

Judging With Righteous Judgment

The ability to reason from observable evidences to reach a conclusion is God-given. The ability to reason manifests itself every time we make a judgment about a person or action. However, judgment is so serious a responsibility that there are admonitions in scriptures warning us to judge with righteous judgment. Jesus Himself warns, "*Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment*" (John 7:24). Jesus' statement implies that mankind will make judgments from time to time. These judgments are to be based upon whether or not it is acceptable to God.

Peter and John challenged the Sanhedrin to judge if it was right to obey God rather than man (Acts 4:19). Paul asked the Corinthians the rhetorical question, "*Do not ye judge them that are within?*" (1 Corinthians 5:12). He then instructs Christians not to go to law against one another but to let brethren judge in any legal dispute that may arise (1 Corinthians 6:1-8). In 1 Corinthians 10:15, Paul continues by saying, "*I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.*" He then charges the brethren to judge whether it is correct for a Christian woman to pray to God unveiled (1 Corinthians 11:13). It is undeniable that men can and do make judgments.

Jesus warns us about making judgments that are unrighteous (Matthew 7:1-2). Jesus' warning is that the measure you use to judge others is the measure He will use to judge you (cf. Romans 2:1). The failure to judge righteous judgment hinders the cause of Christ. It causes non-Christians to view Christians as hypocrites. Like it or not, the Bible says that we have to make judgments -- but they had better be righteous judgments.

Adapted From Glen Young