

Bible Studies

Judging others

Do not judge, or you too will 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. Matthew 7:1-2

Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Luke 6:37

The Bible says some things about Judgement that seem quite contradictory.

- John 9v39** *Jesus said, " For judgement I have come into this world"*
- John 12:47-48** *For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it*
- 1 Corinthians 5v3** *And I have already passed judgement on the one who did this*
- Romans 2v1** *You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgement on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other*
- Romans 12v3** *but rather think of yourself with sober judgement*
- 1 Corinthians 4v3** *indeed, I do not even judge myself.*

The major reason for this is that the word Judgement can mean a variety of things. It can mean to condemn, or it can mean evaluate or examine. It can also mean to negatively or positively discriminate. Or to discern.



Read John 9v35-41

- Who is Jesus talking to and what had just happened to him?**
- Who were the sighted who will become blind?**
- What kind of Judgement was Jesus talking about?**

Jesus is not talking here about final judgement, nor a formal judgement. His comments came after the man had declared his belief. Faith in Jesus is the fulcrum. It determines your future and dictates the path of your life. It is a case of "whoever does not believe stands condemned already". John 3v18. Jesus Christ divides the world into two groups, this is the judgement he is referring to.

Judgement here means to Differentiate

Why did the Pharisees Guilt remain?

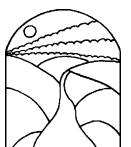


No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval.

1 Corinthians 11:19

- What does this verse mean?**
- Is this verse establishing to classes of Christian?**
- Can we judge other on the basis of this verse?**

Some of us do better than other in our Christian walk. But we all need Christ and however good we may think we are we are never good enough we all stand under grace.





Read John 12v44-50

Here the meaning of Judgement is quite different.

What word in verse 48 suggests the kind of judgement implied here?

What do you think Jesus is saying in this passage?

It seems to me that he is referring to final judgement, and is saying that the time for it has not yet come. There is still time to repent, but that Judgement will come.

What is the basis for Judgement?

This verse may be seen to contradict John 5:22. Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, In this verse it is the Father who judges but, even so it is by the fathers authority moreover the basis of Jesus argument is that he and the father are inseparable.

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Why don't you judge for yourselves what is right? Luke 12:57

What are the kinds of Judgements the above passages speak of?

What are the differences between them?

Why should we not judge others?



Read John 8:15-16

What kind of Judgement do you think Jesus is referring to?

Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment." John 7:24

James describes three kinds of Judging they are:

James 2:2-4

James 4:11-12

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Why shouldn't we judge on external appearances?

Does this include judgement based on race, age, sex etc?

Racial discrimination was a big factor for the early church, it was something they had to overcome. They thought Christianity was only for Jews, when God poured out his Spirit on Gentiles they were astonished!

If you think in your heart that you because you are a New Zealander are better, more significant, or more intelligent than someone say from Africa, Is that a form of discrimination.

The story is told of a white South African pastor who went to visit a black pastor from the same town, he went because he wanted the unity of Christians to overcome the deep divisions of apartheid. He went to proclaim there equality. The black pastor would not have a bar of it. "We cannot be equal" he said "because in your heart you think you are better than me." He was right!

Discrimination can hide! Just because we think we are doing Ok does not mean we are.

Is it wrong for us to condemn another believer if he sins?

"I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is reliable, and what I have heard from him I tell the world." John 8:26



In what areas do we frequently Judge others?

Bible Studies

God's Judgement and Ours



Read Romans 2v1-4

This passage explains some of the problems associated with judging others



What are they?

What is God's judgement based on?

What is ours based on?

Paul expands on this later in the book of Romans.

Read Romans 14v1-4 & 10-13

What matters should we not pass judgement on?

Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. Romans 14:4

What does this mean?

In what way does judging someone else create a stumbling block? v13

James 2v4 says that we have become guilty of being Judges with evil motives, GN Amp (NIV, KJV thoughts). Most of us think we are good judges of situations and of character. It comes as a hard, but valuable lesson to discover we are nowhere near as good at judging as we think we are. We must recognise our weaknesses in this area. Very often when we judge we make bad mistakes and cause great harm.

How good a judge was Eli of Hanna? 1 Samuel 1v12-15



What do you think it is that makes us such bad judges?

What do you think it is that makes God such a good judge?

Our judgement is based on partial knowledge and external appearances. God knows everything and judges the heart. Frequently we judge by our own standard, what we think is acceptable. Our judgement is therefore anything but impartial, to often it comes from the hurt of our own heart, or even our own guilty consciences. Our judgement often lacks the grace and patience God exhibits. God's judgement always includes his desire that all men should be saved. Sometimes we go to the other extreme and are so keen to be accepting of people that we lower God's standard of holiness.

Does this mean we must not act when we see another person sinning? Gal 6v1

Is there a difference between judging what is sin and being judgmental?

What should our attitude be to those who fall?



Read 1 Corinthians 5v1-3

The problem that Paul is facing here is not that a man did something blatantly immoral, Leviticus 18v8, but rather the Churches response to it.

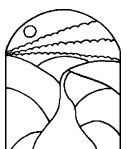
What was their response?

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Ray Moxham
www.wag.org.nz
WaiukuAG
@maxnet.co.nz

Why on earth would they have responded like this?

The best guess is that they saw this as an expression of their freedom in Christ. There were various teachings circulation at the time (some even being blamed on Paul, Romans 3v8) that claimed higher knowledge that said this kind of sin was OK for the mature. Paul disagrees.

Do you think Paul is contradiction his own teaching about not judging?

The Greek here has been translated "I have already reached my decision" *Barratt*. His solution was temporary excommunication.



**What issues do you think Paul had to face in making his decision?
In what capacity does Paul make this decision?
How does this compare with our judgement of our fellow Christian?**

It must be admitted that when we judge, we judge by gossip. Paul's judgement here was official, public and to protect the Church. It cannot be compared with us despising someone who has acted in a way that we cannot countenance.

Paul goes on to say in 1 Corinthians 6, that it is wrong to take legal dispute among Christians before a civil authority. He called on the church to judge such matters. But he is not talking about condemning people but judging the case. Again it is a formal thing.

On one occasion, Jesus was eating in the home of a Pharisee, when a women, evidently a prostitute, came in and anointed Jesus feet. The Pharisee immediately judged her in his heart. Jesus rebuked him for it. Luke 7v36-50.



**Would you have acted differently?
How often are we guilty of judging others?**



**Is it for us to say who is saved and who is not?
Is it for me to say who is spiritual?**

Have you ever noticed that when we sin there is usually an explanation, and some form of mitigating circumstances? When others sin we do not afford them the same privileges we give ourselves. "*Sin is sin, they should have known better, there is no excuse for...*"

Why do you think this is?

Sometimes we need to condemn others to justify ourselves.

Bible Studies

Judging yourself

Then there is the issue of judging yourself.

But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. 1 Corinthians 11:31



In what context is this written?

What is the objective of Judging yourself? v31&32

Is Paul saying we should condemn ourselves?

What kind of judging should we exercise?

Paul here is saying we must identify and deal with the sin in our lives. He is not saying that we should in some way exercise self punishment. Such a practice will only open the door to the enemy.



Read Romans 12v3

What kind of judgement is this, is it the same as that in the last verse?

What is Paul saying we should do?

What is the danger of thinking too highly of yourself?

What is the danger of thinking too lowly of yourself?

How can we be realistic about our abilities?



Read 1 Corinthians 4v1-5

The Church in Corinth had got into the habit of comparing the apostles, how well they preached, how successful they were, how spiritual they were.

This had led to divisions within the church. He is not going to defend himself against such foolishness. He is Christ's servant. He is not going to be forced to be anything else but what God has made him. He answers to Christ alone.

Is there a danger in that attitude?

Do you think we pressure our leader to be what they are not?

Was Paul concerned what others thought of him?

Should we be?

We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise 2 Cor 10:12. Gal 6:4 Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else,

Why should we not compare ourselves with others?

When you compare things you must compare like with like. We do not judge oranges by the standard for apples. We are all individuals, we all have different talents and God has called us to achieve different things. It is therefore fool hardy to judge yourself by someone else.

Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?" Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me." John 21:20-22



What will happen if you compare yourself with The Apostle Paul?

What will happen if you compare your pastor with Yonggi Cho

In what way did Paul not judge himself?

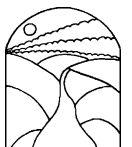
Paul is saying that even self evaluation is unreliable. Just because he may think he has done all that is required of him, just because he has no 'guilty secrets', does not mean there is nothing that God can find fault with.

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Ray Moxham
www.wag.org.nz
WaiukuAG
@maxnet.co.nz

Why is a clear conscience not proof of innocence?

1 Corinthians 8:7,

1 Timothy 4:2,

Titus 1:15,

1 John 3v20

It has been said a good conscience is the invention of the devil.

What do you think this means?

Is it true? 1 Tim 1:5,19

I agree with Paul, it is necessary for us to judge ourselves soberly but there are also areas in my ministry and life that I do not judge because experience has shown that I do not judge right. Very often when I think I have done well I find there is little fruit from my labours. At other times I think I have blown it and miraculously fruit abounds. So I stopped making judgements about myself because the judgements that I made handicapped my Christian walk instead of helping it.



Read 1 Corinthians 2v15

This is the last verse we will look at. It is a verse that has suffered serious abuse. This verse has been interpreted *“I am spiritual therefore everything I do is outside your evaluation, but because I am spiritual it is my right judge you”*

Do you think this is what it means?

The Bible teaches that spiritual things and gifts are subject to judgement. 1 Corinthians 14v32, 2 Thessalonians 5v21. It is not enough to say, “God told me to do this so you cannot disagree with it”. Such an attitude has been used as a cover for all kind of schemes from the harebrained to the evil.

The word Judge here is best translated as; investigate, or examine.

The contrast that Paul is making in this passage is not between spiritual believers and unspiritual ones, nor between those who have experienced the Baptism in the Spirit and those who have not. His contrast is between believers and unbelievers, Believers have the Spirit, Romans 8v9. He is saying that you cannot expect none believers to understand things that are spiritual. To understand the fullness of Christianity you must be Christian. You cannot expect a blind person to enjoy a beautiful view.

It is only in Christ that we have the spiritual and moral standards to understand the world. *‘A man judges aright and with assurance, according to whether he is born again, and according to the measure of grace bestowed on him – and no more’ Calvin.*

Where does Spiritual wisdom come from? v13

Paul is also saying that as a Christian we must now appraise all things by spiritual sight not just human standards.

What does this mean?

Do you think he is also making a contrast between the old and new natures? Out off which nature do our judgmental attitudes emanate?

At the same time we are not judged by the worlds standards, to quote Carman. “My friends think I’m crazy but I’m just radically saved.”



Does this mean we are above the law?

Neither is Paul saying that we are above reproach. He is just continuing with his teaching that Christians are to be judged by their master not by each other.

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God's Judgement and Ours

Youth Version

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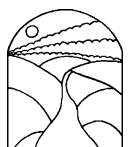
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