

Myth number five: Christians Shouldn't Judge

Matthew 7:1-2

“Do not judge, [so that] you too will [not] be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Why "do not judge" doesn't mean universal tolerance but calls for judgment and grace to be compatible.

Deal with your own stuff first

3“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? 4How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? 5You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

Be aware that we often condemn what we are most likely to do – or did. You may be concerned that your child is going to succumb to the same sins you found so promising but that is a matter of teaching not judging. As long as we are talking about parenting – a parent who lies to his boss, keeps excess change, gets drunk, or cheats on his or her taxes cannot, with integrity, much less credibility, discipline a child.

Always take a sin walk before pointing out a problem in someone else’s life. This doesn’t mean we have to be perfect – Paul recognized his own sinfulness while confronting the sins in the churches to which he was ministering.

However, looking at verse 2 sends a warning that God is taking notes on how we judge so He will know how we are to be judged.

Christians cannot judge non-Christians

6“Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.

Paul enjoins us to not judge non-Christians in

You are not just wasting your time and breath but you are also feeding the worst food possible. There is nothing more disgusting than a dog throwing up a good steak because of the sauce you loving prepared for it. Pigs eat anything and are still pigs. Feeding Christian discipline to a non-Christian may seem like a small step for Jesus but without the filter of faith that discipline is both nonsense and impossible.

This is not a matter of “should not” but a matter of cannot!

1 Corinthians 5:9-13 (NIV) 9I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— 10not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. 11But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. 12What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? 13God will judge those outside. “Expel the wicked man from among you.”

Paul makes it clear that we are judge each other according to God’s moral law – but judging the non-believer is a waste of time and energy since God will take care of that.

As I reminded you last week – God does not want to condemn those non-Christians so in

stead of judging them we are called to share the Good News with them that they may be included in God's grace.

We must, however, hold each other accountable to the law God has given us along with the Spirit to keep that law He also gave.

7“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 8For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

Judge as you want to be judged

9“Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 11If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! 12So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Jesus sets us up here. He uses the family tie to illustrate just how self motivated we are even when we want to appear “other” motivated. What is left unsaid here is that we are not that willing to give bread to people from whom we are not likely to receive bread. Jesus wants us to think of every believer as a family member and not step in and out of our role as His followers. One moment being gracious to those who will be gracious to us and the next being ungracious to those we are not familiar with and so have no reason to believe they will return the favor.

Don't judge if God hasn't spoken clearly

13“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. 14But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

We must learn to judge appropriately or we run the danger of not stopping at the line God has drawn in the moral sand. However we need to be sure that we speak where God has spoken. Too often the areas we choose for judgment are not areas of deep concern for God.

The illustration here seems to say that God's demands are not as broad reaching as our demands. God includes all of life in our goody bag and only takes out what is damaging to us. We, on the other hand, are much more likely to include what we believe to be damaging which includes personal preferences and personal fears.

God excludes drunkenness and we make it drinking. God excludes sex outside of marriage and we warn against enjoying sex for sexes sake inside marriage. God excludes over eating and we exclude butter. God excludes lying and stealing and we exclude books or movies about lying and stealing.

Remember exegesis and eisegesis – well this is a place to be clearly exegetical.

We are asked to judge because some beliefs are just false

15“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear

good fruit. 19Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

Tolerance gives me the freedom to be different not the right to my own moral code.

Jesus Lordship is a matter of truth

21“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ 23Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

If you are one of those who believe that all roads lead to heaven you must take note of these, the words of God. These are words spoken as a warning to followers of God who were editing out the parts that they did not like. Just as you would not fly with a pilot who believed any way to fly will get you to NY. Any type of runway is good enough. Any speed for takeoff is ok as is any speed for landing – or for staying in the air. Give me a flying bigot. One who believes there is only one way to get a plane in the air and it relies on the laws of physics.

If you believe your church commitment is based on a valid philosophy but not the only valid philosophy – listen up! “Not everyone” refers to people who are willing to concede a certain lordship to Jesus – but that is not good enough. Good works done in the name of God (however you wish to name Him) is not good enough. Being a good moral person only earns you the label “evildoer” when those good moral principles are not attributed to your relationship with Jesus. You may believe with great sincerity that you know Jesus agree with his great ideas, but, if you do not believe he is the only way, he does not know you.

Judging must not be the same as condemning

24“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

The following letter was forwarded by someone who teaches at a junior high school in Memphis, Tennessee; the letter was sent to the principal's office after the school had sponsored a luncheon for the elderly. This story is a credit to all humankind. Read it, soak it in, and bask in the warm feeling that it leaves you with.

Dear Reyer School:

God bless you for the beautiful radio I won at your recent senior citizen's luncheon. I am 84 years old and live at the county home for the aged. All my people are gone. It's nice to know that someone thinks of me. God bless you for your kindness to an old forgotten lady.

My roommate is 95 and always had her own radio, but would never let me listen to it, no matter how often or politely I asked. The other day her radio fell and broke into a lot of

pieces. It was awful. She was very upset. She then asked if she could listen to mine, and I told her to buzz off.

Sincerely,

Edna Johnston

Received from ArcaMax Jokes.

Well, ok, that is how we may feel and want to react but:

When God judges he does not condemn unless the guilty party refuses to repent. The court of law does not have a place for repentance. When guilty you will be metted out a punishment. Sometimes contrition will shave time or cost off the penalty but the penalty and its record remain. In God's economy the penalty and its record are erased.

MY NEXT STEP TODAY IS TO...

Memorize Matthew 7:1-2.

Accept the Lordship of Jesus and give my life to Him today.

Stop being judgemental with the people in my::

Family _____; School _____; Job _____; Church _____.

Become more discerning by joining the following Growth Group

_____.