

Who Are You To Judge?

Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life!

(1 Corinthians 6:2-3 – ESV)

Judge not, that you be not judged (Matthew 7:1). This verse has become the hue and cry of heretics and backsliders everywhere, not to mention secular scam artists and those who might think they are saved but only become bible scholars when their freedom to sin is challenged.

The next time someone tries to use Matthew 7:1 as some sort of defense for irresponsibility, heresy, or wickedness, show them these verses from 1 Corinthians 6.

They might say, “Yeah, but that isn’t what those verses are talking about.” To which I would say, “Exactly, and that is what I am trying to tell you about Matthew 7:1, so thanks for making my point for me”. I might also say, “Who are you to judge what I think they mean?” Hopefully they can see that we are indeed supposed to judge some things, like the application of these verses. Otherwise no one can even communicate with each other in any meaningful way.

These verses mean a particular thing, they apply not universally, but specifically, and principally, and that is the point. Matthew 7:1 is not a blanket statement against discernment, discretion, distinction, and determination of right and wrong. It is about being hypocritical, which ironically, those who use this verse as a universal prohibition against “judging” are guilty of themselves. Obviously we must make some distinctions. That requires *judging* things.

Of course you can also bring them to 1 Corinthians 5:12, “*For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge?*”

The whole idea that we are not supposed to judge ideas, behavior, doctrine, faith and practice is more than ludicrous, it is lawlessness. Indeed, in the same chapter Jesus tells us that we will recognize false teachers by their fruit (Mathew 7:20). In other words we are all judges.