

An old Gospel preacher once received a question regarding 1 Timothy 5:23, “Use a little wine for your stomach’s sake,” in which he was asked whether the Passage justified social drinking. The elderly evangelist calmly replied, beginning his response: “1 Timothy 5:23; the one Scripture *every alcoholic* can quote.” Well, like that verse, there is a frequently cited one on another subject: Matthew 7:1, “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” If that very preacher were to receive a question today concerning Matthew 7:1, in which he were asked whether the Passage forbids one human being *ever* to judge another, the evangelist may well respond, “Matthew 7:1; the one Scripture *every impenitent sinner* can quote.”

As in the First Century, there are still those today who take pleasure in twisting plain Scriptural truths to fit their perception of what God *should have* said (2 Peter 3:16). And there is no more of a **created, inaccurate, repeated fable** than “**You can’t judge others**, because God said, ‘Judge not!’” (Matthew 7:1).

Some Judgment is CONDEMNED – Hypocritical Judgment (Matthew 7:1-2, 5a)

There is **a sort of judgment the Lord will NOT tolerate**. He spoke to the multitudes on the mount, “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. Thou hypocrite...” (Matthew 7:1-2, 5a). In reading past verse one, it becomes readily obvious that not all judgment is under consideration: only the kind in which the “judger” would not pass the scrutiny if the same test were applied to him or her – in other words, **hypocritical judgment!**

It simply **makes no sense to judge hypocritically**, because one day, **all will give an answer** for the deeds they have performed. “Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body,

according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:9-10). In the universal judgment, there will be no stone left unturned, when **all secrets** are **brought to the forefront**; “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). Why would one condemn another by the Word of God while acting in the same manner, understanding that **all** will be **judged by** that **exact golden standard**?! “And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:47-48). No wonder Christ would condemn hypocritical judging, for it only leads to the *self-condemnation* of one’s soul!!

Some Judgment is CORRECTED – Hypocritical Judgment (Matthew 7:3-5b)

Criticism is a constructive tool, IF it is utilized in a positive way. For Jesus to criticize this particular form of judging, but not to do so in a constructive manner would serve His creation little. But through His infinite love and desire for “all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4), the Lord has paved the path for every sinner to come out of this pseudo form of judging. To rectify the error, the Messiah instructs, “And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye” (Matthew 7:3-5b). The cure is plain, yet thorough: **instead of first observing everyone else’s faults**; at the outset, **recognize**

your own, stop committing them, then, begin living according to *God’s* desires!

Each person has the right to choose how to live, but if one decides to live wickedly, he or she has NO right to pass condemnation on others who are abiding in the identical predicament. How can one do so for *himself or herself*?! Regarding such a person, the storied apostle writes:

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God.

Even if personal eternal destiny is no part of the equation, how could one do so without regard for the effect such a lifestyle has on *the church*?! Paul continues:

Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written (Romans 2:21-24).

Hypocritical judgment has NO positive result for ANYONE; therefore, it **needs to be**

constructively criticized in all its forms that its *destructive* force may be stayed at once.

**Some Judgment is COMMANDED –
Righteous Judgment out of Righteous Living
(Matthew 7:5c)!**

It almost sounds anti-Christian, does it not – the premise that God would REQUIRE some judging on the part of His people? Yet this is the very thrust Christ emphasizes in the minds of His followers from the section under deliberation. “Thou hypocrite, **first cast out the beam out of thine own eye**; and **then** shalt thou see clearly to **cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye**” (Matthew 7:5). To phrase it in another capacity, “You hypocrite, first judge yourself and fix the wrong in your own life, *then* you will be qualified to judge your brother to help him fix the wrong in his!” Noteworthy is that the exact Passage misconstrued to *condemn* all judging is actually one of the many that *commands* it – how enlightening indeed!

Think for a moment how necessary **judging is in the correction of a sibling in Christ**. Our role in “finding” a lost sheep is to **recognize the erring**, “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins” (James 5:19-20); **reprove the erring**, “Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him” (Luke 17:3-4); and **restore the erring**, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:1-2). Set aside for an instant the collective effort and consider **how** a person can perform ANY of these commands in bringing a straying soul to repentance

without first **making** the determination (a.k.a., **JUDGMENT**) **that such a one is in the wrong?!!** It is no wonder the apostle to the Gentiles rhetorically asks, “[D]o not ye judge?” (1 Corinthians 5:12b), for **without** some form of **judging, not a single soul could be** approached to be **led out of sin!!**

With this being said, it might be good to clarify that **the Lord only employs one sort of judgment**: “I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me” (John 5:30). This is a **righteous**, or just, type of **judgment** that proceeds from an *upright* manner of living. If Jesus does not condemn all judgment, then nor should we; and if the righteous variety is the only judgment Jesus issues, then it must be the only kind we use, as well! **In the Master's own words**, “Judge not according to the appearance, but **judge righteous judgment**” (John 7:24).

Judging others is not something to be taken lightly, nor is it *commissioned* by God in every circumstance. By the same token, it is not *forbidden* by the Lord in each scenario. Judgment that is delivered hypocritically or by any humanly-imposed criterion is outside the jurisdiction of the Righteous Judge and is certain to receive His weighty sentence. However, judgment that is passed from righteous conduct and is in line with the Divine benchmark is *more than permitted; it is commanded!*

This tract is condensed from a lesson presented at the
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To hear or view the complete lesson go to
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**“They Shall Be Turned
Unto Fables”**

**“You Can't Judge
Others, God Said
'Judge Not'”**

by
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