

## **JUDGE NOT, THAT YOU BE NOT JUDGED (Matthew 7:1)**

### **I. Matthew 7:1-5.**

Some Conclude: Jesus said “Don’t ever judge another person.” One person has no right to judge another. One has no right to say anything; to point out right/wrong; to try to correct, guide, or lead another. You should keep your opinion to yourself. You should speak up only if another person gives you permission.

But this would mean: No one would ever take the initiative to speak out about right/wrong; good and evil; the uplifting and beneficial versus destructive teachings and behavior. This would mean Jesus violated His own rule in 5:31-32 (adultery); it would mean Jesus made a mistake when he sent his disciples out two-by-two to preach the gospel (Matthew 10:5-15); it would mean Jesus was wrong in calling the scribes and Pharisees “hypocrites” and calling them out so fiercely (Matthew 23). It would mean Stephen was responsible for his own stoning (Acts 7:51-60) because of the harsh way he spoke. It would mean Timothy should have ignored Paul’s charge ( 2 Tim. 4:2) to “preach the word ... in season and out of season.”

Jesus actually said “Judge not, that you be not judged.” The warning in verse 2 is that a harsh standard imposed by a fallible man would be imposed in turn on him. The warning continues to include hypocrisy: don’t expect to get away with a beam in your own eye, just because you are adept at picking a mote out of the eye of another. The word *judge* (Vine’s) implies *to set oneself up as a judge*. The Pharisees were famous for this. The judgment seat belongs to God alone (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:9-10)

Also John 8:7 Inaccurately rendered “Let him who is without sin cast the first stone.” Actually “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.” This passage is explained even more easily than Matthew 7:1-5. Hypocrisy, the lust to pronounce and execute sentence, and the desire to confound and discredit Jesus, are all refuted by our Lord.

### **II. In what sense are sincere Christians to “judge”? What is the right way?**

In our modern way of speaking, any manner of speaking up and speaking out is criticized as “being judgmental.” What’s a Christian to do? What are the right ways, and the wrong ways?

1. Right way: speak God’s word ( I Peter 4:11: If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God). Wrong way: putting forth your own opinions, rules, and laws outside the Gospel.
2. Right way: Speak up for the right reason: to save souls, out of the love of men. Luke 19:9, The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost. Eph. 4:11-15, Speaking the truth in love. The wrong way: to win a debate; to prove one’s personal moral or intellectual superiority; to win power or influence. Acts 8:18-19, Simon the Sorcerer; 3 John 9, Diotrephes loved being preeminent; I Tim. 6:3-10. Some viewed the gospel as a means of gain.
3. Right way: Practice what you preach; no hypocrisy. Romans 2:1-11
4. Right way: To be as understanding as possible; as patient as possible; as gentle as possible; but without compromise and without weakness and without hesitation. 2 Tim. 3:24-26. I Cor. 9:19-22.

**III. What does the world call “judging”?** The Christian’s God-ordained effort to save souls by teaching the gospel; to shine God’s light on right and wrong; to help and improve the lives of suffering sinners.