



RENDERING A VERDICT MT. 7:1-5

Should Christians Judge?

- Do not _____. (Mt. 7:1; J.s. 4:11-12)
 - Can't mean we don't make moral evaluations or exercise discernment.
- _____ with right judgment (J.n. 7:24; Mt. 7:6)
- God is very concerned with _____ we judge. (Mt 7:3-5)

Unrighteous Judging...

- We are not called to judge _____. (1 Cor. 5:12-13)
- Our judgments are sinful if they are made (1) In _____ or (2) _____.
 - Our judgments are sinful when they...
 - ...evaluate the _____ by the whole.
 - ...infer an _____ from an instance.
 - ...draw _____ from appearances.
 - ...discount someone's _____ based on their past.

Righteous Judging...

- Righteous judging begins with _____ - judging. (Mt. 7:3-5)
- We judge _____ and doctrine, *not* believers themselves.
 - "_____ is inconsistent with what *I believe to be true about you—that you love and belong to Christ.*"
- We judge gently with the goal of being _____, *not* better-than. Righteous judging cares about loving, *not* winning.

The Righteous Judging...

- Christ was judged in our _____. (2 Cor. 5:21)
- If you were judged today, would you be found _____?



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Should Christians Judge?

- Do not _____ **judge** _____ (Mt. 7:1; J.s. 4:11-12)
 - Can't mean we don't make moral evaluations or exercise discernment.
- _____ **Judge** _____ with right judgment (J.n. 7:24; Mt. 7:6)
- God is very concerned with _____ **how** _____ we judge. (Mt 7:3-5)

Unrighteous Judging...

- We are not called to judge _____ **unbelievers** _____. (1 Cor. 5:12-13)
- Our judgments are sinful if they are made (1) In _____ **ignorance** or (2) _____ **hypocritically** _____.
 - Our judgments are sinful when they...
 - ...evaluate the _____ **part** _____ by the whole.
 - ...infer an _____ **identity** _____ from an instance.
 - ...draw _____ **conclusions** _____ from appearances.
 - ...discount someone's _____ **future** _____ based on their past.

Righteous Judging...

- Righteous judging begins with _____ **self** _____ - judging. (Mt. 7:3-5)
- We judge _____ **actions** _____ and doctrine, *not* believers themselves.
 - "_____ is inconsistent with what *I believe to be true about you—that you love and belong to Christ.*"
- We judge gently with the goal of being _____ **helpful** _____, *not* better-than. Righteous judging cares about loving, *not* winning.

The Righteous Judging...

- Christ was judged in our _____ **place** _____. (2 Cor. 5:21)
- If you were judged today, would you be found _____ **guilty** _____?



RENDERING A VERDICT

MT. 7:1-5

Seems like everyone one knows a few verses. John 3:16, Ps. 23, and “Don’t judge,” 2015 Barna Survey: Of millennials who don’t go to church, 87% said Christians are judgmental. We’re in a series talking about what love is, and I want to spend out time today addressing what I perceive to be a problem—namely that a lot of people think that Christians are unloving because they are judgmental. And there is really responsibility on both sides—the church and the culture are at fault.

Truth is we do tend to be judgmental. We judge people in traffic. But unfortunately it doesn’t stop there—it infects our spiritual lives. I’ve sat with people who say, “Christians just act like they’re better than me.” Too often it’s true. And it’s in the church! Have a tattoo and a nose piercing so they probably don’t love Jesus. Big house probably living for the world. Read the Message probably immature. They let their kids have too much screen time they’re not wise parents. Stunningly unattractive to the world. Your Bible doesn’t say over and over not to judge because it’s not a danger for you, but precisely because it is. This isn’t for someone else. And so we need to move into this conversation understanding that this is dangerously easy for us to do. And we need to own it.

And yet the fault is also in many ways with our culture. Our culture has constructed a definition of judging that makes anyone guilty of being judgmental if they don’t agree with their beliefs or decisions. If you say or act like what I’m doing is wrong, you’re judging me. No one can tell me thou shalt or thou shalt not.

Pics “Only God can judge me.” “Don’t judge someone just because they sin differently than you.” “Before you judge me, make sure you’re perfect.” “Unless you’ve walked in my shoes, you can’t judge my steps.”

Should Christians Judge?

- Do not judge (Mt. 7:1; Js. 4:11-12)

It can’t mean... “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.” (Mt. 7:1-2) “12 There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?” (Js 4:12)

- Can’t mean we don’t make moral evaluations or exercise discernment.

- Judge with right judgment (Jn. 7:24; Mt. 7:6)

“Do not judge by appearances but judge with right judgment.” Bc Jesus says in vs 6, “Do not throw dogs what is holy and do not throw your pearls before pigs...” You’ve The fact is that you and I are called to make all kind of judgments all the time ...is this person safe for my child to be around, can I trust this person with my money? Even in the church, we’re called to make a judgment about whether someone is truly a believer or not, we’re called to make a judgment about whether the preacher is faithful or not in his teaching of the word, about whether the elders and deacons meet the qualifications laid out in Scripture. And for those reasons, far from saying that we should never make judgments about people, the Scripture praises good judgment. Wise trained judgment. “But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.” (Heb 5:14)

So we're clearly we're told not to judge. And we're told to judge rightly. And so when it comes to the issues of judging, God is speaking to whether or not we will judge...Rather...

- God is very concerned with how we judge. (Mt 7:3-5)

And that's what he's doing in Mt. 7:3-5—how to remove the speck. This is not a sermon on not judging as much as it is a sermon on how to judge righteously and in a way that is lifegiving and helpful. And I'm going to argue this morning that if you don't judge righteously and wisely you don't love the people around you. That your powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish between good and evil—if you're not taking that training and exercising it for the holiness and good of those around you you're not loving them. **Pray.**

I've just said that God is concerned with how we judge and I want to defend that. “3 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? 4 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? 5 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.” So this is talking about seeing sin in someone's life “speck” and pointing it out—but doing it in the right way. This is exercising godly good judgment. A few things to notice here. First, this is talking about how we should address what we perceive to be wrong beliefs or behavior of *believers*...

Unrighteous Judging...

- We are not called to judge unbelievers. (1 Cor. 5:12-13)

1 Cor. 5:12-13 “12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? 13 God judges those outside. “Purge the evil person from among you.” Now, again this doesn't mean we don't have any sort of opinion on unbelievers' lifestyles. It means that when we go to the unbeliever, our true concern isn't their lifestyle. This is a huge reason Christians are seen as judgmental. They've heard that they need to behave—keep the Ten Commandments and stop smoking and cussing. NO! We go to them with the Gospel. We don't go to unbelievers saying that they have a speck in their eye, we go understanding that they need new eyes to see Jesus. Our judgment of unbelievers is not that they need to grow in holiness. Our judgment is that apart from repentance and faith, they will stand before the holiness of God without mediator. So what we're talking about here is an intramural discussion of people in the family of God.

So you'll notice that speck removal is for believers. And notice also that this text assumes something about doing life in the family of God; that we are called to exercise mutual oversight of each other's faith. You've no doubt heard a lot about the Coronavirus over the last few week or so. And one thing that is so dangerous about it is that you can have it for so long without knowing you have it. When it comes to sin, it is similar. Remember sin isn't just wicked it's deceitful. It's deceptive and hard to detect. This entire illustration is predicated on the fact that neither party can see the sin. You'd think you could see a plank but that's how deceptive it is. It's often undetectable. Like carbon monoxide as it quietly poisons you.

And the problem is their isn't some medical screening or scan we can give you to pinpoint areas where sin has infected your life—your marriage. You what know God has designed to be the tool that detects whether or not sin is infecting your life and making you spiritually sick? The church. Believers are the God-ordained means to help you detect and destroy sin in your life. This is war. We have to put our sin to death. We don't manage it—the problem is that we often can't see. We're in a war where the enemy is so disguised and so deceptive that we need help to make sure we're not sitting ducks, and God has appointed believers to oversee one another and have each other's back so that sin doesn't destroy us. **War example.**

And when you understand it this way, mutual oversight doesn't feel like judgement it feels like rescue. This isn't you just focus on your eye and I'll focus on mine. This is I can see sin that you can't see and you can see sin in me that I can't see—and we're committed to making sure it doesn't destroy us. You are joining a speck removal cooperative. A sin execution collaborative. I want Rebecca to point out my sin! I want to know that she's got my back—sin is the enemy and I want someone who loves me enough to tell me if it's creeping up behind me. Speck removal isn't me against you. It's both us against sin. We're playing on the same team – working toward the same goal. And as we do that there is a right way and a wrong way to go about speck removal... Let's talk about the wrong way first...

- Our judgments are sinful if they are made (1) In ignorance or (2) hypocritically. So let's come back to our text here. Jesus is giving us an image and it's of someone who has a log in their eye trying to take a splinter out of someone else's. And there are two things about this that make for unrighteous judgment: hypocrite because you've got the same problem. And ignorance—you can't see, “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.” Being a hypocrite makes you sinful, being not being able to see just makes you dangerous. And so I want to give you a few pictures of what both of these errors look like. First ignorance—judging by appearances without the full story...

- Our judgments are sinful when they... **QUICKLY**

- ...evaluate the part by the whole.

That is in our heads, we've made a judgment about a group of people—and it may be a fair judgment about the group as a whole—and we then apply it to every individual in that group. This is good old fashion stereotyping. “Poor people are always asking for money. You're poor. So you're probably here for money.” “White people are racist. You're white, so you're probably racist.” Jn 7:24 clearly says do not judge from appearances but judge with right judgment.

- ...infer an identity from an instance.

We're tempted to do this all the time. This is when we take one thing someone said or did and make a determination about who they are as a person. This person said a cuss word so they probably don't love Jesus. This person was short with their spouse, so they probably have real anger issues. This person didn't speak to me when I passed them. They're probably standoffish. The divorced person probably doesn't have a high view of marriage. That young single mom is sexually promiscuous. All damaging. God it angers God when you label his children by their brokenness.

- ...draw conclusions from appearances.

- ...discount someone's future based on their past. Or their present...

The person who struggled with addiction won't amount to much. The person who had that moral failure will always be a wreck. When we do this, we malign the Holy Spirit's power in people. These are sinful judgments because they are made in ignorance but it doesn't stop there. Our judgments are sinful if they're made hypocritically.

Jesus specifically condemned this in a group of folks called the Pharisees Mt. 23:27, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness.” So Jesus is giving us a picture of what hypocrisy looks like and it's a matter of the heart. These people looked better than everyone else on the outside but were the same as everyone else on the inside. These people didn't *do* what everyone did, but they *loved* what everyone else loved and used God as a way to get it. Look at this; this is frightening for me as a pastor: Mt. 23:5-7 “They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, 6 and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues 7

and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi by others.” These people worshipped people’s praise and approval and yet condemned idolatry in others. Same heart sin—their sin was just more marketable. Facebook post vs. people pleaser—both addicted to praise and approval. Drunkard vs. glutton—both addicted to excess.

And so when we judge hypocritically we’re sinful when we judge in ignorance we’re dangerous. So how are we going to watch our brothes and sisters backs in a way that is lifegiving and helpful...

Righteous Judging...

- Righteous judging begins with self - judging. (Mt. 7:3-5)
Jesus says if we’re going to do this right that we have to, “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.” So God has called us to oversee one another and exercise good judgment in recognition of our common enemy in sin. But we have to do it correctly or it’s going to damage people. Self-examination. Godly judgment of others sin must always start with brutally honest judgment of your own. Don’t think about condemning sin in others until you’ve condemned it in yourself—take yourself to task. This goes for the way you confront your children in their sin, your spouse in their sin.

You can see people’s sin as a mirror or as makeup. Others sin either reflects your own or makes you look/feel better about yourself. You should see yourself as the biggest sinner in the room. If you are an expert of others’ weaknesses and your strengths you’ve got a problem. Glutton confronting drunkard. People pleaser confronting FB. Righteous judging begins with self-judging. Going to give you these at the same time...

- We judge actions and doctrine, *not* believers themselves.
 - “_____ is inconsistent with what *I believe to be true about you—that you love and belong to Christ.*”
- We judge gently with the goal of being helpful, *not* better-than. Righteous judging cares about loving, *not* winning.

Crucial to this whole thing is that we are not after believers, we’re after our common enemy sin. We’re not judging one another as people—that judgment as already been rendered. Remember we’re talking about believers here. And the ultimate verdict has already come down; that before the entire universe God has taken up the gavel slammed it down and said—righteous. Spotless. Blameless. Not guilty. These people are already new creations, with God as Father, and an unfading inheritance. And that is God’s final word. That’s who these people are.

So, when we go to them we aren’t judging who they are we’re helping them become who Christ has already said they are. It’s our mutual effort as people on this side of the kingdom to help each other live as the new creations God has already made us to be. This isn’t me against you. This is us against sin. And that completely changes the way you oversee other people’s faith. One thing to say “You are doing bad things. I don’t know about you.”

It’s another thing to say “Hey I’m coming to you because we’re on the same team and think I see an enemy sneaking up behind you. This thing might be taking affections away from the king I know you love. This belief may be steering you away from the eternity I know you’re living for, this tendency you have is inconsistent with the child of God I believe you to be and the holiness that we’re both fighting for. And I’m coming to you not bc I’m sinless but bc I got your back. I’m coming to help you see sin that will kill both of us if we don’t help each other fight it.”

And don't miss this, the only way we can do this—the only way we can take aim at someone's sin and not them—judge their sin and not them—is because...

The Righteous Judge...

- Christ was judged in our place. (2 Cor. 5:21)

We invariably feel like, when we see sin that we need to serve up justice. It feels right. But we're not exacting justice. We're promoting righteousness. And the reason we can do this is the justice and judgment we feel is so rightly deserve was poured out on Christ "21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." He received the punishment for sin so that you and I could help each other fight it. He received the judicial judgment of wrath, which frees us to exercise formative judgment leading to life.

Unbelievers you hate the judgments in the body—so does God—look how seriously he took it.

- If you were judged today, would you be found guilty?