

# Judging And Name Calling

By Britt Williams

"They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly."

-Amos 5:10



One of the most common criticisms that Christians face, and especially those who are exposing or confronting sin, is the constant accusation, by believers and unbelievers alike, that they are "judging." The passage most frequently cited as a proof text against any and all moral judgment is...

Matthew 7:1-2 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.

We consistently hear that the Bible teaches not "to judge" and to do so is unchristlike. "After all," they say, "Jesus never judged or called people any names." Sadly, such statements reveal either a great ignorance of the Bible, a humanistic sympathy with sin and rebellion, or both.

Consider the following three quotes...

"Scripture cautions us not to be harsh and judgmental of others' faults, even where they are evident, because neither are we perfect and free from error. The admonition not to regard the speck in your neighbor's eye before removing the log from your own eye finds parallels in many scriptures. Rather than justify ourselves

and blame others, we should look into ourselves for having such feelings of resentment. We should look into ourselves for where we may have been at fault, and from that starting point we can sincerely strive for reconciliation.”

“Jesus said, ‘Judge not, lest ye be judged. For with what measure ye mete, so shall it be measured unto you.’ Judge not. Do not judge. The self-righteous don’t stop with judging, but go ahead and issue sentence. ‘Because you commit this ‘sin’, as I have judged you, you are to burn in hell’. We can refer back to Jesus’ instructions in a nutshell, and say, ”does this action show love to my neighbor or not?“

"Christians of all stripes, we must let (them) know the real, palpable love of God. They must be able to feel it in the deepest parts of their souls. They must be able to hear it in every word we speak, and to see it in everything we do. It must spring to their mind every time they think about us. We must be so closely associated with Love that they cannot tell where we leave off and Christ begins.“

Do these thoughts sound familiar? Aren't these quotes typical of the "never judge" concepts found in mainstream Christianity? No doubt, many would declare these statements represent sound doctrine. However, we must ask ourselves, who uttered these words? The first quote is by Rev. Sun Myung, head of the cultic Unification Church. The second and third are by Roger Stratton and Steven Pearson respectively, both are authors who promote and sanction homosexual Christianity. Perhaps we should remember John's warning in his first epistle...

1 John 4:5-6 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Whenever sinful humanity and hypocritical religion endorse and advance a concept, it is generally, almost without exception, erroneous (Lk 16:15). Sadly, the modern church's theology is often more in tune with the trends of fallen humanity than with

God's Word. Obviously, this is reflective of the utter lack of solid Bible teaching in the sin-drunken American church. The enemy, who hates the light, in an attempt to weaken Christendom, has sought to remove our obligation to judge righteous judgment. By doing so, Satan has, in many cases, silenced Christians from sounding the clarion call for sinners and hypocrites to repent.

Luke 14:34 Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

Tragically, this condition has so softened modern Christianity that the church is almost unable to proclaim the truth of God's law and mind.

Proverbs 28:4-5 They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them. Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the Lord understand all things.

It emasculates those who would be a bright and shining light in the midst of a crooked a perverse generation.

Ephes. 5:13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

The church has become intimidated by the opinions of the world as they accuse us of, "religious bigotry, hate mongering, and intolerance." Think for a moment, why is the command to judge so vehemently attacked in our society? Obviously, if we, the church, stop judging, we will no longer be able to distinguish good from evil, and finally succumb to moral relativism. Now, nothing could be more unbiblical, let alone absurd, than the idea that Christians are not to judge. In addition, it is equally ridiculous that we cannot name sinners by the sins they are guilty of committing and loving. Thus, in this brief study we will establish, by the Word of God, that we are: commanded to judge, that failure to judge is sin, and that it is impossible not to judge. Then we will briefly look at name calling.

## FIRST, WE ARE COMMANDED TO JUDGE

Let us begin by considering the passage that is so often misquoted and misunderstood, Matthew 7:1-15.

Matthew 7:1-2, 6, 15-16 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. 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; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine....Beware of false prophets.... Ye shall know them by their fruits....”

Notice, if we read this passage in context, we learn that Jesus is not establishing a blanket condemnation of all judgment, but is warning us of "hypocritical judgment." He is teaching us that we must appropriately deal with ourselves before we can adequately deal with others. Secondly, we also see that in actuality, Jesus, rather than commanding us "not to judge," is commanding us "to judge."

Matthew 7:5 ...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.

Jesus is communicating that it is, at least sometimes, appropriate to "cast the mote out of thy brother's eye." Incidentally, it is interesting to note that Jesus refers to His listeners as "hypocrites" and "evil," this coming from a man supposedly telling us to never judge. In the next verse, Jesus also commands us to withhold that which is holy from "dogs," and pearls from "swine." In verses 13 and 14 we are also told to judge what is the "strait way" and the "broad way," and choose one over the other. In verse 15, Jesus warns us of false prophets and tells how they can be

identified. Obviously, all these exhortations either constitute "judgment" or demand that we "judge" to fulfill.

Moreover, we are commanded to judge throughout the Bible, for example in...

Proverbs 31:9 Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

Ezekiel 22:2 Now, thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city? yea, thou shalt show her all her abominations.

Ezekiel 23:36 The Lord said moreover unto me; Son of man, wilt thou judge Aholah and Aholibah? yea, declare unto them their abominations;

Luke 12:57 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

John 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

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1 Cor. 2:15-16 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Cor. 6:2-3 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 3Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

IN MANY CASES, FAILURE TO JUDGE IS NOT ONLY UNLOVING, BUT SINFUL

Ezekiel 33:8 When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

This attitude of "don't judge" is sending our society to hell. Why? Too often, we have withheld warning from those who perish. It is impossible to fulfill the Great Commission without telling sinners what a Holy God thinks about their sin. In fact, it is impossible to merely read God's Word without applying God's judgment against sin. We, as Christians, cannot fulfill our call to love sinners apart from declaring God's law, which indeed, will judge them. The failure to judge has given us a nation infested with promiscuity, militant sodomites, drugs, abortion, heresies, and untold vice. Sadly, the unwritten commands of much of the modern Evangelical Church are as follows:

1. Be extremely nice at all times (to be pleasant is defined as love. To be described as something other than nice would constitute a walking outside of love as it is currently defined).
2. Judge Not (you may approve of anything and everything that professes Jesus Christ, but you must never speak negatively about anything).
3. Never, under any circumstances offend anyone (offending someone might be equated with having a demonic spirit).

There is this underlining pressure to fulfill these unwritten commands. This, of course, may be an oversimplification, but these basic ideas are almost universally honored. Almost subconsciously, people believe that being "nice" constitutes Biblical Christianity. True, we should be loving, but to truly "love" will rarely be appreciated by evil men. Remember, Jesus was not murdered because He was considered nice.

John 7:7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

And may we understand, true love gives people what they *need*, not what they

necessarily *want*.

Now, the plain fact of the matter is that we are not actually doing the judging: God is.

We are judging by God's Word. God has already made the judgment, it is merely our duty to communicate that to the world (we are to be the mouthpiece of God, His messengers). The question is not, who are you to judge? But rather, who are we to withhold the warnings of God's Word? Is there anything loving about refusing to warn the wicked to avoid wounded feelings? Can anyone deny that such motivation is self-centered?

Granted, in delivering judgment, discernment is in order. Presenting the gospel to a 10 year old is a different situation than preaching to 50,000 militant homosexuals at a sodomite parade. Witnessing to a relative with whom you will interact with for years is not the same as confronting drunken sinners leaving a rock concert where we have only a fleeting moment to communicate our message.

## IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID JUDGMENT AS EVERYONE MAKES MORAL JUDGMENTS

How can we define judging? In one sense, it is merely making a decision, discerning that one choice is superior to another. If you decide to drink milk and not radiator fluid, that is judging. If you tell someone they are doing a good job, that is judging. If you decide not to believe a con man, that is judging. Judging is a necessary part of life. We make such judgments every day. Should I eat moth balls or M&Ms? However, moral judgment is more specific. Moral judgments define reality according to Biblical revelation; they force us to establish absolutes. Are Mormons Christians or are they part of a cult? Must men be born-again to go to heaven? Would we tell a Muslim he is hell-bound except he repent? We all judge, it is inescapable. The real issue is whether or not it is right to tell the truth. If men are truly perishing and facing eternity in hell, is it right to warn them?

Leviticus 19:15-17 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour. Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the Lord. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

Moreover, another philosophical problem with the "never judge" doctrine is the hypocritical acceptance of "positive judgments". For example, years ago, in an e-mail correspondence with a brother I was concerned about, I offered a stern warning against a certain heretical ministry. To this, he was shocked and accused me of "judging." I admitted I had judged the ministry, but by God's Word. I then asked him, "do you believe this ministry is of God?" To which he replied, "yes, I believe they are very godly." I then explained that he had made a "judgment" just as I had, but his judgment was considered "positive" so it was deemed o.k., while mine was considered "negative," so it was considered unloving. If judgment is always wrong, then we must not make any moral conclusions. Remember, it takes as much eternal wisdom to decide someone is godly as it does to decide someone is not. Hence, all are making judgments, this is not the question, but rather, are our judgments in accordance to God's Word and His mind.

## WHAT ABOUT NAME-CALLING?

The following is a short and incomplete list of some of the names that people are called in the New Testament. We limit ourselves to the N.T. because, many people erroneously believe the O.T. emphasizes the wrath of God, while the N.T. reveals God's love.

“DOGS” Matt. 7:6 Jesus said, “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs” (see also 2 Peter 2:20-22, Rev. 22:15)

“SWINE” Matt. 7:6 “...neither cast your pearls before swine”

“VIPERS” Matt. 3:7 “O generation of vipers...” (see also Matt. 12:34, 23:33 and Luke 3:7)

“HYPOCRITES” Matt.6:2 “...as the hypocrites in the synagogues...” (see also Matt.6:5, 16, 15:7, 16:3, 22:18, 23:13-15, 29, 24:51, Mark 7:6, Luke 11:44, 12:56)

“CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL” John 8:44 “You are of your father the devil...” (see also Acts 13:10)

“PERVERSE” Mat. 17:17 “...O faithless and perverse generation” (see also Luke 9:41, Acts 20:30, Phil. 2:15, 1Tim. 6:5)

“REPROBATE” 2 Cor 13:5-7 “...except ye be reprobates” (see also Rom 1:28, 2Tim. 3:8, Tit. 1:16)

“HEATHEN” Mat. 6:7 “...as the heathen do” (see also Mat.18:17, Act 4:25, 2Cor. 11:26, Gal. 1:16, 2:9, 3:8)

“FOOLS” Mat. 23:17 “...Ye fools and blind” (see also Luke 12:20, 1Cor.15:36, Mat.23:19, Luke 11:40, 24:25, Eph. 5:15)

“WICKED AND ADULTEROUS” Mat. 16:4 “A wicked and adulterous generation” (see also Mat. 12:45, 13:49, 18:32, 21:41, 25:26, Luke 19:22, 1Cor. 5:13, 2Thes. 3:2, 2Pet. 2:7, 3:17)

“O YE OF LITTLE FAITH” (Christ’s favorite name for His apostles!) Mat.6:30, 8:26, 14:31, etc., etc., etc.

“STIFF-NECKED AND UNCIRCUMCISED” Acts7:53 “...stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart”

“LIARS, EVIL BEASTS, SLOW BELLIES” Titus 1:2 (see also 2Peter 2:12, Jude 10)

“ADULTERERS AND ADULTERESSES” Hebrews 13:4 “...whoremongers and adulterers God will judge” James 4:4 “Ye adulterers and adulteresses...” (see also Rom 7:3, Mat. 12:39, 16:4, Mark 8:38)

“WHITED WALL” Acts 23:3 Paul the apostle to the high priest .

“BRUTE BEAST, GOD-HATERS” (Rom. 1, Peter).

Thus, name-calling is an obvious activity in the life of the New Testament (not only by Jesus, but the Apostles as well). In Matthew 23 alone (one ten minute sermon), Jesus referred to the Pharisees as hypocrites 7 times. Furthermore, he called them 12 other derogatory names ranging from “blind guides” to “serpents.” And finally, he told them they were hell bound. Remember when Elymas, the sorcerer, withstood the Gospel, the Apostle Paul said...

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Acts 13:9-11 ...filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

Remember, our job is to communicate and do this in the most clear and specific manner possible. True, we are not to unrighteously offend or “cheap shot” without cause. However, we are charged with stating the truth as clearly as possible with the objective of helping the person or persons ministered to.

Hence, according to the Bible, righteous judgment is commanded, not forbidden. May God fill us with His Spirit that we may, with love and boldness, shine the

light of God's Word into the darkness without apology.

-B.W.