

Judge Nothing Before the Time

We would be much better off if we released all judgment into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ, who truly is the only righteous judge. He alone has the ability to see into the hearts of men, and He alone knows the rest of the story. Jesus knows the secret motivations of every heart. We can judge men's actions, but we can never judge their motivations because only Jesus knows what makes a man do something. The day will come when Jesus will judge the secret counsels of the hearts of men. At that time He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and every man will receive his just reward.

A time of judgment is coming, and if we busy ourselves with getting our own act together, we will not have time to be criticizing or judging others. We are all still under construction, and God is not finished with any of us yet. We are being conformed daily to the image of Christ Jesus, and we often fall short of the glory of God. We need to learn to be patient with one another because the author and finisher of our faith is not finished with our lives yet.

Often I see things I do not like in others. One of my greatest weaknesses is judging those who judge others. I have a hard time loving critical, judgmental people, yet I know God loves them as much as He loves me.

Just recently we had an experience that taught me a good lesson. We were traveling with a couple to Florida, and suddenly our discussion centered upon one man in our church. Several negative things were said about this man when the wife of the other couple stopped this conversation in its tracks. She asked, "What do you like about So-and-So? Are there any qualities you see in him that are Christlike?" We began to meet this challenge, and each of us came up with many good characteristics and qualities of this person whom we shortly

before were criticizing.

Since this conversation, I have learned when I begin to think negatively about someone to stop immediately and begin to think about the good things I see in this person. Suddenly my negative, critical thoughts dissolve as I begin to praise the Lord for knowing this person. Each of us is of great value in the kingdom because, after all, Jesus bought us with His very own blood.

Lord, help me to see others as You see them. You saw each person born on this earth as a person worth dying for. Who am I to criticize someone whom You esteemed so highly? Help me to esteem others higher than myself.

1 Corinthians 4:1-21 Whenever we judge others we are exalting ourselves into a position reserved only for Jesus Christ. Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith, and only He knows the rest of the story of any person's life. Paul says he cannot without flaw even judge himself. Paul clearly states that the One who judges him is the Lord.

**READ: Ezra 7:1-8:20; 1 Corinthians 4:1-21; Psalm 30:1-12;
Proverbs 20:28-30**