

Should We Make Judgments?

By Ron Boatwright

There are those who say, "Oh, you are judging". But the one who says this is guilty of doing what he has just accused you of doing, judging. Jesus does say, "Judge not that you be not judged" (Matthew 7:1). Judge here means to condemn with harsh and rash judgment when all the facts are not known. It is bitter fault finding that Jesus is condemning. But we all must form opinions based on facts. Jesus says, "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24). Jesus tells us we are to make righteous judgments.

Saying that we are not to make righteous judgments is a doctrine of Satan and not of Christ. Satan does not want us to make any kind of judgments. We have to make judgments to prevent our being misled by false teachers. Jesus says, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:15-16). Jesus is also telling us to be fruit inspectors which requires that we make certain judgments about others.

Satan also wants us to leave those alone who are lost in sin. If we could not make judgments, we would not be able to know if a person is lost and in need of being taught the gospel. If we could not make judgments, we would not be able to know if a brother or sister "wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20). But the Bible says, "if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness" (Galatians 6:1). We have to make judgments.

But as our Lord commands, let us not make rash and harsh judgments without knowing the facts, but let us make righteous judgments.