

October 25, 2020 Faith Under Fire Pt 8

A Peacemaker Not A Troublemaker

Stop Playing Judge...The Job Is Already Filled

Key Marks of a Spiritual Mature Person:

Chapter 1: A Mature Person Is Positive Under Pressure

Chapter 2: A Mature Person Puts Their Faith Into Action

Chapter 3: A Mature Person Has Power Over Their Tongue

Chapter 4: A Mature Person Is A Peacemaker Not A Troublemaker

Chapter 5: A Mature Person Is Patient And Prayerful

Portions of this message adapted from:

- * The Holy Bible. Biblegateway.com. CSB & NLB
- * Dr. Thomas Constable. <https://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/james.pdf>
- * Hiebert, D. Edmond. *The Epistle of James: Tests of a Living Faith*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1979.
- * Mayor, Joseph B. *The Epistle of St. James. Limited Classical Reprint Library series*. 1892; reprint ed. Minneapolis: Klock and Klock Christian Publishers, 1977.
- * Moo, Douglas. J. Tyndale NT Commentary. Erdmans.
- * Opperman, Mark. *Mark Opperman*. <https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/the-tragedy-of-trash-talk-mark-opperman-sermon-on-communication-speech-146744>
- * Kurt A. Richardson. *James*. New American Commentary. Vol. 36..
- * James M. Stulac. *James*. IVP NT Commentary.
- * Schaeufele, Mark. <https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/who-s-the-judge-mark-schaeufele-sermon-on-judging-226603>.
- * Rick Warren: *How To Quit Playing God*. Pt 11. Developing a Faith that Works.
- * Warren Wiersbe. *The Bible Exposition Commentary Vol. 2. James*. P. 366-370

James 4:11,12...¹¹ *Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.* ¹² *There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?* (NIV)

4:11 **To slander** speak evil, malign) <2635> καταλαλέω katalaleo

Meaning: to speak evil of, malign, speaking disparagingly of.

To Judge... κρίνω krino {kree'-no} **Meaning:** 1) to judge or decide; to pronounce judgment, to act the part of judges or arbiters in matters of common life, or pass judgment on the deeds and words of others 6)

to rule, govern **Usage:** AV - judge 88, determine 7, condemn 5, go to law 2, call in question 2, esteem 2, misc 8; 114

There is a difference between slanderous judging and godly discernment, accountability and civil responsibility!

4:12 James was speaking of judging other people without divine authorization to do so, since "there is only one Lawgiver and Judge." Obviously God has delegated the responsibility of judging some civil acts to human governments, some church conduct to elders, and the behavior of children to their parents. Similarly, Christians who are walking by the Spirit, who observe other Christians overtaken by some fault, should seek to restore them in love, not ignore them (Gal. 6:1). (Constable. [HTTPS://PLANOBIBLECHAPEL.ORG/TCON/NOTES/PDF/JAMES.PDF](https://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/james.pdf))

- It is not judging to use the Bible and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in discerning the truthfulness someone's character or teaching and speaking to them about it. (Just remember the verse...Speak the truth in love...Ephesians 4:15)
- It is not judging (slanderous judging) when a person of authority (Judges, etc) carries out legal justice on someone who has broken the law (biblical or civil)

It is judging when you take on the role of judge, (i.e. Play God) by passing judgment on another person without with slanderous and hurtful talk,

The Bible clear and in agreement about judging...

Matthew 7:1-5... *"Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.* (ESV)

Romans 2:1-3...Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? (ESV)

Don't Judge Someone Just Because They Sin Differently Than You

Some portions adapted from Rick Warren. How To Quit Playing God. Developing A Faith That Works – Part 11. December 2, 1986

WE'RE PLAYING GOD WHEN WE JUDGE OTHERS

I. WHY DO WE LIKE TO JUDGE OTHERS?

1. TO EXCUSE OUR OWN FAULTS

"So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them, and yet do

2. IT APPEALS TO OUR PRIDE

"Gossip is so tasty! How we love to swallow it!" Proverbs

26:22 (GN)

II. EFFECTS OF JUDGING OTHERS?

1. **"It is taking God's rightful place** - an attempt to take God's seat as Judge- it puts the other person in a place of answering to you as the Judge over them. Quit taking the Judge's seat! It is reserved for God alone!

2. **It interferes with your obedience** (v.11- there is a sense in which it removes you from the moral obligations you have, putting you above the law.) Your job is to obey God's truth, not be a judge over it. We can get so busy policing and judging others that we fail to obey God ourselves.

3. **It damages relationships** (w/ people and with God – Matthew 25- they are related- How we treat or fail to treat others is equated with how we treat God.)

4. **It tarnishes a person's name/reputation** – If someone makes a mistake or even a series of mistakes in their business dealings, people will usually find out and avoid doing business with them in the future. However, you are not called to advertise against them by speaking evil against them. James refers to brothers (fellow believers) here, but he also speaks of neighbors. Jesus showed that a neighbor is anyone who needs our help, or one who gives help to the one in need.

5. It can harm a person's sense of value and bring discouragement

Sometimes we justify speaking evil against others because they seem to deserve it. Perhaps we think they earned it by the poor choices they made. I think the Lord would want us to ask ourselves a simple question before tearing apart another person's character. "Does God value them?" If He does, then we should too! How do we show value and honor? By the way we speak and how we treat others. They were made in God's image just as we were! If we are speaking evil of someone, it may discourage them from trying harder. It may discourage them from receiving any help from us. It may discourage them from following Christ. Although it can be a copout, there are plenty of people who get so discouraged by hearing other Christians argue and fight that they abandon their faith. Or if they were not believers, they determine never to be a Christian – if that is what Christians are like. Speaking evil of others never seems to produce good results- only negativity and discouragement.

-You might also consider that Satan uses this very tactic. He is called the accuser of the brethren in Rev. 12. If we find ourselves speaking evil of one another, we may have just aligned ourselves with Satan!

-Don't forget the Pygmalion effect – people become what you expect them to be. The more you contribute to a negative expectation, the more it is likely to become the pattern of that person's life. So when we talk negatively about someone, we may be in essence prophesying over their lives in a negative way.

7. It will come back to bite you! Matthew 7:2 For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

-Do you want other people to speak evil of you? Then go ahead and speak evil of others. Do you want others to judge you harshly? Then do it to them. It will come back to you and you won't like it! (Mark Opperman. <https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/the-tragedy-of-trash-talk-mark-opperman-sermon-on-communication-speech-146744>)

III. WHAT MAKES IT JUDGING, RATHER THAN DISCERNING?

When we look at people to judge them there are certain things that we can see.

- i. We can see what they wear.
- ii. We can see what they do.
- iii. We can hear what they say.

However, there are many other things we cannot see.

- i. We cannot see what their day has been like.
- ii. We cannot see the struggles they are dealing with.
- iii. We cannot see the obstacles they face.
- iv. We cannot see the hurt they are dealing with.
- v. And, most importantly, we cannot see their hearts!

<https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/who-s-the-judge-mark-schaeufele-sermon-on-judging-226603>. Mark Schaeufele

1. WHEN I PRACTICE THE SAME SIN (Romans 2:1-3)

2. WHEN IT BLINDS ME TO MY OWN FAULTS (Matthew 7:3-5)

3. WHEN I DRAW CONCLUSIONS BASED ON OUTWARD APPEARANCE (John 7:24)

Chuck Swindoll told of his being at a pastor's conference where he would be speaking. The first day there a man approached him and said how greatly he had looked forward to hearing Dr. Swindoll speak and his delight at now finally being able to realize that desire. That

evening Swindoll noticed the man was sound asleep only a few minutes into of the sermon. Swindoll thought to himself that perhaps he was tired after a long day's drive and couldn't help himself - but this continued to happen night after night. Dr. Swindoll soon became very upset in his spirit with this man! On the last night the man's wife came up and apologized for her husband's inattention to the messages. She then explained that he had recently been diagnosed as having terminal cancer and the medication he was taking to ease the pain made him extremely sleepy. But it had been one of his life-long ambitions to hear Dr. Swindoll speak before he died, and now he had fulfilled that goal. *Source Unknown.*

4. WHEN I CONDEMN SOMEONE BEFORE HEARING THE FACTS (John 7:51)

"We need to stop and recognize that they may be going through things that we have no clue about, and take into consideration what that person may have been through". (Schaeufele)

It is said that the Sioux Indians have a prayer that says, "O Great Spirit, let me not judge another until I have worn his moccasins a moon or two."

"You never really know a man until you understand things from his point of view, until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."
Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird. J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1960

5. WHEN IT'S BASED ON EXTERNAL RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES (Colossians 2:16)

6. WHEN IT CAUSES ME TO SLANDER A BROTHER (James 4:11)

"How often do we make judgments as though we were God when we have little or no understanding of people's motives or circumstances. A grocery store clerk once wrote to Ann Landers to complain about the people buying luxury food items with food stamps. She said these people were lazy and wasteful. In a later column, Landers printed the response of a woman who wrote in answer to the judgmental grocery clerk. -I'm the woman who bought the \$17 cake and paid for it with

food stamps. I thought the check-out woman in the store would burn a hole through me with her eyes. What she didn't know is the cake was for my little girl's birthday. It will be her last. She has bone cancer and will probably be gone within six to eight months. ["Kelly Randolph, sermoncentral.com]

7. WHEN I QUESTION PEOPLE'S MOTIVES (1 Corinthians 4:5)

IV. **HOW TO BREAK THE HABIT OF JUDGING OTHERS**

1. **Zip it!** Proverbs 17:28 Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.

2. **Speak the truth in love** (Eph. 4:15)

3. **Let Christ's words live in you** (Col. 3:16) NLT Colossians 3:16 Let the words of Christ, in all their richness, live in your hearts and make you wise. Use his words to teach and counsel each other..

4. **Speak God's favor (grace) over others**, encourage and build others up- Colossians 4:6 Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

5. **Pray for them.....**Colossians 1:9,10... ⁹ *For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives,* ¹⁰ *so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,*

6. **Apply the Golden Rule to your words** - Matthew 7:12 So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

7. **Think before you speak** - Is this beneficial? Does it build up? Does it make me a judge over someone? Is it said in love?

I shared this many years ago, but there is an acronym for the word think that might help us think before we speak:

T – is it true?

H - is it helpful?

I - is it inspiring?

N – is it necessary?

K – is it kind?

8. Remember I'll be judged by the same standards

"Do not judge others, so that God will not judge you, for God will judge you in the same way you judge others, and he will apply to you the same rules you apply to others." Matthew 7:1-2

9. Remember each of us is accountable to God

"Every one of us, then, will have to give an account of himself to God. So then, let us stop judging one another." Romans 14:12-13

10. Remember how God has been merciful to me

"...Mercy triumphs over judgement." James 2:13

Perhaps another look back to some preceding verses in the Book of James will also help us see how we can change the way we think and talk about others:

1. Recognize the value of Grace (6)
2. Remove the roadblock of Pride (6)
3. Humbly submit yourself to God (6-7)
4. Resist the devil and his temptations (7)
5. Come close to God (8)
6. Get clean from sin (9)
7. Repent and mourn your sinful condition (9)
8. Humble yourself before the Lord (10)

(POEM)

Poem “The Wrecking Crew”

Paul Lee Tan, Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations : A Treasury of Illustrations, Anecdotes, Facts and Quotations for Pastors, Teachers and Christian Workers (Garland TX: Bible Communications)

I stood on the street of a busy town,
Watching men tearing a building down.
With a ho heave ho and a lusty yell,
They swung a beam and a side wall fell.
I asked the foreman of the crew,
“Are those men as skilled in all they do?”
“Oh, no, no indeed.” The foreman said.
“That’s just Bob and that’s just Fred.”
“Just common laborers are all I need.
/
To tear a tear down a building – is a simple deed.
They can tear it down in a day or two.
What took a skilled man a year to build – new.
No skill is involved - no skill do they need,
You see - tearing things down is a simple deed.”
And then I thought as I went my way.
Just which of these two roles am I trying to play?
Have I walked life’s road with care,
Measuring each deed with a rule and square?
Or am I one of those who roam the town,
Content with the labor of tearing things down?

James tells us:

James 4:11,12 . . .¹¹ Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. ¹² There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor? (NIV)

Let God do His job as judge!

Let’s be Ambassadors of Reconciliation...
Peacemaker’s , Not Troublemakers!