

## Supplement to Sermon on the Mount #15 - "Judge Not"

**Matthew 7:1-2 “Do not judge so that you will not be judged. 2 “For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.**

\* The Greek word used throughout the Bible for “judge” is the word “Kritas,” from where we get the English word “criticize.” Depending on the context, it can be a positive or negative quality.

\* Although Jesus appears to be saying “do not judge,” we all know that we must judge the merits or faults of many things. In another place Jesus urged the people to judge. “Do not judge according to appearances, but judge righteous judgment.” (John 7:24). In Matthew 7 the judgment Jesus is condemning is described in the contexts. Jesus qualified His phrase “Do not Judge” with the phrase “by your standard of measure.” Therefore, God wants us to judge by His standard of measure, and not judge by our own standard of measure. As in legal measurements of inches, feet and miles, we are to go by the international standards. To make up your own definition for inches, feet and miles would be ludicrous. But that is exactly what people do with God’s moral law. Humanity is prone to add laws, subtract laws, or misapply God’s laws.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus address the broad category of not “judging by your own standard of measure.” Other Bible passages address the many different ways we do this. The topic of right judgment and wrong judgments is one of the most extensive teachings of Scripture. Through study of the Scriptures and growth in spiritual maturity, the Christian will inevitably be able to discern between good judgment and bad judgment, or rather, between judging by your own standards or judging by God’s standards.

Listed below are some of the various ways we judge wrongly. These are all subcategories of the general command “Do not judge by your own standard of measure”

### **1. Do not judge people by false criteria.**

a. Do not judge by race, economics or gender

Galatians 3:28 *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

(This verse does not mean that men and women should have the same roles or duties, nor does it mean we should not discern the difference between a male or female. God’s standard of measure does discriminate between the role of the man and the role of the woman [See 1 Corinthians 11:3]. Galatians 3:28 is teaching that we should not consider anyone as less spiritual because of race, economics or gender. )

b. Do not judge by wealth

James 2:1 *“Do not hold your faith . . . with an attitude of personal favoritism . . . You pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothing.”*

c. Do not judge by superficial appearances

John 7:24 - Jesus said to the people *“do not judge according to appearances”*

(The people were ready to stone Jesus because it appeared as if He was breaking the Sabbath, but a deeper understanding would lead one to understand the Jesus was actually keeping the intent of the Sabbath. Here the false criterion of judgment was bad theology.)

### **2. Do not judge a person’s motives or results in his service for God.**

1 Corinthians 4:3-5

*But to me it is a very small thing that I may be examined by you, or by any human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself. For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord. Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men’s hearts; and then*

*each man's praise will come to him from God.*

**However, we are to judge people in the ministry:**

Philippians 1:15-17

*Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will; the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment.*

Matthew 23:13

*But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.*

1 Timothy 5:19-20

*Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning.*

Romans 16:17

*Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.*

1 Corinthians 14:29

*Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment.*

By God's standard of measure we can judge wrong doing in the ministry. What Paul is addressing in Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 4:3-5 is judging a persons motives or results in ministry. The Corinthians were asking "who is the better preacher, Paul, Peter, or Apollos?" "Who has the biggest ministry?" "Who has more fruit?" To do this the Corinthians had to judge by their own standard of measure because they did not know all of the facts and circumstances - - "the hidden things in the darkness" (I Corinthians 4:5)

**3. Do not Judge others in matters of Christian liberty or nonessential personal beliefs.**

Romans 14:2-5

*One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only. The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. (See also I Cor. 14, 3, 10, 13; Col. 2:16)*

\* These texts do not mean that we should not judge another's personal choice. Many matters of personal standards need to be judged, as in the case of drunkenness, worldliness or anything that is a lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, or pride of life. In Romans 14, Paul is speaking about not judging others in their extra-biblical personal preferences. In the church there are always those who are quick to judge others, and separate from others, in unessential matters of personal standards and convictions. There are some different standards among believers because Christian often associate evil with certain neutral practices. These should not be judged.

**4. Do not judge others unmercifully.**

(In this case one would be following God's law but not God's verdict. Although God judges sin, he always extends mercy. This judgment punishes, despises or demeans others. This is judging others without providing the proper mercy and forgiveness. Christians tend to fall into this error if they concentrate on the law, and not on mercy. The unspiritual man will take the law of God that he learns in church and with it become wrongly judgmental.

Luke 18:10-11

*"Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. "The Pharisee stood*

*and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.*

(The Pharisee may have been right in everything he said about the tax collector, but he was not being merciful or helpful to the tax collector. This attitude was very common in Israel, as it is in every religious community. It was common among the Pharisees to hold in contempt everyone who did not keep the laws of Judaism. It is one thing to believe in God's standards, and urge others to do the same; it is another to self-righteously despise others.)

James 2:11-12

*For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not commit murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty.*

James 4:11-12

*Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?*

### **5. Do not judge others when you are doing the same or similar sins**

(We condemn in others the very sin we commit. The sin may manifest itself in a different way in our own life. So we convince ourselves we don't do the same, but it is the same root sin. We also enjoy condemning others as a way to feel good about ourselves.)

Matthew 7:3-4

*"Why do you look at 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,' and behold, the log is in your own eye?"*

Romans 2:1-3

*Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things. But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God?*

Romans 2:21-24

*You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal? You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," just as it is written.*

### **Eight Reasons Why Mature Christians Never Feel Superior to Others, and hence, Never Judge Others:**

1. The mature Christian understands that there was a time that he was not completely faithful to the Lord.

Titus 3:2-3

*to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.*

2. The mature Christians understands that growing in obedience takes time, and there is different time for different people. Everyone doesn't come to the same conclusion on the same day of the week.

Galatians 5:5

*For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.*

3. The mature Christian understands that even though another believer may be weaker in a particular area, this other Christian may be stronger in some other area. It is foolish to feel that you are superior because you have one, two or even three superior traits. Another believer may have only one quality, but with that he is far more fruitful.

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 - *But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.*

4. The mature Christian understands that every good gift comes from God, not ourselves.

1 Corinthians 4:7 - *For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?*

Romans 12:3 - *For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.*

Ephesians 4:7 - *But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.*

2 Corinthians 10:12-13 - *For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding. But we will not boast beyond our measure, but within the measure of the sphere which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even as far as you.*

C.S. Lewis called this the "raw materials" God has given us to work with. "*Human beings judge one another by their external actions. God judges them by their moral choices. . . Some of us who seem quite nice people, may in fact have made so little use of a good heredity and a good upbringing that we are really worse than those whom we regard as fiends. Can we be quite certain how we should have behaved if we had been saddled with the psychological outfit, and then with the bad upbringing, and then with the power, say, of Himmler?*" (Henrich Himmler - - commander of the German Gestapo and leading organizer of the Holocaust.)

*"That is why Christians are told not to judge. We see only the results which a man's choices make out of his raw material. But God does not judge him on the raw material at all, but on what he has done with it."* (Mere Christianity)

5. The mature Christians realizes he doesn't know the whole story behind the behavior of others

John 7:24 - *"Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."*

1 Corinthians 4:5 - *Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.*

6. The mature Christian realizes that the sinful flesh causes us to think evil of others

3 John 10 - *For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire to do so and puts them out of the church.*

Galatians 5:26 - *Let us not become boastful challenging one another, envying one another.*

Galatians 5:14 - *You shall love your neighbor as yourself. If you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.*

7. The mature Christian understands God has give others different circumstances, background, experiences, and upbringing. Unless you know what has been given to a man, you can't judge that man. You can never judge

another until you have walked in their shoes. Furthermore, if you find yourself having more wisdom, self-control, and gifts than the other guy, it should be a source of conviction not pride. If you have more you need to be doing greater works for God than others.

*Luke 12:48 - but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.*

8. The mature Christian understands that the Heavenly Father is the disciplinarian and judge in the household of God. I know my children have certain faults, but I don't appreciate hearing their brother or sister point it out. It is not good for siblings to be the judge.

*Romans 14:4 - Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.*

*Romans 8:33 - Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies;*

*James 4:11-12 - Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?*

*James 5:9 - Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.*

**Christians can be tempted with pride, but the truths of Scripture always tempter the pride and replace it with humility, gratitude and compassion. It is extremely important for every believer to personalize the Scriptures I have referenced.**