

Judge Nothing Before the Time

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"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God ..." ~ I Corinthians 4:3-5

WARNING AGAINST PREMATURE JUDGMENT

We are premature in our judgments. We make passing judgments on ourselves and others before God has completed His work in us. We must realize that there is an appointed time for the inspection of God's finished product, but it is not now.

Paul tells us plainly,

"Therefore judge nothing before the time ..." (:5).

GOD HAS NOT FINISHED HIS WORK

We must always be mindful that each one of us is God's work.

Paul calls us *"the work of God"* in Romans 14:20. He calls us *"His workmanship"* in Ephesians 2:10. Day by day He is making out of us what He wants us to be. He is the master-workman, and we are His masterpieces. He has the ages in which to accomplish His work, and He will do so successfully.

"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6).

DO NOT BE TEMPTED TO PLAY JUDGE

Judgment here belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ alone. He is the only one so qualified. The Father has committed to Him sole judgment.

*“For the Father judgeth no man, but hath **committed all judgment unto the Son**”*
(John 5:22).

*“Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness **by that man whom He hath ordained** ...”* (Acts 17:31).

*“... It is He **which was ordained of God to be the Judge** of the quick and dead”*
(Acts 10:42).

*“For we must all appear before **the judgment seat of Christ** ...”* (II Corinthians 5:10).

*“... The Lord Jesus Christ, **Who shall judge** the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom”* (II Timothy 4:1).

*“In the day when **God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ** according to my gospel”* (Romans 2:16).

WE ARE NOT TO JUDGE OURSELVES

“I judge not mine own self” (:3)

When we judge ourselves we are actually passing judgment upon God’s work and ability in us. In faith we need to rest, not in our abilities, but in His capacity to carry out His own work in us. This is why Paul would not pass judgment upon himself.

WE ARE TO BE UNAFFECTED BY THE JUDGMENT OF OTHERS

“But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment ...” (:3).

Others may choose to judge us. However sincere their actions may be, or appear to be, we are not to be affected by this. When we, like Paul, walk before the Lord their verdicts will be a “*very small thing*” in our sight. In fact, if we are concerned about their opinions, it will have a hindering effect on God’s work in us.

“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Galatians 1:10).

Thus, we have Paul's instruction,

"Let no man therefore judge you ..." (Colossians 2:16).

WE ARE NOT TO JUDGE OTHERS

We must walk in faith and see our brothers as who they really are. They are a new creation – the work and workmanship of God. We must not be party to the judgment of God's work.

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? ..." (Romans 14:4).

"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).

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more ..." (Romans 14:13).

We must always remember that God is busy at work in His own creation. We can rest completely in *"the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will"* (Ephesians 1:11). We can rest in this for ourselves, as well as for others.

We are all like a building under construction, a painting yet wet and unfinished, a tapestry still being woven, a tree that has yet to reach maturity. We must with patience await the Master's grand completion.

We would all do well to follow Paul's instruction to,

"... Judge nothing before the time ..." (:5).

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