

Jn 7:24 Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

Context of Jesus healing on Sabbath, and men's judgment against him.

Appearance vs. Righteous – The way things appear is **not** the proper deciding factor.

Work on the Sabbath was wrong, circumcision on Sabbath was right, but some judged healing on Sabbath – not in the law or their writings, was wrong because it APPEARED to be contrary to the law and wrong.

It's wrong to judge by appearance --- because it is colored by what WE want.

Examples: **Samuel and David**

1 Samuel 16:7 – “But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.”

Poor man, rich man –

James 2:1-4 – “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?”

Judge: Greek – to separate, to select, to choose – hence to determine.

Websters: To form an opinion based on careful weighing of evidence and testing of premises.

We look, we compare, we make up our mind, we decide and that decision in turn leads to some **action, or inaction**, on our part.

We just can't NOT judge – not have opinions, not take action.

Often we ask “what's safe”. We might say “don't judge” in order to be safe.

But, we can't do this though.

We ARE to make decisions. We MUST judge on occasion.

Love requires an active participation on our part both to judge and to forgive.

Church in Corinth did not do this

1 Cor 5:1-2 – “It is reported commonly *that there is* fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.”

The Lord said they were “puffed up” thinking more of themselves.

Hurt the church not to judge

1 Cor 5:6,7 - “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:”

They might have been thinking how open minded they were, but Lord warned of LEAVEN.

A Qualification for elders:

Titus 1:9-11 “Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. 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 sake.”

Stop the mouths of the gainsayers else they subvert whole houses. Elders need to JUDGE this.

Matt 7:6 – “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.”

Give not that which is holy to dogs – how do we determine this? We need to judge.

Yet, judgment has consequences – consequences for us.

We ought **not** rush into judgment, we need to be careful, the immediately preceding verses:

Mt 7:1-5 – “Judge not, that ye be not judged. ²For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. ³And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? ⁴Or 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? ⁵Thou 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.”

No deterrent to RIGHTEOUS judgment.

No matter how we judge, or don’t judge - the Lord **will** judge us RIGHTEOUSLY, no getting away from that.

So what judgment MIGHT we escape? Harsh judgment!

Judgment with mercy or without mercy! - the point of this lesson.

V3-4 Notes that people have an inclination to look at others, and not themselves.

That’s why the caution about judging – we may not be accurate.

Our desires and prejudices affect our judgment.

V5 – we must see clearly to judge righteously as the Lord would have us do.

We must LEARN to see clearly.

To **learn** to see clearly we need to practice by getting our own house in order.

We should avoid a rush to judgment before we are ready.

Beautifully illustrated in scripture

John 8:3-7 – “And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; ...

Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? ...

said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.”

Jesus decided, he judged and he had mercy.

Did Jesus do wrong?

He was under the law of Moses. God forbid.

What would you have done?
Would you have judged as the scribes and Pharisees?
Or as Jesus did?

Judgment, **Righteous** judgment, is complicated, look at the situation:

V2 Jesus was **surrounded** by people who were watching
He had to set the proper example for those watching.
Adultery is bad shouldn't we set a DETERRENT?
By not accusing are we CONDONING adultery.
Did Jesus do wrong? God forbid!

As we judge, we shall be judged.
God WILL judge us, and He will judge righteously, what **choice** does He have?
He has the choice of MERCY!

Do we want to be judged **without** mercy?

This is difficult to wrestle with, the idea of mercy affecting judgment.
What makes it difficult is that we must choose and we may be wrong.
And choose we must.

Jesus said as much. That yes, judgment and mercy are balanced against each other.
It is something we must learn.

Mt 9:10-13 – “And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? ¹²But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. ¹³But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

Jesus eating with publicans and sinners – something the Pharisees thought wrong.
Jesus response: They need to learn of mercy. Guess what? We do to!

Hos 6:6 – “For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.”

Mercy, not sacrifice; knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. OT saying!

Which is easier to decide on: Sacrifice, written in Leviticus – or to decide to have mercy?
To study and learn of God, or to light off a burnt offering?
To do something simple and repetitive we've done before, OR
Make a decision. Tough to make decisions – we might be wrong, people might blame us, but we must do as our Lord has done.

Mercy is compassion, forbearance – refraining from enforcing something – not taking an action we are justified in taking.

Charity must be the driving motivation, love for the other, wanting their good above your own.
it is the KEY factor in balancing JUDGEMENT and MERCY.

Out of love we do not require the thing that is due us – we temper or soften our opinion – our judgment.

Rom 13:10 “Love works no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”

What did scribes and Pharisees want to do – fulfill the law.

Old law “Eye for Eye”

New law “Love, mercy”

Jesus demonstrated his understanding of this love to the woman caught in adultery.
Whose good was he seeking? Was she better off dead? Or forgiven?

This is something we **must** learn, something we **must** work at.

We can not continue to walk in darkness because we're too lazy to turn on the light.

Jn 8:12 “I am the light of the word: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, “

To follow – to be like him

Luke 6:40 – “The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.”

How would love change our judgment, our opinion?

Well, Who are we thinking of? Ourselves or others?

John 13:34-35 – “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ³⁵By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

A new commandment, by this we **know** we are his disciples

When do we extend mercy?

Am **I** better off for strictly following the law and requirements? – adulation of others - Rehoboam
Is the **other** better off for strictly following the law and requirements?

Was the woman better off dead – or forgiven?

Are we thinking of ourselves or others?

Who are we supposed to be like?

Php 2:3-5 – “*Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.* ⁴*Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.* ⁵ *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*”

Let this mind be in you, think of others

Eph 4:29-32 – “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. ³⁰And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. ³¹Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be

put away from you, with all malice: ³²And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

In our dealings with each other, how must we be?

No corrupt communication – that which will tear down or to destroy.
Rather, good to EDIFICATION – to build up.

Is that what our speech accomplishes in our brethren?

If not, **V30** we grieve the Holy Spirit

V31 – it's not our brother or sister, it's US that should put away bitterness wrath.

V32 – Does he say, Be FIRM! Be right! Don't compromise Don't back down!
No! Be Kind, tenderhearted, forgiving – be as God!

But, must we always forgive?

**Just as judging without mercy can be wrong,
it can be wrong to extend mercy when it is not justified.**

We must judge as God judges, by what is **best for them, and others.**

BUT AGAIN HERE WE MUST JUDGE!

We must examine and decide and we might be wrong.

And that's the hard part

Do we forgive without discrimination? No!

With Judgment comes Forgiveness, brought on by Mercy, brought on by Charity, our love for another that seeks another's good above our own.

Is it good for us to forgive someone, but allow them to **die**?

Ephesians 4:22 – "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;"

We need to put off the OLD MAN which is corrupt

What if one hasn't done this?

What if one is still lying, or wrathful, or stealing or giving in to the devil in some other way?

What does the Lord require for his forgiveness?

Repentance – a change of mind.

What should we require? More? Less?

Luke 17:3,4 – "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. ⁴And 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."

The goal is summed up here:

Rom 15:1-7 – “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.² Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification.³ For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.⁴ For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.⁵ Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:⁶ That ye may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁷ Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.”

1. Our goal should not be to please ourselves, but to please our neighbor for THEIR good to build THEM up (Romans 15:1-3); using Christ and the scriptures as our example.
2. This takes study on our part (Romans 15:4-5); and encouragement from the scriptures and from God.
3. Strive for a SPIRIT OF UNITY as this glorifies God (Romans 15:5-6) and brings praise to Him (Romans 15:7).

Act as HE did, giving himself for the good of others.

That is why we are here, to learn this.

Love, Agape, requires an active participation on our part. We must JUDGE, decide both to rebuke and to forgive our brothers and sisters for their best good.

Romans 13:10 – “Love works no ill to his neighbor, Love is the fulfilling of the law”

The greatest ill is to be lost forever, to be eternally separated by our sins from God.

INVITATION

Rom 14:7-9 – “For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.⁸ For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.⁹ For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.”

We don’t live or die to ourselves, we are the Lord’s whether we acknowledge that or not. Lord of dead and living.

But the good news is that Christ died for us, and rose and went up to heaven. He’s the Lord – he’s the Judge that we’ll all stand before.

Do you believe that?

Will you start living for Him, to please him, to love others as He loved us?

If so, Hallelujah! You’ve repented. Your old man, the old man of the flesh and self service is dead. You are a new man, you want to walk a new path. But don’t cart that dead old man around with you, come bury him in the waters of baptism, to rise and walk in newness of life.