

Judging Others & Respect for the Holy

MATTHEW 7:1-6

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Heavenly King,
Advocate, Spirit of Truth,
Who are everywhere present and fill all things,
Treasury of Blessings, Bestower of Life,
Come, and dwell within us;
Cleanse us of all that defiles us,
And, O Good One, save our souls.

One of the most misinterpreted verses of the Bible today: **“Judge not, that you be not judged.”** – taken out of context (7:1-3)

- ❑ Leo Tolstoy
- ❑ **Unbelievers** use it against Christians – “Don’t judge me”
- ❑ **Christians** –also misinterpret and misuse.
- ❑ **Problem:** Word can mean: evaluation, ensorship, condemnation

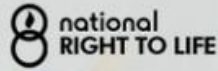
Judging Others





What is Jesus saying?

- Is it wrong to judge a cake-baking contest?
- Talent competitions?
- Athletic competitions?
- Is it wrong for students to write tests, evaluate them, and give marks?
- Is it wrong to evaluate someone apply for a job?
- What about job reviews?
- Do employers and a right to correct their employees if they are doing a bad job?
- All of these things require judgments.**



life

is precious

Are we judging when we say...

- Abortion is wrong.
- Euthanasia is a sin.
- Living together before marriage is wrong.
- Adultery is wrong.
- Stealing is an offence against God and neighbour.
- Lying and cheating is unacceptable behavior.
- NO. BECAUSE GOD HAS JUDGED THESE THINGS FOR US.**

What about the Church?



In the list of Spiritual Works of Mercy we have:

- Admonish the sinner.
- Instruct the ignorant.

Participation in Another's Sin:

- By failing to discipline for the sin committed.
- By remaining silent about the sin committed.
- By consenting to the sin.

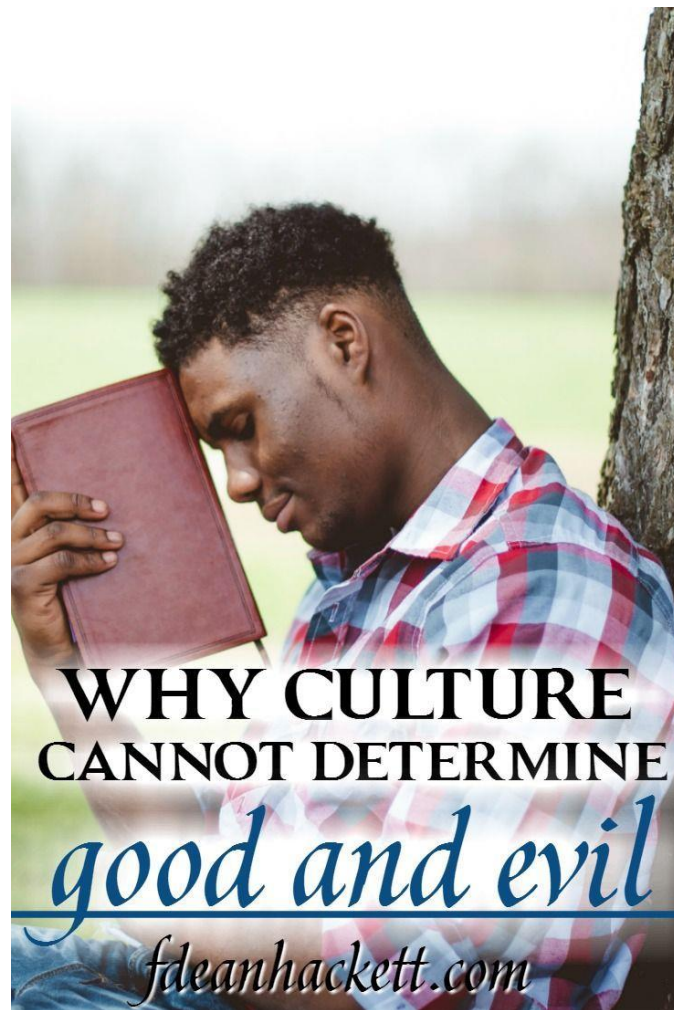
All of the above require us to judge, evaluate and to correct.

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

Edmund Burke

We can judge the sin, but not the sinner

- ❑ God determines what is good and evil.
- ❑ We can judge sin objectively. God has done that for us.
- ❑ We cannot judge the sinner **subjectively** – i.e. assess/determine/judge whether a person is *good* or *bad*, and the degree of their guilt or responsibility. We don't see the heart.
- ❑ **Only God can judge subjectively** – God alone knows the heart, the life story and the spiritual condition.



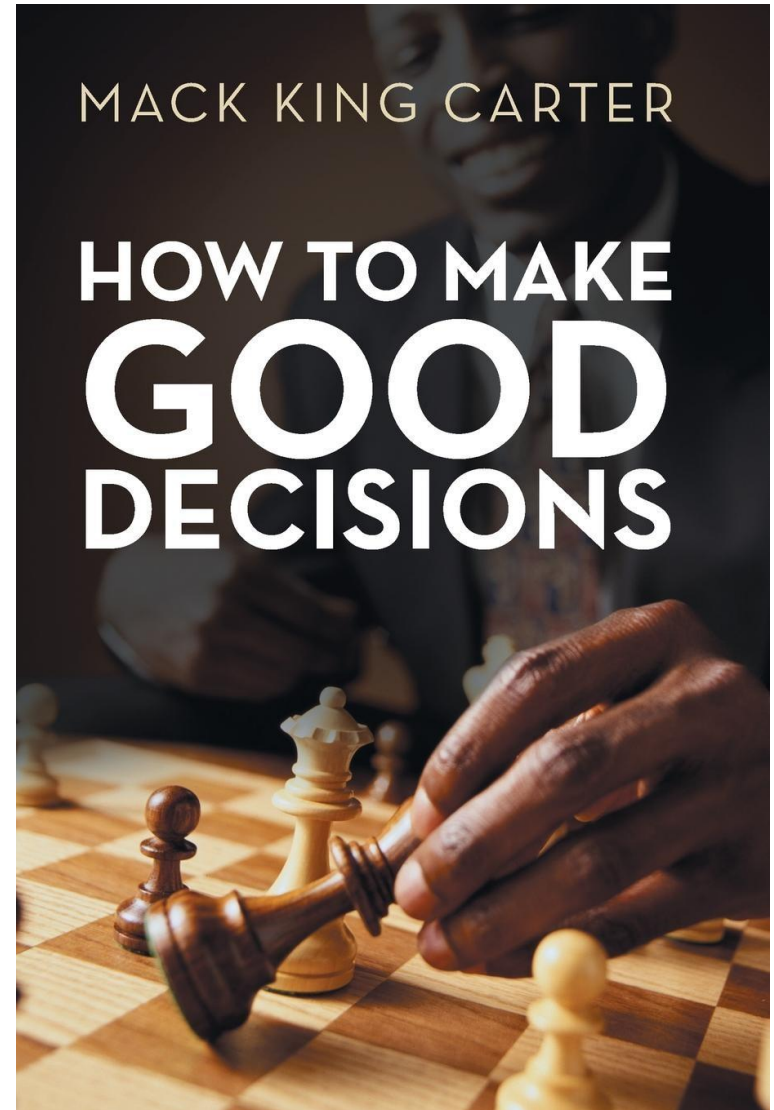
When are we guilty of “judging” when ...

- ❑ **Judge (correct) in the spirit of self-righteousness** – putting others down, tearing them down, condemning, harshly criticizing from elevated platform.
- ❑ **We hope to elevate ourselves** – satisfaction in seeing faults or flaws of others
- ❑ **We judge with hypocrisy** – we ourselves are guilty of that sin
- ❑ **We refuse to forgive**
- ❑ **We make rash judgments**



Making good judgments...

- ❑ Make sure you have all the facts
- ❑ Self-judgment comes first. Am I free from hypocrisy?
- ❑ What is my motivation and my attitude?
- ❑ Who is responsible for making the correction? Am I responsible?
- ❑ What's the right thing to do?
- ❑ Avoid gossip or slander.



Respect for the Holy (7:6)

- ❑ Dogs = mostly scavengers;
Pigs – considered unclean
- ❑ Hebrew word for **holy** is *kadosh* (K D SH)
- ❑ Aramaic word for **ear-ring** is *kadasha* (K D SH)
- ❑ Original saying may have been: “Do not give an *ear-ring* to dogs; nor throw your *pearls* before swine.
- ❑ A derogatory Jewish saying for pagans (Gentiles)
- ❑ Jesus may have changed it to apply to Jews and Gentiles
- ❑ **What is holy?**



For Reflection and Consideration

- Do I understand the difference between objective judgments and subjective judgments?
- Do I correct others when necessary? Or do I avoid it?
- Am I open to correction? Do I welcome it?
- How do I correct others? My spouse? My children? My co-workers? My friends?
- Have I labelled anyone as “good” or “bad”?
- What is my attitude towards the homeless and people with addictions on the streets?