

*“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” (I Thess. 5:21 KJV)*

*“holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.” (II Timothy 3:5 NASB)*

*“Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;” (Ephesians 5:11 NASB)*

Secondly, we are commanded to judge the conduct of brethren.

*“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us.”*

*(II Thessalonians 3:6 NASB)*

*“...remove the wicked man from among yourselves.” (I Cor. 5:13 NASB)*

*“I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; (Rev. 2:2 NKJV)*

Again, obeying these commands is *impossible* unless Christians judge people.

Thirdly, we are commanded to judge ourselves.

*“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you — unless, of course, you fail the test?” (II Corinthians 13:5 NIV)*

*“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.”*

*(I Corinthians 11:28-29 KJV)*

*“But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world. .” (I Corinthians 11:31-32 NASB)*

It is absolutely *impossible* to be obedient to these Scriptures without judging those (as well as ourselves) who are engaged in certain acts and behaviors. It is evident from these verses that we are commanded to judge ourselves, false teachers, false doctrine, immoral conduct among brethren, liars, and all sorts of evil. *God expects His people to judge! God commands His people to judge!* Those who refuse to judge are not being obedient to God and His Word. *Those who will not judge are sinning against God.*

*— (continued in the next issue) —*

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# DILIGENCE

*“We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.” — Hebrews 6:11*

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Issue 2

— Part 2 —

**Judge Not that Ye . . .**

**and**

**Let Him That Is Without Sin Cast . . .**

In this issue, we are continuing our discussion about judging. In the previous issue of *Diligence* we stated that judging is both commanded and condemned in the Scriptures. John 7:24 tells us that we are to judge *“with righteous judgment.”* We determined that a *righteous* judgement is based on the unchanging standard of the Word of God and that it is that Word that does the judging. We discern *from* that Word what is and what is not acceptable to God in order to make *righteous* judgements.

Now, let's look at one of those verses that are so often misused by so many — the “judge not that ye be not judged” verse. But *this* time let's read the context.

*“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.” (Matthew 7:1-5 NKJV)*

Some would say here; “There! You see?! Since everyone sins (Romans 3:23), how can we criticize (or judge) a speck in another's eye when we have a plank in our own?” Good question! Since *no one* is sinless, *no one* can judge the conduct or belief of another. Right? No — wrong! Why!?! Let's take a look at Paul to give us some insight into this discussion.

There are several places in the Scriptures that clearly state that Paul was certainly not sinless (Romans 7:14; I Timothy 1:15; I Corinthians 9:27) yet he didn't hesitate to judge the sinner in these verses that follow.

*“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife. And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I*

have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 5:1-5 NIV)

Paul then went on to say —

“<sup>11</sup>But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.

<sup>13</sup>...Expel the wicked man from among you.” (1 Corinthians 5:11&13 NIV)

Paul passed judgment on this man and he did it on *hearsay*!! He wasn't even *there*! This man was bringing disgrace on the Church and he *had* to be dealt with. Even though Paul was a sinner — just as we are — he didn't hesitate to judge a sinful man.

So then if these verses about the plank and the speck don't say to *not* judge another exactly what *do* they tell us? Let's read verse 5 again.

“*Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.*” (Matt. 7:1-5 NKJV)

Quoting only the “judge not, that ye be not judged” portion of these verses doesn't give us the full picture of what Jesus was saying. Reading the *complete context* tells us that Jesus was speaking of those who pronounce judgment when they themselves are either guilty of the same sin or of judging others for beliefs they themselves do not hold. “*Hypocrites!*” — He said! Paul addressed this again in Romans 2:1-3.

“*You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment?*” (NIV)

Notice that it says “*God's judgment...is based on truth.*” That brings us back to the discussion in the previous issue on *righteous* judgment. Our judgments are to be based on the Truth found in the Word — not what we think as “*a mere man.*” It is the Word that not only *allows* us, but *commands* us to judge certain conduct, behavior and beliefs. But again, it is the *Word* that does the judging — not we. We only discern its content. Therefore a righteous judgment requires that we have enough knowledge of the Word to observe divine laws, keep the commands of God and be always acceptable to Him.

There are so very many verses in the New Testament that speak of judging in one way or another, we could not possibly address all of them. This subject has implications that filter into many *other* subjects that are addressed in the Scriptures. Subjects such as church discipline relate directly to a thorough understanding of judging (or discerning) since there *is* no discipline if judgments are *not* made.

There is also a relationship between judging and the holding of ourselves to a standard that is acceptable to God even though the society around us might be deteriorating to something far less than that which is acceptable to Him. Those of us today who refuse to be “tolerant” or “politically correct” concerning certain sinful behaviors and sinful acts are sometimes seen as judgmental by a society *demanding* that a lesser standard be practiced and accepted.

In recent years, society's push on tolerance of *everything* — even sinful things, has taken its toll on Christians. Even those who know *nothing* of the Bible will quickly throw out the two verses mentioned in the title of these articles — causing many Christians to quickly go silent. Brethren, this fear of those who are misusing the Bible must come to a halt! Many congregations, as well as many Christians are paralyzed today because they have *not obeyed* the commands given in God's Word to judge sinful conduct, sinful acts, false teachers, false doctrine, etc. Congregations have too often allowed such sins to exist in their midst rather than separating from them as Paul instructed the Corinthian Christians to do in I Corinthians 5:1-13. Far too many Christians have bought into society's lie that judging another is always wrong. The greatest danger of our time is not too *much* judging but too *little* judging of sinful acts, teachings and behaviors. The Scriptures clearly instruct us to judge! But *what* do the Scriptures command us to judge?

First, we are commanded to judge between those who do and those who do *not* teach the true doctrine of Christ. It is completely impossible for us to do what the following verses tell us to do if we do not make judgments about people.

“*Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple*” (Romans 16:17-18 KJV)

“*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*” (Matthew 7:15 KJV)

“*Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*” (II John 1:9-11 KJV)

“*Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.*” (I John 4:1 NIV)

“*Therefore come out from them and be separate', says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.*” (II Cor. 6:17 NIV)