

THE

HARVESTER

"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2)

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"JUDGE NOT, THAT YE BE NOT JUDGED"

Passing judgement has been a human trait since the earliest records. Cain improperly judged his righteous brother and was condemned for it (Genesis 4:6-7). Lot was rebuked by the evil men of Sodom for assuming the position of judge among them (Genesis 19:9). The Hebrew at fault questioned Moses' interference by asking, *"Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?"* (Exodus 2:14).

But God has throughout the ages favorably recognized the need for righteous men to make proper and impartial judgement. Moses served in this capacity over Israel, and he was later assisted by subordinates in administering this heavy burden (Exodus 18:13-16). While God was

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displeased with Israel having a king other than Himself, He permitted this arrangement among His people for about 433 years (1 Samuel 8). The king served as a judge among the Israelites. King Solomon requested God's favor in this regard (2 Sam. 1:10-12, 1 Kings 3:5-15), and he enjoyed an excellent reputation for his judgements (1 Kings 3:16-28).

What About the Christian Era?

As one turns to the New Testament teachings, he hears with thundering force those words of Jesus, "*Judge not, that ye be not judged*" (Matt. 7:1, Luke 6:37). Paul adds to this condemnation of improper judging by writing to the Romans, "*Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him...But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ...Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way*" (14:3, 10, 13).

Consideration of 1 Corinthians 4:3-5

Although this passage appears to be much more clear in the original language, Paul says in the King James Version, "*But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgement: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.*"

Verse 3 expresses Paul's intent not to be swayed by human judgement. He wrote similarly in Galatians 1:10, *"For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."* In verse 4 Paul states that he knows nothing about himself wherein he may be judged unfaithful, but that the exact and final judgement will be of the Lord. Verse 5 vividly points out that the frail nature of man prevents him from properly judging *"hidden things"* and matters having to do with intent and motive. Matters such as these will be brought to light in due time and properly handled by God.

In Contrast, Christians are Commanded to Judge

In his first letter to the Corinthians Paul wrote, *"Judge in yourselves"* (11:13) and *"Judge ye what I say"* (10:15). Upon instructing the Corinthians how to handle wicked persons among them he wrote, *"Do not ye judge them that are within?"* (5:12). In the next verse he proceeded to tell them that they should *"put away from among yourselves that wicked person."* A judgement would have been required to accomplish this. Paul had in fact already passed judgement in this matter, for in verse 3 he wrote, *"For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed."*

As to the matter of dispute between brethren, the New Testament clearly condemns taking matters before those of the world, but rather enjoins the passing of judgement among ourselves (1 Cor. 6:1-5). In verse 5 Paul pointedly asks, *"Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?"*

Jesus commented upon the human tendency to make judgements in natural matters and taught the

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necessity of making proper determination (which is what judging is) in spiritual matters when He said, *"When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time? Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?"* (Luke 12:54-57)

Harmonizing the Scriptures

"Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. 7:1) may be understood in all its power and beauty when viewed in harmony with John 7:24, *"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgement."* Judging in itself is not condemned, but judgement with partiality certainly is. Verse 2 in Matthew's account explains that Jesus was not condemning judging in itself, but rather that one may expect to receive judgement after the same manner in which he exercises it. This same principle is also taught in verse 12, *"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."*

In verses 16-20 of the same chapter Jesus explains that one may properly judge through careful and fair observation, even as he can determine trees by the fruit they bear. James

supports this principle in his comments on partiality (2:1-4). We may properly pass judgement when we honestly consider the fruit evident in a person or situation, but we must leave matters regarding a man's heart to the wise and merciful judgement of God.

Application for Christians in This Day

Surely none would presume to sit in judgement for God. Being supplied with Scriptural principles, however, and having ability to examine fruits evident in one's life (Luke 6:43-44), we can and must make appropriate judgement. Not only is judging not wrong -- it is commanded!

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FROM THE SCRIPTURES ...

ABOUT TALEBEARERS

Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor: I am the Lord. (Lev. 19:16)

A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter. (Prov. 11:13)

A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends. (Prov. 16:28)

He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends. (Prov. 17:9)

The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly. (Prov. 18:8)

He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips. (Prov. 20:19)

Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth. As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife. (Prov. 26:20,21)

And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. (1 Tim. 5:13)

AS THE MANNER OF SOME IS

(A Series to Promote Church Attendance)

Have you ever wanted something so badly that you said you wanted it "with all your heart"? Such an expression shows how deep your desire is. "With all my heart" means it is the ultimate feeling--an indication of an intense love. It is a total commitment, reserved only for the greatest of all. It is with this attitude that we will be able to find the Lord. "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." (Jer. 29:13)

Today we can look at people all around us and see how seriously they are seeking the Lord. Some do not seem to be searching very hard because they have totally and blatantly disregarded the commandments of God. They have their "heart" set on worldly things. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John 2:15,16)

But then there are some who truly do seek the Lord. They have set their "affection on things above, not on things on the earth." (Col. 3:2) Their intent is to obey God. "With all their heart" they desire to live "what is that good,

and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."(Rom. 12:2) Are we one of these types?

Our search for God should be reflected in our daily living--the things we do and the things we say. What about our church attendance? The ones who have their "heart" set on worldly things will naturally avoid any "gathering together" of the saints. The two are simply not compatible. But those who are seeking the Lord "with all their heart" will truly want to come to all the church services possible. It is an intense love and a complete commitment to Jesus Christ that drives them to each service and each gospel meeting. Does this describe us? I hope so because we have been told in Psalms 119:2, *"Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart."* Let us put our true desire in the things of God. Our "heart" must really be in it if it is to do us any good at all. *"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."*(Matt. 6:21)

RAY

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Who is on the Lord's side,
Always true?
There's a right and wrong side,
Where stand you?

Thousands on the wrong side
Choose to stand,
Still 'tis not the strong side,
True and grand.

Come and join the Lord's side:
Ask you why? --
'Tis the only safe side
By and by.

Author Unknown

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
May 4-10	Rich Hill Church Liberty, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
May 15-17	Rainsville, AL 7:00pm	Rufus Williams (Montgomery, AL)
May 22-24	Sylacauga, AL 7:00pm	Mark Parkhurst (McMinnville, TN)
May 31 thru June 7	Athens Church Casey Co., KY 7:00pm	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
June 1-5	Taylor's Crossroads Roanoke, AL	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
June 7-13	West Point, GA 7:30pm EST	Lindeal Greer (Bogue Chitto, MS)
June 7-14	La Prada Church Dallas, TX	Various speakers
June 8-14	Sunny Hill Church Woodbury, TN	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
June 14-19 (Su-F)	Mt. Carmel Church Woodland, AL 7:00 each evening	Marty Livingston (Oxford, AL)
June 14-20 (Su-Sa)	Pleasant Grove Church near Alex City, AL 7:00pm	Lindeal Greer (Bogue Chitto, MS)
June 14-20	Pleasant Ridge Church Woodbury, TN	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
June 19-21 (F-Su)	Freefield Church State Line, MS 7:30pm - Fri. singing - 3:00pm Sat.	Chris Melton Bruce Kessler Richard Sargent
June 21-26	Godby Road Church Atlanta, GA	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)