

## ***Righteous Judgment in a Culture of Honor (Mt. 7:1-6)***

### **I. ESTABLISHING A CULTURE OF HONOR**

- A. The Holy Spirit is the guardian of the culture of the Body of Christ. He requires that we dwell together in a culture of honor. Blessing comes from honor. We must demonstrate a culture of honor in our families and ministry assignment (church, marketplace, school, neighborhood).  
*<sup>10</sup> In honor giving preference to one another...<sup>14</sup> Bless and do not curse. (Rom. 12:10-14)*
- B. We bless the budding virtues of all ministries regardless of their deficiencies and without needing to agree with or endorse their differences in ministry focus, style, and standards of excellence. The Holy Spirit forbids us to verbalize their deficiencies and differences.
- C. Scripture commands us to bring righteous judgment to believers with destructive doctrines and behavior (Mt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:1-11; 2 Cor. 11:12-15; Eph. 5:11; 1 Thes. 5:14, 21; 2 Thes. 3:6-14; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; 2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:10-13; 2:15; 3:10-11; 1 Jn. 4:1; Rev. 2:2, 14-15, 20).
- D. Jesus greatly honored people yet He also rebuked them with the most noble motives and goals. He called us to make judgments or evaluations of others but in a righteous way.  
*<sup>24</sup> Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment. (Jn. 7:24)*  
*<sup>30</sup> My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will... (Jn. 5:30)*
- E. We are committed to honoring people without abdicating our responsibility to be faithful witnesses. We must exemplify a strong culture of honor, yet with allegiance to Jesus. We do not need to sacrifice truth for love, but we express them together. Truth gives us the ability to love.
- F. Jesus commanded us to rebuke a brother who sins against us and forgive them if they repent.  
*<sup>3</sup> If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. (Lk. 17:3)*  
*<sup>22</sup> Whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of judgment. (Mt. 5:22)*
- G. Jesus commended those who did not tolerate ministries who promoted falsehood and impurity.  
*<sup>2</sup> You tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars. (Rev. 2:2)*  
*<sup>14</sup> I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak...to commit sexual immorality...<sup>20</sup> You allow (tolerate) that Jezebel...to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality... (Rev. 2:14, 20) <*
- H. Paul and John exposed false teachers instead of allowing them to move freely in the Church.  
*<sup>12</sup> I will continue to...cut off the opportunity from...<sup>13</sup> false apostles... (2 Cor. 11:12-13)*  
*<sup>1</sup> 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 Jn. 4:1)*

- I. We are called to judge the saints to win them to righteousness for the sake of their salvation. We are required to not ignore unconfessed sin with “unsanctified mercy” that allows sin to increase.  
*<sup>1</sup> There is sexual immorality among you...<sup>3</sup> I have already judged him...<sup>5</sup> Deliver such a to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved... (1 Cor. 5:1-5)*
- J. We only judge those in the church who refuse to repent of “scandalous” sins that cause harm.  
*<sup>10</sup> I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world...since then you would need to go out of the world. <sup>11</sup> But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner--not even to eat with such a person. (1 Cor. 5:10-11)*
- K. We are commanded to withdraw from saints who walk in a disorderly way by refusing to repent.  
*<sup>6</sup> We command you...that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us...<sup>11</sup> There are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all...<sup>14</sup> If anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. (2 Thes. 3:6-14)*
- L. In the Church today, there is radical individualism and the privatization of faith. However, anyone who confesses that they love Jesus and are a part of His covenant community (Church) is required to receive the standard of conduct that is commanded in the Scripture. Individual believers are not free to choose any lifestyle they want with assurance of not being "judged".
- M. We are commanded to make loving, righteous judgments in a nonjudgmental world. Any church that refuses to judge according to biblical standards will come under judgment. That judgment will be manifest by a continual increase of compromise in its leaders, members and families.
- N. It is necessary to value righteous judgments to have a community established in righteousness. We are called to be a faithful witness to the truth. This changes the social dynamics in a church.

## II. WE MUST JUDGE IN THE RIGHT PROCESS

- A. We must confront sin in the Church. Yet, we must do it in the right process with a right spirit.
- B. We tell people their faults to win them, not to show ourselves as superior or get back at them.  
*<sup>15</sup> If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup> But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more...<sup>17</sup> And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. (Mt. 18:15-17)*
- C. We go to our brother in private to clearly make known his fault. Then we take one or two with us. If they refuse to repent, then we are commanded to remove them from fellowship until they repent. This is to win them back to a right relationship with Jesus.

### III. WE MUST JUDGE WITH THE RIGHT SPIRIT

*<sup>1</sup> Judge not, that you be not judged. <sup>2</sup> For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. <sup>3</sup> Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?...<sup>5</sup> Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye. <sup>6</sup> Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them...and turn and tear you in pieces...<sup>15</sup> Beware of false prophets...<sup>16</sup> You will know them by their fruits. (Mt. 7:1-16)*

- A. The most quoted Bible verse is, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged" (Mt. 7:1). Many misinterpret it to mean we must never say that a specific belief, lifestyle or person is wrong. In context, Jesus called us to discern "dogs and pigs" (v. 6) as well as false prophets (v. 15).
- B. Jesus was not teaching us to not make judgments, but rather to make them with a right spirit! Jesus exhorted us to not judge with the critical, self-righteous resentment of the Pharisees.
- C. judge in the way that we want to be judged and with the desire to restore. We must restore people in gentleness with processes not governed by the fear of man. Judging in the right way requires a "vigorous spirituality" to discern the right issues, to invest the needed time, and to stand courageously for our brothers and occasionally against them if they refuse to repent.
  1. Gently: We look for their sincere intentions to obey and declare war on their sin.  
*<sup>1</sup> If a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. (Gal. 6:1)*
  2. Humbly: We look to ourselves because the knowledge of our own failures humbles us. We approach others with the sense of mourning over our own personal failure.
  3. Accurately: We take time and effort to get informed with all the available information. Those content with partial information have already made up their minds against another. We do not know all the complex details in the circumstances of another's life.  
*<sup>13</sup> He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him...<sup>17</sup> The first one to plead his cause seems right, until his neighbor...examines him. (Prov. 18:13-17)*  
*<sup>19</sup> Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. (Jas. 1:19)*
  4. Patiently: We give people opportunity to understand and time to repent without quickly concluding they are unrepentant. It is wrong to quickly judge or skip steps in the process.  
*<sup>21</sup> I gave her (Jezebel) time to repent of her sexual immorality... (Rev. 2:21)*
  5. Confidentiality: We only make the info known to those in authority to help restore them.  
*<sup>13</sup> A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter. (Prov. 11:13)*

- D. We do not publicly make known the sins of anyone who repents. There are many levels of discipline that do not require personal exposure.
- <sup>8</sup> *Above all things have fervent love...for love will cover a multitude of sins. (1 Pet. 4:8)*
- <sup>9</sup> *He who covers a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates friends. (Prov. 17:9)*
- E. Mercy is more successful than judgment to those who respond to mercy by repenting. Mercy received transforms a person faster than judgment, but if mercy doesn't work there is judgment.
- <sup>13</sup> *Judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. (Jas. 2:13)*

#### IV. MORE NOTES ON MT. 7:1-6

- A. Mt. 7:1-6 teaches us how to treat others while pursuing the Mt. 5-6 lifestyle. The word “judge” (krinoµ) means to analyze, evaluate, condemn or avenge. We must understand Jesus' message here. Since Scripture does not contradict itself, we interpret each passage in light of others.
- B. We must discern the difference between planks (more serious sins) and specks (less harmful failures). We are often too easily offended by specks in the lives of those near to us.
- C. Dogs do not value holy things as swine do not value pearls. They are insensitive to what is of great value. Jesus exhorts us to not give advice about truth to those who are unreceptive. There is a time to move on as Paul did (Acts 13:46; 18:6; 19:9). We do not force feed the truth to people. Pigs trample, but not dogs. Dogs tear, but not pigs. Do not give what is holy to unreceptive people. Dogs and pigs stood for Gentiles but to Christians it speaks of "non-disciples" and false believers (Mt. 5:47; 6:7, 32; 18:17; Lk. 12:30; Phil. 3:2; 2 Pet. 2:22; Rev. 22:15). In Ps. 22:16, dogs are those who persecute the righteous. The dogs ere are wild scavengers.
- D. Paul's insistence on judging destructive beliefs and behavior agreed with Jesus' teaching.
- <sup>19</sup> *Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. 20 Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest will be fearful of sinning. (1 Tim. 5:19-20, NAS)*
- <sup>2</sup> *Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. (2 Tim. 4:2)*
- <sup>10</sup> *There are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers...11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain...13 Rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, (Titus 1:10-13)*
- <sup>15</sup> *Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you. (Titus 2:15)*
- <sup>10</sup> *Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, 11 knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned. (Titus 3:10-11)*