

General Topics :: JUDGMENTALISM**JUDGMENTALISM - posted by shibu (), on: 2005/11/24 7:58****JUDGMENTALISM by Fredrick W. Faber**

With regard to our judgment of others, we may safely say that there has never lived a Christian who did not at some time have to repent for judging his fellow-believers too harshly. On the other hand, there has never lived a Christian who ever had to repent of being too loving or compassionate or charitable.

It is a universal law that when we judge others, we come to wrong conclusions from the mere fact that we naturally judge over-harshly. It is one of the characteristics of the flesh that it puts the worst construction on what we see, or hear about others, and makes very little or no allowance for the hidden good that is in them. We judge ourselves by the best things that we find in us, but we judge others by the worst things that we know.

A fleshly severity is one of the characteristics of an immature Christian. Many religious people think that the power to detect evil in others is a special gift from God, and when such people hunt for evil they always find it to their satisfaction. But this practice gives birth to a habit of suspicion which is totally ruinous to Christ likeness of life and to the deep love of God. Many believers have an awful habit of swiftly seeing evil in others and circulating it. But they are slow to speak about the good that they see.

Human beings are generally speaking, most severe with those of their own profession. Musicians criticize other musicians. Businessmen speak evil of other businessmen. And believers are most severe on other believers. The reason for this is that each of these groups of people is most familiar with the infirmities and sins that are liable to affect their own group.

When we see evil in others, we can never see the amount of inward resistance with which those people may have, resisted the evil, or the amount of sorrow which they may have had for their failures and defects. We can also never estimate how severely another person faces temptation, because of his temperament, family upbringing, former way of life etc.

Everyone - even the most excellent people - have some defect or the other. But not all have the deep humility to see it or to acknowledge it. Sin is easily noticeable. But God alone can determine how much guilt there is in each sin. For what is conscious sin for one, may be only unconscious sin for another. And what may be a deliberate act of sin in one case may have been only an accidental fall in another.

The evil in other people strikes us with bold, startling proportions, whereas the goodness in them may be more quiet and hidden and thus often passes unobserved. The people we are judging may be more keenly alive to their defects than we imagine, and God may be seeing their grieving in secret. But we don't see it. In a thousand spots that look to us like a desert waste in another, God's mercy will still find something there for His glory.

Satan is constantly stirring good believers against other good believers. This work of evil spirits unconsciously affects our judgment of others. But we fail to see that God is ten thousand times more active than Satan, though He seems to be less so. If we could actually see what God is doing in the lives of the very people whom we often criticize and condemn, we would be utterly astonished. It is true that Satan is active. But grace is more active.

We also need to distinguish between sin and human defects. There are many things in good people that are extremely disagreeable, that may not be sin. Such deformities may affect the behavior and personality of a person. We can then judge him more by the inconvenience he causes us rather than by how he stands before God. We usually condemn those sins of others that inconvenience us more than those sins which don't inconvenience us.

This is why an impartial God has to condemn us so often for the very condemnation we give to others, because our judgments do not proceed from the love of God but from our own personal taste and upbringing. It takes time for a person to become gracious, even after grace has begun to operate in his life. So we must be merciful.

Nothing is more amazing than the gentle, patient love that God shows His creatures. It is almost as though He shuts His

eyes to their weaknesses. His judgments seem to move with slow, tortoise pace, taking a long, long time, as if to give a person every allowance possible to infinite mercy.

The more we walk with God, the closer our union with Him, the more deeply we partake of His nature, the more we will possess His gentleness and compassion of spirit, which will destroy our tendency for harsh judgments and take away our keenness for seeing evil in others.

The severity of our judgments is usually an infallible indication of our low spiritual state. Spiritual immaturity is always swift and sharp in judgment and thinks that God is too lenient. It often acts as though no-one is sitting on God's judgment-throne. **Spiritual maturity on the other hand, is always slow, gentle and compassionate, making allowances for others in areas where it would never make allowances for itself. The more severe we are with others, the lower we are in love. On the other hand, as we become stricter with ourselves, we will become milder with others.**