

III. THE CURE

- A. The only cure is true Christian love. (I Corinthians 13:4-8.)
 - 1. "Love suffereth long," "is kind," and gives clearness of vision.
 - 2. "Let love be without hypocrisy; abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good." (Romans 12:9.)
- B. Love is "slow to condemn" because there is a prior obligation:
 - 1. To love our brother "above all things." (1 Pet. 4:8.)
 - 2. To restore the fallen and erring. (Galatians 6:1; James 5:19,20; Revelation 3:2.)
 - 3. To forgive the brother who repents. We can encourage him to do this. Christ is our example in forgiveness.
 - 4. To bear our brother's burden. (Galatians 6:2; Romans 12:15.)
- C. Honestly apply the golden rule, another "rule of life."
 - 1. Poem: "Let Something Good Be Said."

CONCLUSION —

- I. "The sin of harsh judgment and of unfriendly criticism can never be cured in any man or woman so long as he or she is lynx-eyed toward neighbor and mole-eyed to self." Lofton, Character-Sketches, p. 166.
- II. If Christian, we are our brother's helper, not his fault-finder, prosecuting attorney or final judge.
- III. The Bible gives frequent warning against loveless, harsh and hypocritical judgment of one another.
- IV. Always judge with mercy and truth (facts): "Blessed are the merciful, for they will obtain mercy." (Matthew 5:7.)
- V. Let us never become "judges with evil thoughts" (James 2:4), but always "judge righteous judgment." (John 7:24; Acts 18:24-28.)
- VI. "Wrong conclusions lead to strong delusions."

Charles Crouch

"Judge Not, That Ye Be Not Judged"

Matthew 7:1-5

INTRODUCTION —

- I. THERE IS ALWAYS NEED FOR TEACHING SUCH GREAT RULES OF JESUS AS "JUDGE NOT, THAT YE BE NOT JUDGED."
 - A. Such rules help us walk "in the way of life."
 - B. The need for such teaching is greater at times than others.
 - 1. "Because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold." (Matthew 24:12.)
 - 2. We live in a time of great iniquity, and some feel and say, "the love which Jesus engendered is dying," and is being replaced with "murderous hate in the hearts of good people."
 - 3. Let this happen to none of us; for no one can afford the consequences! (Galatians 6:7,8.)
 - C. "Some of the most saintly souls have sinned in this respect."
- II. THERE ARE SOME THINGS JESUS DID NOT FORBID IN MATTHEW 7:1-5.
 - A. The judgments of civil courts. (Matthew 5:25; Acts 25:10,11; Romans 13:1.)
 - B. The judgments God has given the church to make. (John 7:24; Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:12,13; 6:5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 John 4:1.)
 - C. Determinations made by "fruit inspection" (Matthew 7:15-20).
 - D. Learning, knowing, teaching, and upholding "the will of God." (Ephesians 5:17; 3:1-5; Romans 16:17; Titus 2:1,8; 3:9-11; etc.)
 - E. One cannot live without some "judging."
 - 1. The word has three meanings: (a) To distinguish, as between good and evil; (b) to decide, as to which way to go; (c) To censure or condemn, as to "try" a

criminal.

2. We make a thousand judgments every day.
3. We make them about food, clothing, travel, books, papers, and people, whether or not we express them.

III. WHAT THE LORD DOES FORBID IN THE WORDS, "JUDGE NOT," IS A FAULT-FINDING SPIRIT, "THE DISPOSITION TO DOWNGRADE," TO CONDEMN WITHOUT FULL EXAMINATION OF CHARGES, OR TO CONDEMN WITHOUT LOVE OR MERCY--A LOVELESS, JUDGMENTAL ATTITUDE.

DISCUSSION —

I. THERE ARE SEVERAL WARNING IN THE LORD'S WORDS, "JUDGE NOT, THAT YE BE NOT JUDGED." (7:1.)

- A. Against hasty or snap judgments based upon half-truths, over-simplification, hear-say, or rumor. (James 1:19,20; Proverbs 6:18.)
1. Some are eager to "jump to conclusions," the most frequent form of exercise some get. Easy but dangerous.
 2. Jesus is teaching against "evil surmising," the disposition to put the worst possible construction upon the acts of others, the habit of being too quick to condemn.
 3. Examples: (a) "Stuck in the Arkansas mud," at Little Rock Airport. (b) "I hate to repeat this rumor, but what else can you do with a rumor?"
 4. "Lord, make my words sweet and tender today, for I may have to eat them tomorrow."
- B. "BOOMERANG!!!" -- Against the judgments which may come back to torment and haunt us. (7:2.)
1. "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." (2)
 2. "Judgment provokes judgment. It excites animosity, provokes retaliation. The judge will be judged, the critic will be criticized, the measurer will be measured. Life is action and reaction." --Frank L.

"Judge Not, That Ye Be Not Judged"

Cox.

3. We shall be judged as we are. "Judgment is without mercy to him that hath showed no mercy..." (James 2:13; Matthew 18:35.)

C. Against the hyper-critical, unjust, unkind, unsympathetic, merciless, judgmental spirit--the hypocritical spirit. (7:3-5.)

1. The "mote-finder" is unable to form a correct judgment.
2. He is blinded by a beam--a glaring fault in his own eye.
3. His eagerness to find a mote indicates a beam--a glaring sin--ill-will, a heart poisoned with malice. Undue "severity toward others is evidence of crime in one's own life: 'Thou art the man.' (2 Sam. 12)." Cf. Titus 1:15.
4. Poem: "Take a Walk Around Yourself."
5. A delicate matter: The eye--clean hands needed. (Galatians 6:1)
6. Yet, "mote-finding" is the only "sport" I know which guarantees success to everyone who participates.
7. Let us find better sport than this, with better consequences!
8. "The censorious spirit can be destructive of every other Christian virtue which we may have in our life."

II. THE RIGHT OF FINAL JUDGMENT BELONGS TO GOD, NOT MAN. (James 4:12.)

- A. Harsh judging puts us in God's place, a place for which we are not prepared: We are not omniscient, and we do not always know or understand the circumstances or temptations of others which led them into sin. (Romans 14:10-12.)
- B. Harsh judging sets us up as examples "holier than thou," whereas, "...the righteous are scarcely saved..." (I Peter 4:18.)
- C. Harsh judging forces us into the pool of hypocrisy, in which self-defense takes precedence over Christian duty.

The Sermon on the Mount -- Lesson 21