

Judging for Yourself

There is not a person in this world who has not made a judgement regarding another person. When we choose a friend, we need to judge whether the person is deserving of our friendship. A person considering marriage will have to judge whether their fiancé is going to be a faithful spouse and parent. So, why has the topic of judging become so unwelcoming? It may be that some are hypercritical or hypocritical. Both are too often. However, it may also be that others want their own standard of judgement meaning there is no universal or mutual standard for judging at all. This leads to confusion.

The bible speaks of making judgement for ourselves as a necessity. However, it specifies the standard for us which is quite simply - the bible. It tells us how to stay within the straight and narrow path (Matt. 7:14) and it tells us how to be a furnished and complete person of God (2Tim. 3:14-17). The Christian life is filled with making judgements regarding our spiritual well-being but the hardest is when it involves people. We are to test a person's teaching (Matt. 7:15-20, 1John 4:1, 1Thess. 5:12), as the Bereans did (Acts 17:11), to ensure the teacher is leading us on the straight and narrow path - which is our personal responsibility (1 Tim. 4:16, 1Cor. 10:15). We also have to make judgements on those in the church who may have sinful influence on us (Gal. 5:8, 1Cor. 5:6-8, 2Thess. 3:6) or are unrelenting and divisive (Tit. 3:10-11, 3Jn. 9-11). A judgment is needed to determine if there is a need for separation from such influence.

What about those in the world? God will judge them by the same standard (1Pet. 4:5-6, 1Cor. 5:13). However, we don't separate ourselves from them (1Cor. 9-13) otherwise we couldn't make disciples of them (Matt. 28:19). Instead, we shine our Christian influence on them (Matt. 5:14) and teach them (Matt. 28:19). Still, we also need to make judgements as to avoid the potential of calling good evil and evil good (Isa. 5:20), or practicing and approving of the worldly things (Rom. 1:32).

Judgement is necessary but in order to make a righteous judgement, we need to know the standard since our judgements will be returned back on us (Matt. 7:15). Hopefully we all strive to be spiritual so rather than simply judging, we can restore the erring (Gal. 6:1, Jam. 5:19) and convert the lost (Matt. 28:19, Acts. 2:38, 41).