With a right motive, we are to correct/reprove the brethren with the intention of building them up, not to tearing them down; with a view to making them stronger not making yourself seem more holy. Finally, we are to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15).

*“Correct your brother, not as a foe, nor as a an adversary, exacting a penalty, but as a physician providing medicines. Yes, and even more, as a loving brother anxious to restore and rescue.”*

- John Chrysostom