

“Judge Not That Ye Be Not Judged”

by Bill Crews

continued from page 2

Jesus said, *“I can of myself do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is righteous; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me”* (John 5:30).

Jesus also said, *“Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment”* (John 7:24).

Paul wrote, *“For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged him that hath so wrought this things”* (1 Cor. 5:3 — he was speaking of the brother that had taken and was living with his father’s wife in fornication).

“For what have I to do with judging them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within?” (1 Cor. 5:12).

“Or know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?” (1 Cor. 6:2).

If Jesus were forbidding all judging, then how could a congregation exercise discipline toward members walking in sin? (1 Cor. 5:4-5, 6, 13; Rom. 16:17; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14; 1 Tim. 5:20; Titus 3:10). A church must judge its members; parents must judge their children; teachers must judge their students; authorities in a state must judge its citizens; jurors and judges must judge those accused of crimes; employers must judge their employees. And, friend, as you go through life you will be called upon or you will decide to do much judging — be sure that it is always righteous judgment.

And why did Jesus say, *“He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her”*? (Jn. 8:7) He said that to certain scheming and hypocritical scribes and Pharisees who were making trial of him by bringing that adulterous woman unto him just to see what He would say, hoping to find fault with His answer that they might use it against Him. They did not care about God’s law being respected, or justice being done — then why bring the matter to Jesus, and why not also bring the man with whom she committed adultery (according to the law of Moses, both parties were to be stoned, not just the woman — so where was the equally guilty man?). Jesus knew their hearts and the record of their lives — they were not only sinners, but the sort that would not correct their own sins. We pervert the passage severely if we take it out its context and try to make it forbid rebuke and punishment under all circumstances. If that were its meaning; then parents could not rebuke and punish their children; school officials could not rebuke and punish students, the state could not accuse, convict and punish law-breakers; companies could not rebuke and punish employees; churches could not rebuke and punish impenitent members.

301403