

**DO WE HAVE A RIGHT TO JUDGE?  
Matthew 7:1-6**

**Introduction:**

1. Have you ever been judged by someone because you judged another person?
  - a. In our politically correct society any criticism of another's behavior, morals or beliefs is taboo.
  - b. We are told that we have no right to judge another.
  - c. If we do make a judgment about another, we are judged to be mean-spirited, bigoted or a nit-picker.
  
2. Have we no right to discern between right and wrong, good and evil?
  - a. Must we accept every type of degraded behavior and say nothing?
  - b. Must we accept every false religious teaching without opposition?
  
3. What did Jesus mean when He said: "Judge not that you be not judged?"

**Discussion:**

- I. THE WORD FOR "JUDGE" IS ALSO THE WORD FOR "CONDEMN."
  - A. To judge also means to discriminate.
    1. Life is filled with choices in which we must choose one belief or course of action over another.
    2. I once worked at an orchard where I graded apples.
      - a. The best apples went into the showroom to sell.
      - b. The second best were sold for canning.
      - c. The worm eaten and damaged were used for cider.
      - d. Only the fully rotten apples were thrown away.
  
  - B. The Bible uses the word "judge" in two different ways:

1. Some judging is commanded.
2. Some judging is condemned.

## II. THE LORD COMMANDED US TO JUDGE RIGHTEOUSLY (John 7:24).

### A. He commands us to judge between truth and error.

1. He warned of false teachers (Matthew 7:13-23).
2. He said: “By their fruits (teachings) you will know them.”
3. John commanded: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

### B. He commands us to judge between morality and immorality.

1. The church at Corinth had a member living in open sin (1 Corinthians 5:1-13).
2. He was living in fornication with his own father’s wife.
3. Paul said, “I am absent but I have already judged him.”
4. He commanded: “Put away from yourselves the evil person” (v. 13).
5. As a result, the man repented (2 Corinthians 2:5-11).

## III. THE LORD FORBIDS HARSH, HATEFUL AND HYPOCRITICAL JUDGMENT.

### A. Bible scholars describe the kind of judging Jesus forbids.

1. J. W. McGarvey said: “All judging from surmise, or from insufficient premises, or from ill-will is prohibited.”
2. A.T. Robertson said: “The habit of censoriousness, sharp, unjust criticism *is forbidden*.”
3. Guy N. Woods said that the judging condemned “is to impute unworthy motives to others, to put the worst possible interpretation on their works and actions....”
4. Wendell Winkler wrote: “...the kind of judging forbidden by the Lord is harsh, hasty, unfounded, censorious, hypercritical, uncharitable, malicious, slanderous,

ill-natured judgment” (Heart Diseases and Their Cure).

- B. Jesus speaks of harsh, hypocritical judging in Matthew seven.**
- 1. People will judge us by the way we judge others.**
    - a. If we are unjust and dishonest in our criticism of others, we can expect others to judge us the same.**
    - b. “What goes around, comes around;” or “What we sow, we will also reap.”**
  - 2. The “beam” or “plank” Jesus speaks of is a timber that would be used as a floor joist or ceiling rafter.**
  - 3. The “mote” or “speck” is a tiny sliver of straw, chaff, or a minute splinter.**
  - 4. The unjust critic is aware of your small fault, but ignores his own more glaring fault.**
  - 5. He cannot help you correct your fault until he has dealt with his own much greater problem.**
  - 6. The Pharisees condemned Jesus for not observing their man-made custom of ritual washing before eating, while breaking the fifth commandment by refusing to care for their aged, needy parents (Matthew 15:1-9).**

#### **IV. WHY MUST WE BE CAREFUL ABOUT JUDGING OTHERS?**

- A. We may not know all the circumstances in a given situation.**
- 1. A passenger on a train berated a young father who was unable to stop his baby from crying.**
    - a. He shouted, “Why don’t you take that child to its mother?”**
    - b. He did not know the baby’s mother was dead.**
  - 2. Hannah silently prayed that God would give her a son.**
    - a. Eli saw her lips moving but heard no sound.**
    - b. He assumed she was drunk (1 Samuel 1:12-17).**

**B. We cannot see the “big picture” as God does.**

- 1. A young sailor saw an iceberg protruding above water and remarked it was a small one; an experienced sailor told him he was only seeing the tip of the iceberg.**
- 2. God told Samuel: “For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).**
- 3. We cannot read others’ hearts so we must be careful about impugning motives to them.**

**V. WHY DO PEOPLE JUDGE UNJUSTLY?**

- A. Some want to turn the attention away from their own sins (John 12:1-7).**
- B. Some criticize others for the very things they are guilty of (Romans 2:1).**
- C. Some criticize others because they think they build themselves up by tearing others down (Luke 18:9-14).**
- D. Some unjustly judge others because they are envious of them.**
  - 1. Saul envied David and tried to kill him (1 Samuel 18:6-11).**
  - 2. Haman built a gallows for Mordecai (Esther 3:5;5:14).**
  - 3. The Jews delivered Jesus to be crucified (Matthew 27:18).**

**Conclusion:**

- 1. If we practice the Golden Rule we won’t judge unjustly (Matt. 7:12).**
- 2. If we examine ourselves, we won’t judge unjustly (2 Cor. 13:5).**
- 4. We will all stand before the Judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10).**
- 5. Prepare now by being baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:26,27).**