

Unbiblical Cop-outs: Don't Judge Me!

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Author: Christopher J. E. Johnson

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If someone tells you that you are not supposed to judge anyone or anything, they are telling you to turn away from the doctrine of Christ.

Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

-John 7:24

In this teaching, I will go over the commandments of Christ on this subject, explain the difference between good and evil judgments, and cover the doctrine of false teachers who preach in opposition to righteous judgment. In the Bible, the Lord God has told us that He loves judgment:

For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

-Isaiah 61:8

Today, there are countless churchgoers and pastors who repeat the same tired lines, which are basically summed up as "Don't judge me!" or "Don't judge anyone!" This is what I called in the title of the teaching a "cop-out," which basically means that they are avoiding responsibility for something, and I will explain more about that as we progress through this teaching.

cop-out (n): a slang term for the act or an instance of backing out of a situation or commitment or avoiding responsibility for something

(See 'cop-out', *Random House Dictionary*, 2021, [dictionary.com]; See also *Collins English Dictionary*, 10th Edition, William Collins Sons & Co, 2012)

A churchgoer making the "Don't judge Me!" argument is one of the most nonsensical, anti-biblical, and hypocritical arguments I have ever heard. My goal in this teaching is to help born again Christians understand how important judging is for us in the church, that we have a duty to judge righteous judgment, why God loves it so much, and how to do it in accordance with God's Word.

It is important to understand that when I just said that the "Don't judge me!" argument is "nonsensical, anti-biblical, and hypocritical," I made a judgment, not only of the argument, but also of those who make the argument. Some readers might automatically condemn me for doing this, and may declare that this teaching is wrong and full of error, but by doing so, they are also judging and condemning me, and so to understand this matter, we first need to understand the definition of the word 'judge'.

judge (v): to compare facts or ideas, and perceive their agreement or disagreement, and thus to distinguish truth from falsehood; to discern

(See 'judge', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved Nov 30, 2021, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

If anyone tells you that you should not judge, they are telling you to **IGNORE** lies and **NOT** look for the truth.

While I was preparing to write this teaching, I read many internet articles from preachers talking about this subject, and in all my research, I did not find a single pastor who simply defined the word 'judge.' When we look at the word 'judge' from a Biblical perspective, namely, telling the difference between truth from lies, the grand majority of people on this planet believe that truth should be distinguished from lies, and so that leaves us with a very important question: Why are so many pastors and churchgoers *AGAINST* distinguishing truth from lies?

Please do not misunderstand; I do not believe that most churchgoers are generally against distinguishing truth from lies (i.e. judgment), because they do it daily, and I will talk more about that later. Rather, the truth is that they do not like others distinguishing truth from lies about *THEM* (especially when it comes to spiritual matters) because they do not judge themselves with righteous judgment, as the Word of God instructs us.

For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.
-1 Corinthians 11:31

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?
-2 Corinthians 13:5

When the average pastor or churchgoer says "*don't judge me*," what they are really telling you is: "*Don't tell me anything that will cause me to feel ashamed or embarrassed about my words and actions.*" This is because, today, most church buildings have become feel-good country clubs, filled to the brim with those who love themselves, and because they love themselves so much, they will do everything in their ability to avoid righteous judgment that disagrees with their preconceived ideas about themselves.

This know also, that in the last days perilous [destructive] times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;
-2 Timothy 3:1-4

To begin, let's take a look at Matthew 7 because verse one is, based on my research, the most cited Scriptural reference for churchgoers and pastors in support of the "*don't judge me*" argument. However, as we are about to see, Jesus Christ actually taught the opposite in that chapter.

Judge not, that ye be not judged.
-Matthew 7:1

If we stop right here and read nothing else, many readers might leave this teaching thinking that we should not judge anyone or anything, and in fact, that is what some preachers do. For example, Greg Johnston, a pastor of The Grove Church, quoted Matthew 7 and made the following statement in a teaching he called "Judging Others:"
"These words of Jesus are not a quaint request, but an imperative command. The words, 'Do not judge...' literally means 'stop judging!'... Jesus said we are not to judge other people."

-Greg Johnston, "Judging Others," The Grove Church, July 7, 2013, retrieved Nov 30, 2021,
[<https://www.grovechurch.com/2013/07/judging-others-sermon-notes>]

This is the danger of cherry-picking verses out of Scripture and creating a teaching around it, and in this context, I use the term "cherry-picking" to refer to those who select a single verse, or sometimes a short phrase within a single verse, and create a teaching out of it, apart from its context and full meaning. Most often, the true meaning of the verse is lost because churchgoers and preachers who cherry-pick verses do not follow the instruction of God concerning how we are supposed to study His Word.

Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:
-Isaiah 28:9-10

In other words, the Word of God is not organized with color codes and bullet points, and is purposefully designed in a way that the fullness of a doctrine can only be understood if all the pieces are aligned, and most often, those doctrines are located throughout various books in the Bible. The Lord God instructed us to read His Word "*precept upon precept*," meaning that we take each commandment in correlation with other commandments, "*line upon line*" meaning that we need to read it in its context, and "*here a little and there a little*," meaning that we need to compare verses of Scripture with other verses of Scripture and correlate them together.

For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.
-2 Timothy 3:6-7

The reason God structured His Word this way was so that corrupt men (i.e. those who do not have the Holy Spirit) who would read and attempt to understand God's Word would never be able to fully understand it. Without the Holy Spirit for understanding, they believe and teach false doctrines, and thereby, we can spot the counterfeit teacher more easily.

That is why Isaiah went on to say that false teachers would "*fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken*:"

But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.
-Isaiah 28:13

Those who cherry-pick verses fall for this trap, and there are many pastors out there who cherry-pick, which means many pastors fall for this trap. The simple reading of Matthew 7:1 could leave us with two different conclusions about what Jesus was saying:

- Do not judge others, so that you will not be judged.

Or...

- Do not judge others, as if you will not be judged according to the same judgments.

In other words, we have two options, one is that we should not judge anyone or anything so that way we can avoid being judged, and the other is that we should not judge in hypocrisy.

hypocrite (n): one who feigns to be what he is not; one who assumes a false appearance; one who has the form of godliness without the power, or who assumes an appearance of piety and virtue, when he is destitute of true religion
(See 'hypocrite', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved Nov 30, 2021, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

A hypocritical judge is one who points out the errors, contradictions, and sin in others, but does not judge himself according to those same standards. A hypocrite is also, for example, like a pastor who judges others on a regular basis, claims he does not judge others, and then condemns anyone who judges him.

So how do we know which option is the proper and true interpretation of what Jesus said in Matthew 7:1? The answer, according to Isaiah, is that we need to read the Word of God "*line upon line*," so let's continue to read what Jesus Christ said when He explained more details:

For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.
-Matthew 7:2

Whatever we discern to be true or false in the actions of another, that judgment will be brought to us, either in worldly consequences, or on the Day of Judgment before the throne of God. Whatever measures we give to the weightiness of a matter, meaning that whatever impact we believe one's words and actions have, those judgments will be held as a standard to us as well.

The hypocrisy of this matter is rooted deep because many churchgoers believe they have found a loophole with this verse, meaning that they believe if they do not judge anyone or anything, then they will never have to suffer the judgments of God. This is foolishness because, as we will soon find out, they judge matters all the time, every day. Churchgoers who preach "*don't judge me*" are often the ones who are the quickest to judge a matter unrighteously, without evidence, meaning that they assume the appearance of a "non-judgmental" person, when they are the most unrighteously judgmental of all.

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

-Matthew 7:3-4

mote (n): a small particle

(See 'mote', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved Dec 1, 2021, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

The Lord Jesus Christ is referring to those who will point out what the world would consider to be minor faults and errors of others around them, but have much bigger sinful problems of their own. For example, a pastor might point out the foolishness in the decision making of young men and women, but within himself, he is full of pride, arrogance, and covetousness, and thinks very highly of his person, meaning that he is a hypocrite to judge the young men and women in their foolishness, when his own foolishness is far greater, and has a much more widespread negative impact on others. (Read "[Respecting Persons is Sin](#)" here at creationliberty.com for more details.)

Jesus then goes on to explain to us that it is not wrong to judge matters, but that we should judge our own hearts and minds first:

Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

-Matthew 7:5

In order to judge righteous judgment, we need to first judge ourselves. Jesus took an example from the Jews' own documents, in this instance, from the corrupt Babylonian Talmud:

"What is the import of the words, And it came to pass in the days of the judging of the judges? It was a generation which judged its judges. If the judge said to a man, 'Take the splinter from between your teeth,' he would retort, 'Take the beam from between your eyes.' If the judge said, 'Your silver is dross,' he would retort, 'Your liquor is mixed with water.'"

-Baba Bathra 15b, "Babylonian Talmud: Tractate Baba Bathra," retrieved Dec 1, 2021, [http://come-and-hear.com/bababathra/bababathra_15.html]

I am not saying that the Babylonian Talmud is a good document to read because it is a man-made document about spiritual matters that has many corruptions in it, but Jesus was using their own words against them. If a man has judged his own heart and disciplined himself according to Christ's standards in the Bible, then he will see clearly to judge and rebuke others, and that process of self-examination will humble him, meaning that he can judge others with clear sight and charity of heart, judging the words and actions of others for their benefit, instead of judging others to make himself look good on the outside.

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

-Matthew 7:6

This verse confirms for us that Jesus was *NOT* teaching that "*we are not to judge other people,*" or as the corrupt pastor put it, to "*stop judging.*" That is false doctrine from the mouths of false preachers who do not want to be judged for what they say and do.

In Jewish society, the term 'dog' was used as a metaphor for the heathen, and the term 'swine' was used as a metaphor for those who were abandoned to their sin and would not hear the truth. Jesus used this as a warning to us that we should be cautious of who we rebuke, as we should not put ourselves into a situation in which we would waste our time judging and rebuking a man who would only do us harm in revenge because his sins were exposed.

It was in the nature of religious leadership in Jewish culture to exact revenge and punishment on those who rebuked their sin. Their pride and vanity was so great within themselves, they would act swiftly on anyone who dared to speak the truth and damage their reputation, and thus, Jesus was taking the terms 'dog' and 'swine', which the Jews used to refer to heathen, and turned that back around on the pastors and elders of that day.

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprovved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

-Ephesians 5:11-13

It is our job to rebuke and reprove the unfruitful works of darkness, and sanctify ourselves if necessary, which also means that we have to judge the words and actions of others to discern who is a 'dog' or 'swine' that will not only refuse to hear, but turn around to get revenge against us. To emphasize the point, this requires *JUDGING RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT* (John 7:24), which means Jesus was teaching us not to judge in hypocrisy (i.e. to put on a false appearance), or as I said earlier, "*Do not judge others, as if you will not be judged according to the same judgments.*"

It is right for Christians to judge one another, and that is part of our job to maintain vigilance in protecting the church from leaven:

I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

-1 Corinthians 5:9-13

It is impossible for us to not have any company with men of this world who live in their sin, but Christians are capable of not keeping company with hypocrites, which are those who claim to be of Christ while living in their sin without repentance. If there are such people in the church, we are supposed to remove them from the church to prevent leaven from influencing everyone else.

In this passage, Paul poses two questions, the first being: "*What have I to do to judge them also that are without?*" When he says "also," he means that he judges those within the church, but has no need to judge those who are outside of the church because their souls have not been regenerated by the Holy Ghost, and therefore, they cannot understand the finer points of Biblical doctrine without having their understanding unlocked by the power of God.

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

-1 Corinthians 2:14

Then, Paul goes on to ask the church another question: "*Do not ye judge them that are within?*" This question was not designed to turn them away from judging righteous judgment with one another, but rather, it was asked to them to remind them that they judge the church on a regular basis, and that it is right for the church to do, to keep the church safe from the influence of the Devil.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:
-1 Peter 5:8

If we do not judge (i.e. discern between what is true or false concerning) the beliefs, words, and actions of those who are in the church, then we are simply opening the door to invite in deceitful men who will try to corrupt the saints.

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.
-Jude 1:4

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.
-Acts 20:28-31

*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for **wide** is the gate, and **broad** is the way, that leadeth to **destruction**, and **many** there be which go in thereat: Because **strait** is the gate, and **narrow** is the way, which leadeth unto **life**, and **few** there be that find it. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*
-Matthew 7:13-15



It is important for Christians to understand the full meaning of the phrase "wolf in sheep's clothing" because, sadly, due to the influence of corrupt preachers, many Christians have been left with the impression that a wolf will only look like a nefarious person, who has a curly moustache and wears a black cape. A wolf in sheep's clothing is a wolf who, in all outward mannerism and speech, appears to be a Christian, which means that he will put on a suit and tie, stand behind the pulpit, sing praises to Jesus, and shout "Amen!" just like everyone else.

To tell the difference between a sheep and wolf in sheep's clothing, we need to look at their doctrine, meaning that we need to hear what they teach and profess to believe. This is how we judge (i.e. discern) whether or not someone is leavened, and it is what Jesus instructed His disciples to do:

Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.
-Matthew 16:6-12

The **Pharisees and Sadducees** of that day were not just some cult that existed among the Jews a couple thousand years ago, but rather, they were the religious leaders of that society. They were the **pastors, elders, deacons, priests**, etc. They are the very men who society held up as a standard of righteousness, but they were hypocrites who judged unrighteously, just like we have a lot of church building preachers today who are put on the same pedestal, but speak and do the same hypocritical things.

By judging a man's doctrine, we can distinguish the truth from the lies in his teaching, and thereby, we can discern whether he is following Christ, or following some other doctrine while hiding behind the name of Jesus and Christianity. I hope that readers can begin to see why so many preachers are teaching false doctrine on this subject.

I would encourage readers to study the Word of God, and compare it with what I am teaching to judge whether or not I am teaching you the truth. I welcome that because the Bible not only commands us to study to show ourselves approved unto God, and not only does the Bible tell us that a righteous man studies to answer, but it also means that you are not worshipping me (a mere man) in any sense, by falsely putting your faith and trust in me, and instead, you put your faith and trust in the Spirit of God to teach you His Word.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

-2 Timothy 2:15

The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

-Proverbs 15:28

These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

-1 John 2:26-27

One of the major problems with a lot of churchgoers on the subject of righteous judgment is that they never define what they mean when they say the word 'judge'. We have already learned the Biblical definition (i.e. to discern between what is true and false), and it makes perfect sense because the word 'god' means "judge," or in other words, the name of God means He is a judge, which means His very name declares that He is the discerner of truth.

This is one of the reasons why there are some religious cultists out there who misunderstand certain verses of Scripture and teach absurdly false doctrines. For example, let's look at Psalm 82:

I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

-Psalm 82:6

There are corrupt preachers out there who claim that God has declared mankind to be "little gods" of themselves based on this verse, but again, this is another example of cherry-picking verses. If we read this verse alone, without any other verse involved, some people might get that impression, but let's look at the Scripture in its full context, and then review it with the Biblical definition of the word 'god'.

(Read "[Corruptions of Christianity: Mormonism](#)" here at creationliberty.com for more details; Mormons believe that they will become gods over other planets.)

God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods. How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah. [pause and consider the matter] Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked. They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course. I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

-Psalm 82:1-8

If we remember that the word 'god' means "judge," we can easily understand that this passage is not calling men "gods," but rather, God is referring to the judges of Israel, who were commonly referred to as "gods" in that day because that is what the word means. The judges of Israel were supposed to be judging earthly matters in a courtroom based on the Word of God, which means they were (in a sense) temporarily judging matters in God's place, so they were called "gods," not in any divine way, but in the manner that they were supposed to have the authority to judge righteous judgment in the Hebrew's judicial system.

In Psalm 82, we have a situation in which the judges were not judging righteously, accepting bribes and lifting themselves up in their pride, taking advantage of the poor and needy who desperately rely on judges to give them justice and restitution for wrongs done against them. God speaks to them in a somewhat sarcastic manner, mocking them for calling themselves "gods" in their unrighteous judgments while they believed themselves to be holy among the people, and so God tells them they will "*die like men*," meaning that they will perish as all men do, to remind them that they were mere creations, made from the dust of the ground, and to the dust of the ground they would return.

Even Jesus challenged the "gods" (i.e. the judges) to judge Him:

Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

-John 10:34-38

Jesus pointed out to them that they were called "gods" (i.e. judges), and they were arguing with Him, claiming that He was lying about being the Son of God. He told them that, being judges (i.e. gods), they should judge the works that He does, and judge righteous judgment in truth, or in other words, He told them to examine the evidence and draw an honest conclusion, to differentiate between right and wrong.

Their pride was so great within them, they were outraged that Jesus would dare question them. Therefore, for telling them the truth and requesting that they do their job, they tried to arrest Him, but Jesus escaped from their hands:

Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,

-John 10:39

Once we understand what the word 'god' means, and why the judges were called "gods," it is much easier to understand these verses. The judges (i.e. gods) were supposed to judge righteous judgment, but in hypocrisy, they refused to do so, and that correlates to the hypocrisy of pastors and churchgoers who also try to avoid righteous judgment.

We can understand the meaning churchgoers *IMPLY* when they say the word 'judge', but that is not the meaning of the word. What they actually mean is that they do not want you to *CONDEMN* them, however, they misunderstand that even if they use the word 'condemn' in that context, they are condemning themselves.

First, let's define the word 'condemn':

condemn (v): to pronounce to be utterly wrong; to determine or judge to be wrong, or guilty

(See 'condemn', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved Dec 3, 2021, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

It is through the corrupt teachings of leavened preachers that the word 'condemn' has received such a negative view. In fact, God commanded the judges of Israel to condemn the wicked, or in other words, they were supposed to judge (i.e. discern between right and wrong, truth and lies) those who came before them based on the evidence that was presented, and then condemn (i.e. pronounce to be wrong) those who had done wrong.

If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

-Deuteronomy 25:1

I do not personally know anyone who thinks that a judge should not condemn evil because they want to see those who did evil be brought to justice. For example, if a young woman was sex trafficked and abused, would you not judge and condemn her abusers?

When a man performs an abortion (i.e. kills a child in a woman's womb), do churchgoers pronounce that man to be utterly wrong in what he has done? Do they not declare that a mother who kills her baby to be utterly wrong? Of course, they condemn those things, but when it comes to their own sin and willful blindness, suddenly, they hate the very same judgment and condemnation that they use on a regular basis.

I have offered this challenge many times in my teachings: If you want to see the truth about how churchgoers judge and condemn others on a regular basis, just sit them down in front of a reality TV show and watch how they react. I am not encouraging anyone to watch TV or reality shows (in fact, I believe Christians ought not to watch them), but the experiment will prove the point, that they know how to judge when someone does right, and condemn when someone does wrong.

What makes the "don't judge me" churchgoers hypocrites is that they will not turn those same judgments and condemnations on themselves. If they were to examine themselves properly, then they would see more clearly to judge righteous judgment with others, and to be able to do so in charity.

This brings us to a controversy of doctrine in Luke 6, and these are the correlating verses to Matthew 7:1-5:

Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

-Luke 6:37-38

So what we have learned so far in Scripture is that Jesus was not telling us to "Judge not, and ye shall be not judged" in the sense that we should not judge anyone or anything. Nor was it to be understood that we should not condemn any action, or that we should not condemn a man if he has done a wrong deed.

We know that judges of civil courts judge matters according to the laws of the land (which are based on moral laws of God), and we all know by our own consciences that it is a good thing. We also know that, within the church, Christians are supposed to judge matters among one another, rebuking one another when there is a wrong done to promote correction unto righteousness, and giving them every opportunity to repent of their wrongdoing.

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

-Matthew 18:15-17

It is required of those who are born again in Christ to have a repentant heart (i.e. a heart of sorrow when one does wrong), and that is why we are ready and willing to forgive when a brother or sister comes in repentance:

Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

-Luke 17:4

This is not to say that we do not have forgiveness even for those who do not come to us in repentance of their wrongdoing, but there are two aspects to forgiveness that Christians need to understand. There is forgiveness of wrongdoing in the sense that we forgive the wrong itself, and how it might have grieved us, but there is also forgiveness in the sense of a debt owed, in which there was physical damages that require restitution.

forgive (v): to pardon; to remit, as an offense or debt; to overlook an offense, and treat the offender as not guilty

(See 'forgive', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved Dec 3, 2021, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

Under the listing of 'forgive', Noah Webster adds a paragraph that is very well written to explain some discrepancies between contextual uses of the word:

"It is to be noted that pardon, like forgive may be followed by the name or person, and by the offense; but remit can be followed by the offense only. We forgive or pardon the man, but we do not remit him."

(See 'forgive', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved Dec 3, 2021, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

There are offenses that directly harm other individuals, and this creates debt that is owed by restitution ordered through the courts. For example, let's imagine a horrible circumstance in which a man snuck into your daughter's bedroom and raped her, but he did not repent (i.e. have any grief or sorrow of his wrongdoing), should you forgive that man and welcome him back into your home without repentance of his sin?

Of course, no one in his right mind would offer complete remission of such a grievous debt of offense without repentance. You might let it go to move on with your life, so you will not seek revenge, giving that all to the Lord, but you would not allow that man anywhere near you or your family again unless he had fallen on his knees in tears of sorrow for his actions, and even then, from the perspective of a father, he would let that man nowhere near his daughter because reconciliation would take a lot of time, if it ever happened at all.

To forgive someone of a debt is what it means to "remit" sins, or as Jesus called it, "*remission of sins.*"

And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

-Luke 24:46-47

So now let's put this altogether. The Lord Jesus Christ did not come to this world to condemn the world:

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

-John 3:17

It was not Christ's purpose to come to the world to condemn men (i.e. to declare they are utterly wrong) because they are *ALREADY* condemned by the Word of God, as He goes on to say:

He that believeth on him is not condemned [i.e. because he has grace through the forgiveness and mercy of God]: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

-John 3:18-20

Why would Jesus Christ need to come down from His heavenly throne to do that which has already been done in God's Word? That would not make any sense.

However, that does not mean that Jesus did not condemn because Jesus certainly did condemn certain people while He was with mankind in the world. Jesus condemned the hypocrites, and was even more severe with the money changers, but it was not His ultimate purpose in coming to this world.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass [travel] sea and land to make one proselyte [religious convert], and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.
-Matthew 23:15

And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.
-John 2:13-16

This is condemnation, meaning that Jesus declared them to be utterly wrong in their words and actions, so just because He did not come to this world to condemn, it does not mean that He never condemned anyone. It is the same thing when Paul said He was not called to baptize, but to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and yet, he did baptize when it was necessary for him to do so.

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.
-1 Corinthians 1:17

Jesus taught us that, with repentance (i.e. grief and godly sorrow) of sin, remission is given, which is a full pardon of debts owed:

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
-Matthew 6:12

He also taught us that we ought to do the same as our Heavenly Father in such matters:

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.
-Matthew 5:44-45

So the way we Biblical judge and condemn the words and actions of others is by doing so in charity, and I understand this is a foreign concept to many readers, but that is only because this is not being properly taught in church buildings. The reason for that is because most churchgoers hate righteous judgment, and the majority would throw out any preacher (like myself, for example) who would teach them that they should examine themselves in the light of God's Word, and compare facts among one another to determine the truth, rebuking and exhorting one another as necessary.

If we go back to Matthew 7:1-6, and we keep reading past that point, Jesus explains this concept of charitable judgment in more detail:

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?
-Matthew 7:7-11

So contextually, Jesus first explains to us that we should not judge matters without turning that judgment on ourselves first, to examine ourselves to see if we match up to the very thing we are judging in others. Then, once we do that and can see clearly, we ought to be charitable and merciful by considering how we would like to be treated if we were in the same situation as those we are judging, or rather, we should consider the pit from which we were digged, meaning that we should consider how Christ treated us when we came to Him in repentance of our sin.

Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.
-Isaiah 51:1

And Jesus finished the thought in verse twelve:

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.
-Matthew 7:12

The world has called this "The Golden Rule." Sadly, they prefer that label because it censors the name of Jesus Christ who taught it in the first place.

Our Heavenly Father provided for us when we were lost, He rebuked our sins, and He had mercy on us to forgive us of all our debt when we came to repentance (i.e. godly sorrow) at the foot of the cross. We can judge (i.e. discern between good and evil) and condemn (i.e. declare that evil is wrong) in love and truth, both rebuking and having understanding with our brethren and neighbors when they do us wrong.

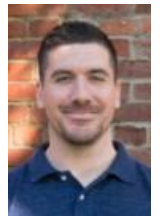
Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.
-Romans 13:8-10

At this point, if any churchgoers happen to read this teaching, the fact that most churchgoers do not judge righteous judgment would mean they have not done right in the sight of God, and they are typically quick to defend themselves. One of the most common defenses on this subject is the phrase, "You can't know what's in a man's heart! Only God can!"

For example, Mark Ballenger, the founder of *Apply God's Word Ministries*, said:

"We can't know people's hearts, so Jesus says we must look at their lives. It's wrong to judge people's motives because we usually assume they are evil motives. But we also must not judge people's motives because we might assume they have good motives when they do not."

-Mark Ballenger, "3 Signs Your Pastor Really Is the Problem," *Apply God's Word Ministries*, retrieved Dec 23, 2021, [https://applygodsword.com/3-signs-your-pastor-really-is-the-problem]



The problem with the phrase "*We can't know people's hearts*" is that it contradicts Christ's doctrine, in which He told us that we can:

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.
-Matthew 15:18

Of course, this does not mean that we can know every last thought or feeling in a man, but we can know his general heart by the things he says. However, the reason why men like Ballenger, and other pastors and churchgoers, reject this concept is because, as I said earlier, they do not like to be judged with righteous judgment.

Ballenger digs his hole deeper by going on to say that "*It's wrong to judge people's motives,*" and in his stupefying willful blindness, he is condemning God for doing exactly that. For example, because of these false doctrines that contradict God's Word (including my research into Ballenger's many other false doctrines, and his errors surrounding the Gospel of Salvation), I can know that Ballenger is a man who has no problem deceiving the hearts of his simple-minded listeners with fluffy, feel-good words, and that he is in this for money because he wants to feed his grumbling belly, knowing that he can do that most quickly and easily by getting a preacher's salary from a leavened church-ianity organization.

How could I possibly know that? Under normal circumstances, I could not know that, and it would be wrong for me to judge those matters, but with the Holy Spirit, I can know it from God's Word:

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences 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

If it were wrong to judge someone's motive, then it would be impossible for police officers to do their job. A policeman must judge a person's motive, otherwise, they would not look to defend themselves from criminals until after a criminal has shot him to death.

In fact, in the Bible, God has defended those who have presumed to judge evil intent without all the evidence, and this should explain why Ballenger's doctrine is so far off from Scripture. However, this is done under very specific circumstances, so let's look at the Scripture more carefully to gain a full understanding.

If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him. If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution;
-Exodus 22:2-3

In another teaching I have called "[Can Christians Kill in Self-Defense?](#)," I cover this subject in more details, but essentially, this verse is describing an intruder who breaks into a man's home. If the intruder is killed during the day, without evidence that he was a direct threat to the homeowner, then the homeowner would need to make restitution for a crime, however, if the intruder is killed during the night when the homeowner cannot see whether there is a threat or not, and the homeowner kills the intruder, then there is no restitution to be made because the homeowner, without being able to see all the evidence, was correct to presume evil intent to defend himself and his family.

The point I am making is that the homeowner, in both circumstances, is forced to judge the intent of the intruder. In fact, Jesus Christ even told us that a man does a good work if he prevents the intruder from breaking up his home.

But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.
-Matthew 24:43

Again, in order to stop an intruder, one must judge the man's intent, which means, we judge the intent of people around us all the time, otherwise, we would become victims of crimes quite easily. So when corrupt preachers like Ballenger teach, "We can't know people's hearts," and "It's wrong to judge people's motives," he is not only opening people up to become the victim of crimes, but also opening up churchgoers to openly accept false doctrines from leavened preachers because they are being taught never to judge a man by what He says and does.

The only reason a man would teach such nonsense is because he does not want others judging his words and actions. He fears to be found out because he hates rebuke and correction.

My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:
-Proverbs 3:11

Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die.

-Proverbs 15:10

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

-Revelation 3:19

Men who hate rebuke and correction hate Jesus Christ too, no matter how much they claim to love Him with their mouths.

This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

-Matthew 15:8

It is God's desire that we (i.e. His children) judge righteous judgment concerning our neighbors, no matter their wealth, station, rank, title, or lineage—all should be judged according to the same moral standards. We should analyze the facts by comparing a man's words and actions with the Word of God, and then speak the truth of that matter openly.

(Read "[Respecting Persons is Sin](#)" here at creationliberty.com for more details.)

Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.

-Leviticus 19:15

Leavened preacher Henry Kranenburg, of *Christian Reformed Church*, taught the following:

"Now in all honesty we don't have too much of a problem with it if someone judges that I am one of the nicest or smartest or best looking people they know. But that's not usually what we think of when we talk of 'judging.' Usually we think of people who have made critical judgments about us, directly or indirectly. Comments that can hurt and make us feel inadequate. So when Jesus says 'don't judge' then we say, 'good for you Jesus; you tell 'em.' And we want to say to people: 'Listen to Jesus and back off.' But you have to hold off for a moment before reacting. Because Jesus isn't saying 'now you, don't let others judge you.' Nor is Jesus saying: 'and when they do don't pay attention.' Jesus isn't talking to you about others judging you. He's saying 'this is about you: you don't judge. I'm not talking to your neighbour or your husband or wife or some proud people in your church or circle of friends. I'm talking to you. And if you want to be a disciple, this is something I want you to have a look at.'"



-Henry Kranenburg, "Judging Others," *Christian Reformed Church*, Mar 17, 2010, retrieved Dec 24, 2021, [<https://www2.crcna.org/resources/church-resources/reading-sermons/judging-others>]

Over the years, I have had to stomach the nauseous feeling I get when I read the transcripts of leavened pastors like this spewing out their false doctrines, but part of me has come to find these excerpts fascinating to read because I discover how they manipulate their listeners, and it increases my discernment. It is often difficult to catch because some of the words they use are very subtle, especially if we only listen to them audibly, but if we slow it down and read the words, we can see what they are doing.

It was surprising to read the acknowledgement from this man that a compliment is judgment. He did not necessarily admit it, but he implied it, and to that, I agree, compliments are judgment.

For example, let's say a man crafted a beautiful wooden dining room table, and you complimented him by saying, "You are a very skillful craftsman" — that is judgment. Remember earlier that we defined what judgment is, namely, to compare facts to determine what is true or false, and so objectively, a man who can woodwork well enough to design a fully functioning dining table is a skilled craftsman.

Of course, the skilled craftsman who received the compliment typically thanks the person who gave him the compliment. I guarantee that, never once in your life, would you give a man such a compliment, and in response, he turns to you and says, "How dare you judge me!?"

Such a response would make no sense because the man would be pleased with that kind of judgment. He would enjoy the fact that someone else recognized and acknowledged his hard work and dedication. Such judgments would make him feel good, and under that circumstance, we typically have no problem making that judgment because it was honest and fair.

So if churchgoers are so opposed to judgment, it should be a strange thing that when a female churchgoer is complimented about how pretty she looks in her dress, she does not whip her head around, gasp in shock, and rebuke you by saying, "*You should not judge anyone! Jesus Christ said so!*" However, because we know the selfishness of the heart, we know it is not a strange thing for her to turn around and graciously accept such a judgment because it makes her feel good, but if she was wearing an immodest dress among the church and rebuked for it, she might get angry because that judgment did not make her feel good.

Therefore, because Kranenburg separated feel-good judgment from feel-bad judgment, or in other words, he preaches against judgment, but excludes things like positive judgments (e.g. compliments) from his rebuke, preachers like Kranenburg are hypocrites that do not have a love of the truth, but rather, they have a love of only those things which are pleasurable to their feelings, meaning that their true god is their own heart. The Bible tells us that such men and women, who follow after their hearts instead of the truth, are fools, or in other words, they are people who cannot be reasoned with.

*He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool:
but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.*
-Proverbs 28:26

*The heart is deceitful above all things, and
desperately wicked: who can know it?*
-Jeremiah 17:9

And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.
-2 Thessalonians 2:10

fool (n): one who is destitute of reason, or the common powers of understanding; in scripture, fool is often used for a wicked or depraved person; one who acts contrary to sound wisdom in his moral deportment; one who follows his own inclinations, who prefers trifling and temporary pleasures to the service of God and eternal happiness

(See 'fool', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved Dec 24, 2021, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

Kranenburg goes on to say, "*He's saying 'this is about you: you don't judge. I'm not talking to your neighbour or your husband or wife or some proud people in your church or circle of friends. I'm talking to you.'*" This is a contradiction and another false doctrine.

The contradiction is that if he is talking to "you," but not the people sitting next to you, then what about the people sitting next to you? Is he not talking about them too? So for him to say that he is talking to you, when he is speaking to a wide audience, then he is not just speaking to you, which makes his statement a bunch of nonsense.

The false doctrine he taught was not just "*don't judge*," which is a violation of Christ's commandment to us (i.e. "*judge righteous judgment*," [John 7:24](#)), but also that anyone who makes a judgment is "*proud*." In case you may not have understood, Kranenburg is teaching you that if you follow the commandments of Jesus Christ to judge righteous judgment, you are committing sin, and that is a great demonstration of how ridiculously absurd the preaching of these men are when they do not have the Holy Spirit for understanding.

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
-1 Corinthians 2:13-14

The leavened, false preachers I have quoted in this teaching will think that what I am writing here in rebuke of them is foolishness, and that is because they have not been humbled to repentance and faith in Christ to receive the Holy Ghost that they might understand. They put their faith into their Bible colleges and degrees, but never came to the humility of godly sorrow for their sins, and that is why, after so many years of study, they still cannot understand proper judgment.

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles [prophets] of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

-Hebrews 5:12-14

Again, discernment and judgment go hand-in-glove; the two cannot be separated. This is why Paul, in First Corinthians (which we just read above) goes on in verse 15 to say:

But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

-1 Corinthians 2:15

Those who are spiritual (in this context) are *NOT* those who claim to be "spiritual" just because they are a part of (or a leader of) a religious organization, or in other words, those who imagine themselves to be spiritual, but rather, this refers to those who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, being given repentance (i.e. godly sorrow of sin) and faith, and born again in the Spirit of God by the grace and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. A spiritual man has a spiritual understanding given to him, by which, when he hears sound doctrine of Scripture, he responds positively and moves toward it, and such a man also judges all things spiritual in the same respect, which does not mean that he has knowledge, wisdom, and understanding of all things in this world, or even of all things in the Bible, but rather, he judges all things that are claimed to be "spiritual" to see if they match the doctrines of Christ and His apostles.

When it says that "*he himself is judged of no man*," this is not to say that we, as Christians, are not judged by any man because we are judged all the time by those who are of the world, and (if the church is doing what is right) we are judged by the church. However, the 'man' that is being spoken of at the end of this verse is the unspiritual man who has no discernment of spiritual things (like atheists for example), or those men who claim themselves to be spiritual but have no understanding (like corrupt pastors for example); their judgments are nothing more than the trivial ramblings of depraved men who have no understanding, meaning that we have no need to take heed to those judgments because we are judged of the Lord who has given us His great mercy.

Therefore, knowing that there are so many corrupt men out there making judgments, even while some of them claim they do not judge anyone or anything in hypocrisy, it is even *MORE* important for born again Christians to judge righteous judgment to counter hypocritical judgments. After all, if we, who have the Spirit of God, do not judge righteously, especially in spiritual matters, then what hope does mankind have to hear righteous judgment in their lifetime?

It is our job as born again Christians to judge right judgment. The poor and needy need righteous judgment. They rely on it. God, in His great kindness and infinite wisdom, preserved and gave us His Word (i.e. the Bible) for that reason; namely, that the poor and needy would be able to judge righteous judgment in spiritual matters, to protect themselves against the oppression from those who puff themselves up in the pride of their hearts to take advantage of simple minded people.

oppress (v): to load or burden with unreasonable impositions; to treat with unjust severity, rigor or hardship; to oppress one by compelling him to perform unreasonable service; to overpower; to overburden; as, to be oppressed with grief

(See 'oppress', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved Dec 28, 2021, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men. They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak. The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things: Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us? For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him. The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.

-Psalm 12:1-7

And yet, despite the fact that God preserved His Word for our protection, that we might discern the truth and judge righteous judgment, false preacher Tom Shepard, in a teaching he gave called "*Judging Others? Stop It!*," claimed that is sin:

"When we judge one another we are breaking God's commandment - we are breaking God's law."

-Tom Shepard, "Judging Others? Stop It!" *Sermon Central*, Oct 22, 2008, retrieved Dec 28, 2021, [https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/judging-others-stop-it-tom-shepard-sermon-on-wisdom-128022]



Shepard is teaching the exact opposite of what the Bible is telling us to do, and this is because he cannot understand the Scripture, I will demonstrate what I mean. Shepard goes on to quote James 4:11 (from a new-age bible version), and so let's read the passage:

Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

-James 4:11-12

Shepard then said:

"James tells us right up front not to speak evil of one another - because by speaking evil of one another - we judge one another. Anytime I judge you - any time you judge me - you and I have stepped over the line - because we start playing God. It's only God's responsibility to judge people - not yours or mine."

-Tom Shepard, "Judging Others? Stop It!" *Sermon Central*, Oct 22, 2008, retrieved Dec 28, 2021, [https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/judging-others-stop-it-tom-shepard-sermon-on-wisdom-128022]

Watch the language he is using very carefully here because Shepard is doing some dual sleight-of-hand techniques. I will cover his statement in a moment, but in order to fully understand Shepard's hypocrisy, we need to gain a sound interpretation of James in chapter four.

When James said "*speak not evil one of another*," he was making a conclusion on the thoughts he had expressed in chapter three, namely, that "*where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work*" (**Jms 3:16**), which was a warning to the Christians among the twelve tribes of Israel about the religious leaders who sought to lord over them. Those who profess themselves to be zealous in religious matters are often guilty of doing this very thing, in which they will give a false or misleading testimony against an honest Christian man, they will bring false charges against him, they will emphasize his faults and weaknesses, and they will do and say anything else they can to discredit his character and/or his good name.

If the truth discredits a man's character and good name, then let it be so, but if such a thing is done through pride and maliciousness, in which lies have to be told to attack a man's character, that is a very great evil. It is an extraordinary evil in which a woman would accuse an innocent man of rape in order to destroy his reputation, or that a father might lie about his daughter to make her look like a harlot—such evil is akin to murder.

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

-1 John 3:15

So for example, when a man (who claims to be brethren in Christ) preaches a message in which he tells every other preacher who teaches the truth of God's Word that they are committing sin, that man is actually lying to build himself up, while attempting to destroy the reputation of those who judge righteous judgment. This means that Shepard is using Scripture to justify his false doctrine, and does not understand that the very verses he is quoting are rebuking him!

Furthermore, when James says, "*He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law,*" he is not saying of judgment in general, but contextually, he is speaking of a man who is judging his brother in *UNRIGHTEOUSNESS*. This means that, if a good man is doing that which is right according to the commandments of God (e.g. judging righteous judgment as Jesus Christ commanded, [John 7:24](#)), and the evil pastor tells the good man that he is committing sin by doing the right thing, that means that the evil pastor is judging the law itself, declaring himself to be above it, and looks down upon the rest of us in the pride of his heart.

Therefore, James concluded that "*if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law,*" meaning that the pastor is already guilty of breaking the laws of God by his corrupt preaching. By doing so, the pastor also takes upon himself the position of a judge, or rather, *THE* Judge (i.e. God Himself), because the only one who is worthy to judge the law is the author of it, or in other words, God, the Good Courtroom Judge is the only one who is worthy to judge the law.

This is why James goes on to say in verse twelve that "*there is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy*" ([Jms 4:12](#)), which is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Only God can save a man through His grace, and only God can destroy both the body and soul in hell.

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.
-Matthew 10:28

So James asks, "*who art thou that judgest another?*" which is not said in the sense that we should not judge. Rather, in the context, James was asking this: **Who are you to judge another in the wicked manner that was just described?**

So I return that question to Shepard because he said, "*Anytime I judge you - any time you judge me - you and I have stepped over the line - because we start playing God.*" Shepard, who are you to judge that we Christians are evil for judging righteous judgment? In your arrogance and willful blindness, you have made yourself into a hypocritical little god of your own making because you claimed that we are evil for doing what Jesus Christ told us to do, which means you are guilty of doing the very judgment that you condemn as wrong, and you should be ashamed that this nonsense was ever printed or spoken.

Some readers may think I am being too harsh, but I am only doing what the Bible has instructed us to do, which is to judge righteous judgment, and then for those pastors who deceive the flock, teaching things they ought not to get a paycheck, I rebuke them sharply, that they might be sound in the faith, and that the church would be warned of the danger:

For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's [money's] sake. One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;
-Titus 1:10-13

The reason it is so important to rebuke men like Shepard is because he stated, "*James tells us right up front not to speak evil of one another - because by speaking evil of one another - we judge one another,*" and though I agree that Christians ought not to speak evil of one another, that is *NOT* the subject matter he was preaching on. Shepard was *REDEFINING* the word 'judge' to mean "speaking evil of another," which is not true.

Instead of understanding that judgment is discernment between good and evil, and that condemnation is a declaration of wrongdoing, corrupt preachers typically redefine judgment as "speaking evil," then further defining the phrase 'speaking evil' to mean "saying anything negative about anyone else's words or actions," and weaving condemnation into that philosophical knot. This is a trap to enslave a church building congregation, and it is why so many pastors preach this false message.

When a pastor has the entire church convinced that they cannot say anything negative about what he says and does, and once they believe that they are "sinning against God" if they speak any rebuke against him, then he gains a fear control over the church. This is very similar to the fear control a pastor gains when he preaches the false doctrine of storehouse tithing, the congregation is fearful of God's retaliation on them if they do not hand over some of their paycheck to the pastor, and likewise, they are fearful of God's retaliation on them if they mention anything the pastor has said or done in error.

(Read "[Tithe is Not a Christian Requirement](#)" here at creationliberty.com for more details.)

The "*don't judge me*" false doctrine is the pastor's immunity shield. He becomes impervious to wrongdoing, and he will not have to face any criticism that would expose him.

This also creates a sense of congregational policing that goes on in church buildings. If one person has the courage to mention that the pastor did or said something wrong, that person is often met with scowling disapproval from other members of the church because they believe that speaking a negative word is "judging," and therefore, they are "sinning" by saying it, which discourages any sort of discussion that would lead to leaven being cut out of the church.

Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees... Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.
-Matthew 16:6-12

Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:
-1 Corinthians 5:6-7

Instead of judging in charity, in meekness, without hypocrisy (i.e. judging ourselves first), as Jesus Christ taught us, most pastors find it to be more beneficial to their office of station if they simply brainwash the congregation to eliminate all judgment. That way, they will not have to answer any challenges to what they teach, nor will they have to be held accountable for the things they do.

Another verse that corrupt pastors misuse (i.e. to preach the false "*don't judge me*" message) is from Romans 14:

Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.
-Romans 14:4

This is another example of cherry-picking phrases out of a verse, ignoring the context, and creating a false doctrine out of it. This chapter is referring specifically to traditions of the Old Covenant, like eating habits, or sabbath days, and Paul says these are minor disputes that should not be fought over.

Let's start over in verse one to get the full context:

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.
-Romans 14:1-3

The context is that we ought not to judge minor issues that have nothing to do with moral goodness, like whether or not someone wants to eat bacon. Some people might be untempered to sins like gluttony, so to discipline themselves, they stick to a more rigid diet to put their flesh under subjection to the Word of God, and therefore, we ought not judge a man for such things because there is no moral law that anyone has broken for eating or not eating.

One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.
-Romans 14:5-6

Some Christians eat meat to exercise liberty in Christ, and other Christians do not eat meat to honor Christ. Both honor Christ, and so because neither has broken any moral laws or done any corrupt things, there is no way to judge them for their eating choices unless we created some other rule outside of the Gospel of the New Testament.

However, if someone is going to bring disputes into the church over such a matter that has no moral commandment in the New Testament, then we should not accept that contentious person into the church.

But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.
-1 Corinthians 11:16

We need to set ourselves apart from any person who comes into the church to cause contention over such things that carry no weight of importance. All faithful children of God are set at liberty in Christ to make those choices for themselves, and so when Paul poses the question about why we judge our brother, he is asking this context:

But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.
-Romans 14:10

This verse is not questioning judgment in the sense that the church should not be judging, but in this specific context, why should we judge on matters to which Christ gave us all liberty? That is a matter we should not judge because it is pointless to bring up disputes over things that God gives us freedom to choose for ourselves.

This is why Paul concludes:

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.
-Romans 14:13

This is another commonly cherry-picked verse because it is easy for corrupt preachers to take it out of context. Paul is telling the church that they should not judge in that way, but rather, they should judge righteous judgment in charity, namely, to consider whether or not what we say and do would cause another person in the church to struggle, or in other words, that we might cause them to have turmoil in themselves for doing something wrong, when they actually did nothing wrong.

This is why Paul goes on to explain that we should not suffer people in the church to speak evil of us for the things that we do honestly in the sight of God to honor Him:

Let not then your good be evil spoken of: For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.
-Romans 14:16-18

However, that does not mean that we do not judge righteous judgment among our brethren in the church. If a new member comes in, and starts teaching corrupt things, we need to discern it, and then speak up to rebuke it, but if we never judge the matter, we will never be able to spot false prophets and remove them.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.
-Matthew 7:15-20

Jesus Christ expects us to be cautious and on guard against false preachers, and should know them by what they say, teach, and do (i.e. their fruits), so how are we supposed to do that without judging what they say, teach, and do? You *MUST* judge righteous judgment in order to tell the difference between a child of God and a false prophet.

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences 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

How do you mark those who cause contention against the proper teachings of Christ if we do not judge they say and do? How are we supposed to know if a man is speaking deceptions with "good words and fair speeches," if we do not judge his words and speeches?

Even if there is a churchgoer or pastor who reads this teaching, and in their malice (because they hate righteous judgment) accuses me of being a corrupt preacher, they *HAD* to judge me in what I am teaching here in order to do that. Of course, that makes them hypocrites because they preach "don't judge," but then were quick to judge me. We cannot avoid judgment because it is a part of our daily lives, and it is a responsibility required of Christians, so we need to make sure we study the Word of God to have our discernment exercised to understand the difference between evil judgment and righteous judgment.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
-2 Timothy 2:15

Let's suppose you were at a church building that had a donation box in the back, and you saw one of the members of the church sneak over to the box, take some money out of it, and put that money in his pocket; what would you do? Of course, you do not know the exact reason he did it, but please note that if you address the man, or even report to someone else that he did it, you are judging the man because you have already detected potential wrongdoing, discerning good from evil, and have taken action to stop evil.

The Bible teaches us that it is a good deed if we seek righteous judgment:

Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.
-Isaiah 1:17

In the first chapter of Isaiah, God is rebuking Jerusalem, instructing them to judge righteous judgment, which we can see by the phrase "judge the fatherless," meaning that children who have no father would be in need of help, and that if we judge righteous judgment (i.e. the discern the truth from the lies), charity should be given unto them. Yet, because Jerusalem threw away righteous judgment, they turned into a city of harlots and murderers.

How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.
-Isaiah 1:21

The Lord God added that Jerusalem (i.e. Zion) would be redeemed with righteous judgment:

Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.
-Isaiah 1:27

When God walked together with Abraham toward Sodom and Gomorrah, He looked favorably on the fact that Abraham and His children would judge righteous judgment:

And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.
-Genesis 18:17-19

God has declared that judging others includes charity to orphans, widows, and strangers:

For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.
-Deuteronomy 10:17-19

Because of the false doctrines being preached from most pulpits around the world, most churchgoers have no clue that it is impossible to "love thy neighbour as thyself" without judgment.

Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.
-Leviticus 19:18

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.
-Matthew 22:37-40

When Solomon was given an offer by God to have whatever he asked for, Solomon asked for understanding so he could judge righteous judgment.

Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?
-1 Kings 3:9

If it was wrong for Solomon to judge anyone or anything, as so many corrupt preachers and leavened churchgoers keep telling us, then why did God not rebuke him for it? In reality, God was very pleased with Solomon's request:

And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.
-1 Kings 3:10-12

Having the greatest wisdom of God among all mankind, Solomon wrote that judgment (i.e. discernment between right and wrong) was a gift from God:

*To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;
-Proverbs 1:2-3*

King David, Solomon's father, also judged righteous judgment:

*And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people.
-2 Samuel 8:15*

David prayed that God would teach him good judgment:

*Teach me good judgment and knowledge; for I have believed thy commandments.
-Psalm 119:66*

God has said He will guide the meek to judge righteous judgment:

*Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way.
-Psalm 25:8-9*

God has declared that we are blessed if we continue to judge righteous judgment:

*Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.
-Psalm 106:3*

In fact, God has stated that good judgment is more acceptable to Him than sacrifices:

*To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.
-Proverbs 21:3*

And this is because the Lord God loves judgment:

*For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
-Isaiah 61:8*

So why do so many pastors and churchgoers hate judgment? The Scripture answers that too:

*This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.
-Matthew 15:8*

Churchgoers love to go into their church building and passionately sing songs about Jesus, and profess how much they follow Him in His Word, but inwardly, their hearts want nothing to do with His doctrine. In Amos chapter five, God said some things that most churchgoers today do not want to hear:

*I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies.
-Amos 5:21*

Some readers may find it strange that God, who appointed the Jews' feast days and solemn assemblies, would hate the very things He told them to do. Why? Let's keep reading:

Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts.
-Amos 5:22

The Lord God instructed them to do these things, so why would He reject them? Let's keep reading:

Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.
-Amos 5:23

The Lord God told the Jews to sing praises unto Him (Psa 47:6), so why would He tell them to stop? Let's keep reading:

But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.
-Amos 5:24

The Lord God hated their songs and traditions because they were all for show. They had no repentance (i.e. godly sorrow) for their wrongdoing, and simply did these things as an outward show of so-called "holiness." He hated the fact that they rejected righteous judgment, which is exactly what we see in most church buildings today.

During their apostleship, Peter and John were performing miracles of healing, helping the poor and needy, and the Pharisees, Sadducees, priests, and scribes all hated it because it took preeminence (i.e. the honor and respect they received among the people) away from them. The higher religious and governmental powers of Israel did what they could to shut them up, commanding them not to preach Jesus Christ to the people, and making them out to be common criminals, but Peter and John turned to the people and told them to judge the matter for themselves.

But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.
-Acts 4:17-19

If judging were this horrible sin, as many pastors and churchgoers claim, then why would Peter and John tell the people to sin? There is no sin in discerning truth from lies, right from wrong, and good from evil, but there is sin in lying to people by calling that which is good an "evil" thing.

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!
-Isaiah 5:20-21

Again, we judge matters all the time, every day, everywhere we go. We judge the temperature of our bath water. We judge if milk has gone bad. We judge what we would wear based on how hot or cold it is outside. If we did not judge all these things, we would end up dead very quickly.

Not just ourselves, but if we did not judge our surroundings properly, we would end up killing others. For example, when you see pedestrians on a crosswalk, you automatically slow down your vehicle to let them pass, but if you stopped judging things, you would end up driving over them, which is a horrifying thought.



This is just one of countless examples, but the important thing to take away from this teaching is that the peace of God is known through righteous judgment from His Word:

Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.
-Isaiah 59:7-8

For those who hate righteous judgment, darkness and blindness awaits:

Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men. We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us... and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.
-Isaiah 59:9-15

I receive judgment every week in many various emails I receive, or forum posts made, but the insane part about it is that the very people who accuse me of being "judgmental," are judging me, but completely blind to it. They judge me, claim judging is wrong, then accuse me of judging them, which is fallacy and childishness that is hard to explain in words.

For example, in my email archives, I have a letter written to me by a man named Jorge (*hoar-hey*), in which he told me that Christians should not debate other religions (and he gave examples like Catholics and Anglicans), but then invited me to debate with him. (I know that sounds unbelievable, but he said, "[The Bible] does not tell us to go into all the world and debate Catholicism... but you are welcome to debate and tell me personally of your personal experience.") He started out his letter telling me, "your method of evangelization is low and reproachable," and then concluded by telling me, "You are an hypocritical, judgmental, pharisee."

As you can see, Jorge started out with all sorts of judgments about my ministry, but then hypocritically told me that I was a hypocrite, and judged that I was judgmental. This is what is sometimes referred to as "projection," which is when a man who has done wrong accuses someone else of the wrong he has done, so it takes the attention off of himself.

As far as I am aware, I have never accused anyone of being "judgmental" because judging matters is a good thing. However, I have accused a number of people of judging in hypocrisy, which is exactly what Jorge did because he did not like the fact that I preached the truth about the corruptions of the Catholic Church, and I now have a full-length book on the subject, which is free-to-read here at creationliberty.com, called *Corruptions of Christianity: Catholicism*.

I receive these kinds of emails frequently, in which people hypocritically judge in unrighteousness (i.e. not according to truth and reason), but when someone judges our actions and words, our first inclination should be to listen objectively to what they are saying because, after all, even our enemies can be right sometimes, and so we need to make sure we hear the truth, even if it comes from a source we may not like. If the accusations they make against us are true, we should consider the matter and change our ways so we can be right with the Word of God; however, if their accusations are not true, and contradict the Word of God, then we should rebuke them for their sakes, that they might come to understanding of Scripture, and if they will not hear, then we can pray blessings for their families and depart in peace, sanctifying ourselves for the sake of Christ.

(Read "[The Biblical Understanding of Sanctification](#)" here at creationliberty.com for more details about Christians setting themselves apart, or sanctifying themselves, from others.)

Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

-1 Peter 3:8-9

Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

-Luke 6:28

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

-Ephesians 5:11

But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

-Matthew 15:13-14

There is no need for you to be ashamed or embarrassed to judge matters, but rather, we who are of Christ should ask ourselves, "Are we judging righteously by discerning the facts and comparing them to the Word of God for verification?" If we continue to judge righteous judgment, examining ourselves first (lest we be hypocrites), rebuking error and condemning evil, then we do that which is pleasing in the sight of the Lord.

I urge Christians to consider that, when judging matters concerning others, you always remember charity, that we would love our neighbor as ourselves. Remember the pit we were stuck in before Christ saved us, and then we will know better how to answer every man.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

-Matthew 7:12

Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.

-Isaiah 51:1

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

-1 Peter 3:15