**The Mote And The Beam**

 Mike Davis / Mike’s Musings

 

 ***“Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.”*** (**Matthew 7:1-4**)

 Few passages have received more abusive use than these four verses. Most folks want to stop with verse one, thinking they are “exempt” from those who critique their conduct (i.e. “judge them”). Judging is NOT condemned by our Lord: judging without accepting like judgment is condemned! Jesus said, ***“Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.”*** (**John 7:24**). More to the point, in our present passage of study, you will note one cannot remove a mote from a brother without first removing a beam from yourself. Such action requires examination; which is judging. (**2 Corinthians 13:5**)

 Quite often, those who shout, “You can’t judge me!” are themselves afraid to examine their situation with Scripture. Just as frequently, there are arrogant folks who believe themselves “infallible” and refuse to allow close examination of their situations. Paul said, ***“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall”*** (**1 Corinthians 10:12**). All of us are subject to examination. All of us are seen and heard by those who see and hear us. Whatever impression we leave with those seeing and hearing us (pro or con) is in truth their judgment of us. Now, think of Lydia to prove this point: after obeying the gospel, she asked Paul**, *“if you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord”*** (**Acts 16:15**). Friends, we can judge and we are judged by our conduct of life every day!

 Part of the problem is in understanding the word “judge”. While we have shown in this article the use of word as “examination,” (for such is the meaning in the passages discussed) too often the mental recognition of the word is “pass sentence” as in the sense of “declaring one’s practice as right or wrong.” We must accept the fact “passing eternal judgment upon souls” is the Lord’s expertise and not man’s (**John 5:22**). Yet, even in the context of “declaring one’s practice right or wrong” the Scriptures show us we ARE permitted to make that determination, i.e. “judgment.” **Galatians 6:1** says, **“*Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”*** How does one comply with this without making a “judgment?” **James 5:19-20** says, ***“Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”*** How does one comply with this this without making a “judgment?”

 The greatest difficulty with “judging” is doing so to OURSELVES. As one preacher was wont to say, *“Be careful about pointing the finger of guilt; it usually leaves three more pointing right back at you.”* All Jesus was teaching in Matthew 7 is that we must NEVER be condescending and judgmental of others until we have FIRST examined ourselves carefully and removed OUR OWN faults! Further, just about the time you think you’ve cleared yourself of all such blemishes, there might be one or more that will attempt pointing out a few more “stains” in our lives. Be gracious enough to accept their “judgment” (if true - kds) and more thoroughly examine yourself to be sure you are in the faith (**2 Corinthians 13:5**).

 TRUTH never fears examination! HONESTY never fears examination. TRUTHFUL HONEST souls are willing to take beams out of their own eyes so they can lovingly help others take motes from their eyes! It’s called “brotherly love.” The Hebrew writer said it is to continue (**Hebrew 13:1**). It can’t continue unless it first exists! Let’s examine ourselves with that aspect as well!