

Judge, Jury, and Executioner? continued

by Wayne Goff

before you become harsh, critical, unforgiving, and unloving in your actions!

John 7:24

“Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.” Again, Jesus is not forbidding judgment, but He is forbidding *unrighteous, or unfair judgment!* In the context of **John 7**, we see Jesus’ enemies accusing Him of having a demon because He worked miracles and taught the proper understanding, application and fulfillment of the Old Law, which they did not like (**vv. 19-23**). So Jesus warns them, and us, about investigating someone’s argument or claim before condemning them for it just because it does not suit your preconceived ideas! How many times have you rejected someone’s argument or logic just because you didn’t like the person, or you disagreed with their position? We are not saying accept everyone, but we are saying “Let’s investigate the situation further. Let’s not make rash judgments.”

Matthew 5:7

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” This is one of Jesus’ beatitudes, or kingdom pointers, and describes the disposition of those who should enter His kingdom, the church! Are you, dear reader, harshly critical of others, or are you merciful in your judgment of them. It does make a difference! Again, with **what judgment** you judge, **you will be judged!** If you want God’s mercy and grace, then start learning to extend such to others.

Seventy Times Seven?

In **Matthew 18**, Peter came to the Lord and asked Him how *often* he should forgive his brother who sins against him. Peter suggested seven times, and that sounds reasonable since seven is the “perfect number.” But Jesus blew Peter’s mind when he said “*seventy times seven*”! And Jesus demonstrated it on the cross when He prayed to the Father to *forgive* His murderers (**Lk. 23:34**)!

Jesus told the parable of a servant who was forgiven of a large debt by his master (**vv. 23-27**) because of the master’s *compassion*. That very same servant then went out and *without compassion or mercy* **demanded** from a fellow servant that he pay his small debt, and threw him into prison when he could not (**vv. 28-30**)! When the master heard this, he called the forgiven servant to him and said: “...*You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?*” (**vv. 32-33**). And Jesus did not leave us without a personal application: “*So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses*” (**v. 35**). How many problems in the church, in the community, and in the home could be solved if we would take this lesson to heart! **Forgive your brother or sister from your heart — don’t pack up and leave, taking all your emotional baggage with you!** But no, we would rather have our “pound of flesh” and feel justified in our anger.

Ephesians 4:2-3

“With all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Toward whom, dear brethren, do you think God wants us to be long-suffering, forbearing, and loving? **Your brethren**, especially those in the local church! **Colossians 3:12-13** says the same thing: “*Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*”

And there is **so much more** to be said about it!

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Roanridge Reader Volume 37 Issue 08 Page 02