

Miracles that follow the plow :: God's faithful working in me...

God's faithful working in me..., on: 2007/9/15 17:53

Judging

Why do we condemn those with whom we disagree? Why is it so difficult to accept a brother or sister who seems different? Or believes differently? Why can't we love them?

"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful, disputations." Romans 14:1

Judge: Forming a negative mental opinion, about someone else who does something you would not do yourself - God commands us not to do this of our brethren!

"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Romans 14:1-12

We shall each stand before the Bema Seat of Christ and give account of ourselves. This judging spirit will probably be far more grievous in the eyes of Christ than that which we judged in our brother or sister.

"Take this for a general rule: spend your zeal in those things wherein you and all the people of God are agreed and do not dispute matters that are doubtful." - Matthew Henry

"We make ourselves our brethren's Masters and do in effect usurp the throne of God, when we take upon us thus to judge them, especially to judge their thoughts and intentions, which are out of our view, to judge their persons and state, concerning which it is hard to conclude by those few indications which fall within our cognizance." - Matthew Henry

"In judging and censuring our brethren, we meddle with that which does not belong to us. We have work enough to do at home, and if we must needs be judging, let us exercise our faculty upon our own heart and ways." - Matthew Henry

"Christ is the gain we aim at, living and dying. We live to glorify Him in all the actions and affairs of life...Christ is the centre, in which all the lines of life and death do meet. This is true Christianity which makes Christ all in all." - Matthew Henry

"Now if Christ paid so dearly for His dominion over souls and consciences, and has such a just and undisputed right to exercise dominion, we must not so much as seem to invade it, or entrench upon it, by judging the conscience of our brethren, and arraigning them at our bar." Matthew Henry

"A believing regard to the judgment of the great day would silence all these rash judgments." Matthew Henry

"...He that is strict in judging himself and abasing himself will not be apt to judge and despise his brother." Matthew Henry

"Those are most pleasing to God that are best pleased with Him." Matthew Henry

"Acceptance of God is to be desired and aimed at in the first place, because, sooner or later, God will bring all the world to be of His mind." Matthew Henry

When you see a brother or sister failing in an area in which God has worked in your life, don't judge them as being failures but rather in humility thank God for what He has done in your life, express grateful praise to Him, then humbly ask Him to work in that brother or sister and lead them in the way of truth. Cause for humility: Why should God reveal a certain truth to you? For what reason are you worthy of all the mercies He has given you? Should it not put us in the dust that

t God has worked thus in our lives?!!

"Lord, help us always to assume the good in a brother or sister." Prayer of a Christian

"Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God." Psalm 50:19, 20, 23

Instead of slandering a brother, offer praise to God for what He is doing in that brother or sister's life. Then God will be glorified. We must leave the perfecting process in God's Hands.

"Thus let us endeavour to make the name of God glorious and renowned. If God seek our good, let us seek His glory. If He make all things tend to our edification, let us make all things tend to His exaltation." Thomas Watson

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6

"The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands." Psalm 138:8

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Jude 24-25

The above thoughts and quotes come from the Lord's working and revealing these things to me. The Matthew Henry quotes are from his commentary on Romans 14.

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A couple weeks ago the Lord was revealing to me a very critical and judgmental spirit in me toward my brothers and sisters in Christ. It just broke me to realize there was such pride in me, and that I would treat my fellow brothers and sisters with such unkindness; even if they do not know of my thoughts about them, it is a grief to the body of Christ that I would do this. And it is a reproach to my Father, because just as He is working in me, so He is working in His other children. And to criticize a brother or sister in Christ is criticizing God's very work in their lives! Oh! To be critical of the working of God, that is so serious. The Lord has been so gracious to me in revealing this to me. With His grace and help I am seeking to love my brothers and sisters and accept them where they're at. How needy I am! And, how I praise God for His perfecting process in not only me but also in my brothers and sisters in the Lord. Praise God for His faithfulness! I would ask my brothers and sisters to pray for me that God would work in me a spirit of love and humility toward the body of Christ. I can testify that He is already doing this, and in revealing these things to me He has been changing my heart.

These last couple weeks as I have prepared and prayed for the upcoming conferences I will be attending God has really been working on me and peeling back the layers and showing me the need in my own life. It is good to set aside times of prayer and self-examination of our own lives as we prepare for the upcoming revival conference. It's amazing what God reveals to us if we will only humbly come before Him and make ourselves available for the searching light of His Holy Spirit.

I do realize that there is to be a proper spirit of judging in the body of Christ toward sin that is manifested by professing Christians. ([https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic\\_id19141&forum34](https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id19141&forum34)) This article is an excellent example on that type of judging. But how often do we overlook these big sins because we fear to offend someone, yet have no difficulty whatsoever nitpicking, slandering, and tearing down the character of a brother or sister who is seeking God? I confess, my natural, fleshly tendency has been to do the latter...but with God's grace and help I am determined not to do this.

*I didn't undertake this study for the sake of SI, it was for me, and to retain this lesson that God is teaching me that I might review it and not forget His gracious workings. But I wanted to share it here for others who are earnestly seeking God to go deeper with Him and live lives that are pleasing and glorifying to Him.*

Blessings,

~Joy

**Re: God's faithful working in me... - posted by awakenwithin (), on: 2007/9/15 21:43**

Sister I wanted to say thank you for posting this..  
may God you deeper sister.. May teach go deeper..

Holy King come and speak to my sister.. Let her hear your voice as bow down to worship you

Amen sister.. thank you so much for posting..  
What wonderful thing to see, a heart that is real and open.. I am really so blessed you are my sister. What a wonderful Work God is doing.  
Glory Glory to his wonderful name.

I love you sister... and you are in my prayers :)  
Charlene

**Re: God's faithful working in me... - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2007/9/15 22:34**

Sister, thank you for sharing this. I've been reading some Amy Charmichael recently and your post reminded me of the following from the her book *IF...*  
IF, I have not the patience of my Savior with soul who grows slowly; if I know little of travail (a sharp and painful thing) till Christ be fully formed in them,  
then I know nothing of Calvary love.

IF, I sympathize weakly with weakness, and say to the one who is turning back from the cross, "pity thyself"; if I refuse such a one the sympathy that braces and the brave and heartening word of comradeship,  
I know nothing of Calvary love.

IF, I cannot keep silence over a disappointing soul (unless for the sake of that soul's good or for the good of others it be necessary to speak),  
then I know nothing of Calvary love.

In Christ,

Ron

**God's faithful working in me... - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/9/15 23:14**

Dear sister,

There are many tremendous things that are contained here and that compulsion to quantify them by importance has me struggling for proper words ...

What an incredible expression this is. All that you have pulled together and shared of your own life, the similar convictions, even to draw out this much;

*"We make ourselves our brethren's Masters and do in effect usurp the throne of God, when we take upon us thus to judge them, especially to judge their thoughts and intentions, which are out of our view, to judge their persons and state, concerning which it is hard to conclude by those few indications which fall within our cognizance."* - Matthew Henry

This, being one of the most difficult to observe as it happens here sadly too often, and worse to practice, the constant diligence of not allowing it to take space in the thoughts ...

There is so much here. I pray it finds the widest audience and true inward participation.

My prayers, my thanks ... my God

**Re: God's faithful working in me... - posted by tjservant (), on: 2007/9/15 23:56**

Thank you for this sister. Thank you very much.

**Re: God's faithful working in me..., on: 2007/9/16 0:12**

None of us need judge the brother/sister personally.

condemn or judge.

John 8:11

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

KJV

condemn: katakrino (kat-ak-ree'-no); from NT:2596 and NT:2919; to judge against, i.e. sentence:

KJV - condemn, damn.

(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright (c) 1994, Biblesoft and International Bible Translators, Inc.)

"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

Romans 14:1-12

to Judge NT:2919

krino (kree'-no); properly, to distinguish, i.e. decide (mentally or judicially); by implication, to try, condemn, punish:

KJV - avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, go to (sue at the) law, ordain, call in question, sentence to, think.

(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright (c) 1994, Biblesoft and International Bible Translators, Inc.)

Webster definitions:

noun: public officer authorized to hear and decide cases in a court of law; a magistrate charged with the administration of justice.

noun: an administrative head of Israel in the period between the death of Joshua and the accession to the throne by Saul.

noun: to hear evidence or legal arguments in (a case) in order to pass judgment; adjudicate; try: The Supreme Court is judging that case.

**verb:** to form a judgment or opinion of; decide upon critically: You can't judge a book by its cover.

Even though I believe condemning and judging is the definitions given above in the Greek-Hebrew Definitions and not used in the Webster's verb usage, I am not to condemn or judge anyone who defines it differently, by the definitions above. According to the Hebrew and Greek definitions I have no desire to. The one and only true Judge will do that. But I only have a desire to love them and try to give truth the best I can.

In His Love

moe\_mac

edit: Each thing that we believe or speak or post to be God's truth, also applies to ourselves as well. If we read a post or hear a WORD spoken and we believe that person is judging by what they write, say or post in reply. (Are we ourselves judging that brother/sister)? We would be if we used the verb Webster dictionary definition. Judging is much more than giving what we believe to be truth. We will be judged by God on whether we are correct or not in what we speak or post. Let God judge right!

**Re: God's faithful working in me... - posted by BrokenOne (), on: 2007/9/16 0:24**

Quote:  
-----"In judging and censuring our brethren, we meddle with that which does not belong to us. We have work enough to do at home, and if we must needs be judging, let us exercise our faculty upon our own heart and ways." - Matthew Henry  
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Quote:  
-----"We make ourselves our brethren's Masters and do in effect usurp the throne of God, when we take upon us thus to judge them, especially to judge their thoughts and intentions, which are out of our view, to judge their persons and state, concerning which it is hard to conclude by those few indications which fall within our cognizance." - Matthew Henry  
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These really struck me -- we meddle with that which does not belong to us, usurping the throne of God. There is something fearful in these statements.

Quote:  
-----"Lord, help us always to assume the good in a brother or sister." Prayer of a Christian  
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Several years ago I found myself judging the intentions of a particular person at church. I found myself thinking very critical thoughts when I would see this person. One day, in the midst of my ugly thoughts and attitude, the Lord brought this verse to mind:

To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. Titus 1:15

My harsh judgment of that person was revealing a defect in me. It is a lesson that is still fresh in my mind to this day.

Quote:  
-----It's amazing what God reveals to us if we will only humbly come before Him and make ourselves available for the searching light of His Holy Spirit.  
-----

Sister, thank you so much for sharing your heart with us. My prayer is that it would prompt us all to make ourselves available for His searching. We so desperately need it. And let me echo Charlene's words -- what a wonderful work God is doing, in all of us. I am blessed to know you, my sister.

Danielle

**Re: God's faithful working - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/9/16 12:54**

*"Now if Christ paid so dearly for His dominion over souls and consciences, and has such a just and undisputed right to exercise dominion, we must not so much as seem to invade it, or entrench upon it, by judging the conscience of our brethren, and arraigning them at our bar." Matthew Henry*

*"A believing regard to the judgment of the great day would silence all these rash judgments." Matthew Henry*

*"...He that is strict in judging himself and abasing himself will not be apt to judge and despise his brother." Matthew Henry*

Have found myself again reading through much of Matthew Henry's commentary this morning, primarily towards another matter, another posting ... There is such a weight and richness, a penetration into the marrow of the scriptures, something

g that just demands the attention and contemplation.

This is such a tremendous post ...

**Re:, on: 2007/9/17 13:39**

Thank you to each of one of you who have responded. How grateful I am for the love and patience of the saints!

Brother Ron, thank you for sharing those tidbits from 'If'. Oh that book, I find myself responding in two ways to it (and really to all truth that is shared), one I will read briefly over it and go on because I don't want to stop and admit how short I am of really knowing Calvary Love, or number two, I will really stop and let the words soak in, I will ask myself, even as the disciples asked themselves when Jesus said one of them would betray them, those haunting sorrowful words of "Is it I?" (Mark 14:18-19), "Could these words be true in my life?"

Quote:  
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IF, I have not the patience of my Savior with soul who grows slowly; if I know little of travail (a sharp and painful thing) till Christ be fully formed in them  
,  
then I know nothing of Calvary love.  
-----

*The patience of my Savior...* Is not that which is missing in me? His love, His patience? His longsuffering?

It's so staggering to think of this 'usurping of the throne of God' in censuring and judging our brethren...this pride, deviou s pride that slips in so subtly, *"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.*

*By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil."*

**Re:, on: 2007/9/21 23:06**

As I was reading through Joshua I came upon the passage about the eastern tribes and the little misunderstanding which occurred when they erected an altar as a memorial to the Lord. It's a very insightful passage on misjudging others when all we see are their actions and not their inward motives. Oh, the passage is in Joshua 22. :)

Matthew Henry had some good things on it. I'm only pulling out a few quotes from his wonderful notes.

*First, In every thing we do in religion, it highly concerns us to approve ourselves to God in our integrity therein, remembering that he knows the heart. Secondly, When we fall under the censures of men, it is very comfortable to be able with a humble confidence to appeal to God concerning our sincerity.*

*"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self .  
4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.  
5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness , and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."* 1 Cor. 4:3-5

*...Though the record on high, and the witness in our bosoms, are principally to be made sure for us, yet there is a satisfaction besides which we owe to our brethren who doubt concerning our integrity, and which we should be ready to give with meekness and fear. If our sincerity be known to God, we should study likewise to let others know it by its fruits, especially those who, though they mistake us, yet show a zeal for the glory of God, as the ten tribes here did.*

....

*We have here the good issue of this controversy, which, if there had not been on both sides a disposition to peace, as there was on both sides a zeal for God, might have been of ill consequence; for quarrels about religion, for want of wisdom and love, often prove the most fierce and most difficult to be accommodated. But these contending parties, when the*

*matter was fairly stated and argued, were so happy as to understand one another very well, and so the difference was presently compromised.*

*...But a little want of consideration and good manners should be excused and overlooked in those who, we have reason to think, mean honestly.*

*...Much less did they go about to fish for evidence to make out their charge, because they had once exhibited it, but were glad to have their mistake rectified, and were not at all ashamed to own it. Proud and peevish spirits, when they have passed an unjust censure upon their brethren, though ever so much convincing evidence be brought of the injustice of it, will stand to it, and can by no means be persuaded to retract it.*

**Re: - posted by huggybear555, on: 2007/9/28 23:46**

i strongly agree. i know that when everything is said and done, there you will see the truth. the truth will stand throughout all generations. i think i once read a scripture that david wrote. david said be careful what you might see, because there might be a logical answer for it. and i'm paraphrasing what he wrote. i myself do some strange things, but i can say that they are holyspirit inspired. i'm a human being. i'm not waiting for something to happen, because it is happening right before our eyes. i hope my writing is clear enough.

**Re: God's faithful working in me..., on: 2007/11/11 22:27**

"...And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him,

**Follow me.**

Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

Peter seeing him saith to Jesus,

**Lord, and what shall this man do?**

Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come,

**what is that to thee?**

**Follow thou me."**

John 21:19-22

*Lord, help me to leave others in Your Hands, and focus on following You. You are able to take care of them and give them the instructions that they need to hear. Help me to be faithful to the instructions You give me to do.*

**Re: God's faithful working - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/11/12 10:16**

This ever grounding section ... very much the principle and constant reminder in so many things.

Matthew Henry, a few excerpts;

*It seems, by Christ's answer, there was something amiss in the question. When Christ had given him the charge of such a treasure, and the notice of such a trial, it had well become him to have said, "Lord, and what shall I do then to approve myself faithful to such a trust, in such a trial? Lord, increase my faith. As my day is, let my strength be." But instead of this,*



... He seems more concerned for another than for himself. So apt are we to be busy in other men's matters, but negligent in the concerns of our own souls - quick-sighted abroad, but dim-sighted at home - judging others, and prognosticating what they will do, when we have enough to do to prove our own work, and understand our own way.

... we need not ask, "What shall be the lot of those that shall come after us?" Is it not well if peace and truth be in my days? Scripture-predictions must be eyed for the directing of our consciences, not the satisfying of our curiosity.

... Christ's reply to this enquiry (Joh\_21:22), "If I will that he tarry till I come, and do not suffer as thou must, what is that to thee. Mind thou thy own duty, the present duty, follow thou me."

... That he should not die a violent death, like Peter, but should tarry till Christ himself came by a natural death to fetch him to himself. The most credible of the ancient historians tell us that John was the only one of all the twelve that did not actually die a martyr. He was often in jeopardy, in bonds and banishments; but at length died in his bed in a good old age. Note, First, At death Christ comes to us to call us to account; and it concerns us to be ready for his coming. Secondly, Though Christ calls out some of his disciples to resist unto blood, yet not all. Though the crown of martyrdom is bright and glorious, yet the beloved disciple comes short of it.

... Others think that it is only a rebuke to Peter's curiosity, and that his tarrying till Christ's second coming is only the supposition of an absurdity: "Wherefore askest thou after that which is foreign and secret? Suppose I should design that John should never die, what does that concern thee? It is nothing to thee, when or where, or how, John must die. I have told thee how thou must die for thy part; it is enough for thee to know that, Follow thou me."

Note, It is the will of Christ that his disciples should mind their own present duty, and not be curious in their enquiries about future events, concerning either themselves or others.

... There are many things we are apt to be solicitous about that are nothing to us. Other people's characters are nothing to us; it is out of our line to judge them, Rom\_14:4. Whatsoever they are, saith Paul, it makes no matter to me.

Other people's affairs are nothing to us to intermeddle in; we must quietly work, and mind our own business. Many nice and curious questions are put by the scribes and disputers of this world concerning the counsels of God, and the state of the invisible world, concerning which we may say, What is this to us? What do you think will become of such and such? it is a common question, which may easily be answered with another: What is that to me? To his own Master he stands or falls. What is it to us to know the times and the seasons? Secret things belong not to us.

... The great thing that is all in all to us is duty, and not event; for duty is ours, events are God's - our own duty, and not another's; for every one shall bear his own burden - our present duty, and not the duty of the time to come; for sufficient to the day shall be the directions thereof: a good man's steps are ordered by the Lord, (Psa\_37:23); he is guided step by step.

Now all our duty is summed up in this one of following Christ.

We must attend his motions, and accommodate ourselves to them, follow him to do him honour, as the servant his master; we must walk in the way in which he walked, and aim to be where he is. And, if we will closely attend to the duty of following Christ, we shall find neither heart nor time to meddle with at which does not belong to us.

... The mistake which arose from this saying of Christ, that that disciple should not die, but abide with the church to the end of time; together with the suppressing of this motion by a repetition of Christ's words, Joh\_21:23. Observe here,

The easy rise of a mistake in the church by misconstruing the sayings of Christ, and turning a supposition to a position. Because John must not die a martyr, they conclude he must not die at all.

... They were inclined to expect it because they could not choose but desire it. Quod volumus facile credimus - We easily believe what we wish to be true. For John to abide in the flesh when the rest were gone, and to continue in the world till Christ's second coming, they think, will be a great blessing to the church, which in every age might have recourse to him as an oracle. When they must lose Christ's bodily presence, they hope they shall have that of his beloved disciple; as if that must supply the want of his, forgetting that the blessed Spirit, the Comforter, was to do that.

Note, We are apt to dote too much on men and means, instruments and external helps, and to think we are happy if we



*may but have them always with us; whereas God will change his workmen, and yet carry on his work, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of men. There is no need of immortal ministers to be the guides of the church, while it is under the conduct of an eternal Spirit.*

**Re: Gods faithful working, on: 2007/11/12 10:30**

Roniya:

Quote:  
-----Why do we condemn those with whom we disagree? Why is it so difficult to accept a brother or sister who seems different? Or believe differently? Why can't we love them?  
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This is so amazing as i was not even aware of this thread and just a couple of three days ago PMed someone asking for forgiveness and might we agree to disagree. The reply was beautiful in different ways and that my PM was graciously received.

We will be known by our love for each other.

Thank you for this meaningful thread.

**Re: God's faithful working in me..., on: 2007/11/13 0:11**

(<http://www.rbc.org/utmost/index.php?month07&day30>) **The Teaching of Disillusionment by Oswald Chambers**

***Jesus did not commit Himself to them . . . , for He knew what was in man***  
—John 2:24-25

"Disillusionment means having no more misconceptions, false impressions, and false judgments in life; it means being free from these deceptions. However, though no longer deceived, our experience of disillusionment may actually leave us cynical and overly critical in our judgment of others. But the disillusionment that comes from God brings us to the point where we see people as they really are, yet without any cynicism or any stinging and bitter criticism. Many of the things in life that inflict the greatest injury, grief, or pain, stem from the fact that we suffer from illusions. We are not true to one another as facts, seeing each other as we really are; we are only true to our misconceived ideas of one another. According to our thinking, everything is either delightful and good, or it is evil, malicious, and cowardly.

Refusing to be disillusioned is the cause of much of the suffering of human life. And this is how that suffering happens— if we love someone, but do not love God, we demand total perfection and righteousness from that person, and when we do not get it, we become cruel and vindictive; yet we are demanding of a human being, something which he or she cannot possibly give.

There is only one Being who can completely satisfy to the absolute depth of the hurting human heart, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Lord is so obviously uncompromising with regard to every human relationship because He knows that every relationship that is not based on faithfulness to Himself, will end in disaster. Our Lord trusted no one, and never placed His faith in people, yet He was never suspicious or bitter.

Our Lord's confidence in God and in what God's grace could do for anyone, was so perfect that He never despaired, never giving up hope for any person.

If our trust is placed in human beings, we will end up despairing of everyone."

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2007/11/17 10:12

Dear sister Joy, thank you for sharing these things. Thank you.

I have done this also.

I was reminded of the passage in 1Timothy which speaks of **evil surmisings**.

And of the words of the Lord Jesus

"Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me."

- John chapter 8 verses 15-16(KJV)

He could see with perfect clarity. His Father showed Him all things(thinking of John 5:20).

We so often do not see clearly and there are many things not revealed to us. But we act like we see clearly, and know so much. Or we behave so inwardly, in the life of our thoughts. And God sees them all. We must always be fighting to take those thoughts, which are evil, and contrary to the knowledge of Christ, to take them captive.

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."

- Isaiah chapter 11 verses 1-4(KJV)

Instead of smiting our brothers and sisters with the heavy rod of our thoughts, we ought to think with love, and pity, and compassion towards them. Does a man beat down his friends who are already fallen upon the ground? What kind of friendship is that? Who loves a man that is struggling up a mountain by beating him as he goes.

"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:"

- 1Peter chapter 3 verse 8(KJV)

If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

Forgive us Father. Help us.

**Re:, on: 2007/11/24 13:34**

Thank you, brother Chris, for sharing these things...

Quote:

ChrisJD wrote:

We so often do not see clearly and there are many things not revealed to us. But we act like we see clearly, and know so much. Or we behave so inwardly, in the life of our thoughts. And God sees them all. We must always be fighting to take those thoughts, which are evil, and contrary to the knowledge of Christ, to take them captive.

Yes, brother, yes...the galling pride of our own hearts to *presume* that our limited knowledge is sufficient excuse to judge another person,

*"We make ourselves our brethren's Masters and do in effect usurp the throne of God, when we take upon us thus to judge them, especially to judge their thoughts and intentions, which are out of our view, to judge their persons and state, concerning which it is hard to conclude by those few indications which fall within our cognizance." - Matthew Henry*

And I may hold my tongue in expressing something unkind or critical of a brother or sister, but oh, if the thought is even there what a grief to God, and compromise it is! We must indeed take every thought captive...

Quote:

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."

- Isaiah chapter 11 verses 1-4(KJV)

I just read that passage and this little bit stuck out,

*And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD:*

In the fear of the Lord...

*"Fear is used to express a filial passion. In a good man, the fear of God is a holy awe or reverence of God and His laws, which springs from a just view and real love of the Divine Character, **leading the subjects of it to hate and shun every thing that can offend such a holy Being**, and inclining them to aim at perfect obedience. This is filial love." - Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary*

*Do I have the fear of the Lord in my thoughts? Particularly in how I think of others?*

Quote:  
-----Instead of smiting our brothers and sisters with the heavy rod of our thoughts, we ought to think with love, and pity, and compassion towards them. Does a man beat down his friends who are already fallen upon the ground? What kind of friendship is that? Who loves a man that is struggling up a mountain by beating him as he goes.  
-----

Oh, how do we love our brethren? Why are we so quick to tear down instead of build up? Do we have such a light consideration of how the Father looks upon our treatment of His children that we could stoop this low; even if no man knows of those thoughts, God does.

Quote:  
-----  
Forgive us Father. Help us.  
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Amen. And put Your holy fear in our hearts.

**Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2007/11/27 0:47**

And thanks again for putting us in remembrance of this.

I really appreciate this quote also

*"Fear is used to express a filial passion. In a good man, the fear of God is a holy awe or reverence of God and His laws, which springs from a just view and real love of the Divine Character, leading the subjects of it to hate and shun everything that can offend such a holy Being, and inclining them to aim at perfect obedience. This is filial love." - Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary*

This is helpful.

Just now the verse comes to mind of love that says it *thinks no evil*. Perhaps instead, wants to think the best of someone, to give them the benefit of the doubt so to speak?

Re:, on: 2007/12/4 12:51

*And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.*

*And Jesus knowing their thoughts said,*

***Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?***

*Matthew 9:1-4*

*Excerpt from Matthew Henry's commentary on this passage:*

1. He charged them with it. Though they did but say it within themselves, he knew their thoughts. **Note, Our Lord Jesus has the perfect knowledge of all that we say within ourselves. Thoughts are secret and sudden, yet naked and open before Christ, the eternal Word (Heb. iv. 12, 13), and he understands them afar off, Ps. cxxxix.**

2. He could say to them (which no mere man could), Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? **Note, There is a great deal of evil in sinful thoughts, which is very offensive to the Lord Jesus. He being the Sovereign of the heart, sinful thoughts invade his right, and disturb his possession; therefore he takes notice of them, and is much displeased with them. In them lies the root of bitterness, Gen. vi. 5. The sins that begin and end in the heart, and go no further, are as dangerous as any other.**

*"There is a great deal of evil in sinful thoughts, which is very offensive to the Lord Jesus."*

Re:, on: 2008/1/19 17:30

God continues to work and chip away the unbecoming pieces of censoriousness from me by bringing along articles such as this one:

## **A CENSORIOUS (CRITICAL/SEVERE) SPIRIT**

By: G. D. Watson

**Censoriousness is composed of self-conceit and severity; a self-conceit that we are superior to others, and are entitled to some sort of lordship over them; and then a severity of judging others by the outward letter of righteousness instead of by the Spirit.** There are other people besides Christians who are censorious, but it does not look so conspicuous in their lives, for it is the very nature of religion to make a streak of badness look more ugly. Censoriousness has a special facility of fastening itself on a religious person, and on persons professing a great deal of religion, and its very intensity is in proportion to the intensity of religious zeal, and seems to find its greenest pastures in those who profess the perfection of love. It is a parasite which, like the mistletoe, fastens itself on the tree of religion, and seeks to spread itself until it claims to be the tree and, in fact, if not killed off, will succeed in killing the tree which, indeed, it often does. There seem to be certain weaknesses, and ugly, disagreeable infirmities, latent in the soul that nothing ever develops till it becomes religious, and sometimes the more intense the religion the more glaring are these infirmities.

Censoriousness is not grace, but it assumes the profession of grace, and oftentimes of great sanctity, and it seems to develop in some characters only when they are really under the operations of grace, as an iceberg throws off a heavy fog when it comes near the Gulf Stream. **One thing is certain, that many professors of very high grace are very censorious, and they never were very censorious until some time after their declaration of entire yielding to God. Perhaps we can never understand the metaphysics of it, but we know it is a delusion of Satan to get religious people to mistake censoriousness for sanctity.** One of the remedies against it is a clear understanding of what it is.

1. **A censorious person sets himself up as a standard of religious experience, or practice, by which to judge all others.** He has almost a boundless confidence in the superiority of his own character. He never admits that he has been

backslidden in heart or life; he stoutly defends some ugly things in his disposition or conduct with the plea that they proceeded from the highest righteousness. His anger is clothed with the pretty title of righteous indignation. His stinginess is softened into holy economy. His harsh words are under the sweet cognomen of being true to other people's souls. **He lives under the one supreme thought that he came into the world for no other purpose than to set people right.** If he was not always reproving somebody, or pitching into something, he would think himself false to his calling.

His opinion concerning any church, or any association of Christian workers, or any preacher, or evangelist, or writer, or book, is already made up in advance, and labeled like so many bottles of poison on the shelves of his judgment, and he is not going to change his opinion concerning any of these things, and does not want any further light, but knows enough already to settle him in his views. **How many thousands of times have we denounced, or severely judged others, not so much because they were displeasing God, but because they were displeasing to us; not because they were in reality breaking the Word of God, but because they were breaking our notions and offending our artificial taste.** Oh, it is a miserable view of life, to turn ourselves into wooden yardsticks, and metallic scales, by which to weigh and measure our fellow Christians, and then to do this under the profession of holiness.

**2. A censorious person persuades himself that he has a special religious calling to correct others, and especially to correct them with severe methods, and that this is the greatest proof of his righteousness.** If it were not for the religion that is in the censorious soul, and that it has a special vocation from God, it would lose all its seriousness and be a comical joke; but the censorious man thinks his salvation depends on the vinegar in his nature.

There are two sides to religious self-conceit; one is where the soul mostly contemplates its own superiority; this produces the peacock professor; and the other side is where the soul mostly contemplates the defects of others; this produces the bull dog professor. The censorious man belongs to the latter class, for while spiritual vanity is a part of his make-up, yet spiritual inquisition and severity with others constitutes the major part of his life.

**There are many who think that mere power to detect evil is a proof of holiness, and that growth in grace shows itself by an increasing aptness to ferret out the weaknesses and shortcomings of others.** Now, it is a fact that the practice of detecting the defects of others will soon reach a point of almost scientific accuracy.

The world is full of evil, and Christians have many defects, though they be not actually committing sin; and **even fully sanctified Christians have weaknesses of manner, and taste, and conversation, and ways of doing things that look to a critical eye as if something bad were behind it, and the well-practiced eye of a censorious spirit will, in most cases, diagnose a subject with great skill.** When he finds he has hit his game so accurately, it is only another proof to him of his superior holiness. And so he lives on hunting his game, and resembles a hunting dog that is so passionately fond of the chase that he fails to take time to eat, and keeps himself a living skeleton because all his strength is spent in the pursuit of game. Who ever knew a censorious person to be genial in company, or a lover of little children, or sweet and amiable in his private life!

It is said that fortune tellers start out with a knack of reading natural character, and by some practice they soon find that a few general principles- such as a love affair, or some money, or a dark suspicion, or a dream of ambition- apply to most lives, and so they often tell things with amazing accuracy until, in some cases, the devil actually gets them to believe that they are prophets sure enough. **So the censorious person practices his gift of ferreting out the evils of others until he loses all his love, mistakes a sharp eye to be a pure heart and, with the help of one of Satan's messengers, comes to think he is an ordained prophet of God, only instead of telling good fortunes he is always telling bad misfortunes. Hence these censorious people, with great calmness of decision, will consign their fellow Christians to hell for any trifling thing that does not agree with them.**

**3. A censorious spirit is never fruitful in saving or perfecting souls in grace, and fortunately if it grows on a person it becomes so offensive as not to reproduce its own self, and so often hinders others from becoming censorious. Persons who are gifted with the discerning of spirits are very seldom useful; in fact, never so, except in those cases where they have been crucified so thoroughly as to be utterly humble and loving, as was the case with Bramwell.**

I have met several persons who had an extraordinary gift of discerning people, whose lives were almost utterly fruitless; and I have met a few who, **like Bramwell, while having deep discernment, were deeply ballasted with meekness and charity.** But discernment by itself is like a razor in the hands of a lunatic. The sharper the instruments, the greater need of brain in the surgeon that handles them; and power to detect sin needs fathomless humility and boundless love to render it useful. A censorious man is one who lives in his head instead of his heart. We can never keep our hearts warm except by living in them. A creature that should be nothing but an enormous eye, without a breast or heart, would be a m

monster; and a censorious person lives in his eye and lets his heart out to freeze. **Truth of itself can never bear fruit.**

**It is only when truth is heated with love that it has the power of reproduction.**

Censorious people think they bear fruit because they make such a stir, and if they can cause others distress, or vexation, or bring on a quarrel, or a sharp debate, or brow-beat some timid soul till he weeps, they think that is fruit.

Fecundity, that is the fountain of fruit bearing, lies in the heart and is destroyed by censoriousness. **As a rule, a censorious person has some glaring and serious inconsistency in his own life, and while he represents the path of holiness as very hard to others, he makes it exceedingly easy for himself.**

There is nothing more cheap than a rigorous theology, and nothing more costly than to let our love crucify our judgments, and always run out beyond our discernment. A censorious spirit is a mule in the moral species, an adept at kicking, but having no fecundity.

**4. A censorious person is always uneasy at the large-hearted mercy or grace of a holy soul.** He seems distressed lest some people should slip through the gates into Heaven that he thinks ought to go to Hell. Whenever he mentions having mercy or grace for others, he generally prefaces it with, "I believe in charity, but not in sentimentalism, or letting people off too easy." **Nothing so shocks a censorious spirit as coming in contact with a great ocean-hearted love that makes allowances for people, and looks on the hopeful side.** There is a sort of mania for religious severity, which is developed by the practice of censoriousness. It is said that butchers, after a while, grow nervous, and morose, and develop a tendency to suicide, from the habitual slaughter of cattle and the sight of so much blood. **The case is similar with a censorious person; if he is not tempted to commit literal suicide, he does kill himself spiritually.**

**Severity, even though accompanied with many gifts and some charitable grace, will soon wear its welcome out, make enemies where there is no need to, cripples weak believers by binding on them artificial burdens, disgusts quiet, sensible people, keeps itself in constant hot water, and then imagines itself a heroic martyr.**

In many cases censorious people at last get broken down and mellowed into a little love just before they die. It is not a rare occurrence that people prophesy the death of some professing Christians by this symptom of mellowness and love that at last breaks through the crust of their harsh lives, and proves that divine grace was strong enough to live hidden in their souls through years of frostiness of disposition. **Oh, what a loss, to wake up at last and find that years have been thrown away in censorious, self-righteous fretting over the defects of others, instead of pouring the soul out in a constant stream of humble kindness and fruitful love for others! Even sulphuric acid cannot hurt pure gold, but a censorious spirit will terribly eat away the crown of rewards that is being prepared for many a brow.**

A censorious preacher, in presenting Christ on the cross, will magnify the iron nails far more than the blessed person of Jesus. Some people talk as if there were nothing about crucifixion except the nails, whereas it is the living, loving heart that consents to be nailed, which is the only thing worth our attention. **Severe people talk much of crucifixion, but the deepest crucifixion possible on earth is to agree persistently to have our whole nature turned into love. To make a censorious person forever relinquish all his severity toward all people, and at all times, and in all ways, would be the deepest crucifixion and would involve the most painful death to self possible in this life. So, after all, nothing kills us to sin and self but divine love.**

Re:, on: 2008/1/19 22:05

I used to think that I was too harsh in the way that I approached people who seem to have apostacyzed, but the Lord showed me that it wasn't them that I was being too harsh to, it was the crippling teachings that they were bestowing on others or themselves that I was targeting. I never intentionally want to hurt anyone, but I guess it's like being a soldier on the front line, there's no time to be nice, or tiptoe around the truth, you gotta get your weapon and kill or be killed. The enemy is aiming for your head, and he wants to take you out.

It's hard to be soft when you're in a battle. I can remember people saying things to me, that at the time, kinda made me mad, but the more I thought about it, the more I realized what they were saying was true, and even though I felt like it was directed straight at me, it was usually directed to what I was promoting.

There was a time when I was so weak that I could barely stand, because I was so messed up in my mind about what was what. It's real.



It took the Lord himself to teach me who I was, and who I was in him. Once I learned this I became solid and strong. Let me carify that I'm only strong in Christ. If I step away from my strength I become as weak as a puppy. I think God for putting me through the furnace to get me to where I am now.

Re:, on: 2008/3/5 22:26

James 3:1-12

*1 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. 2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. 3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. 4 Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. 5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. 7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: 8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. 10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. 11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? 12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.*

The foregoing chapter shows how unprofitable and dead faith is without works. It is plainly intimated by what this chapter first goes upon that such a faith is, however, apt to make men conceited and magisterial in their tempers and their talk. Those who set up faith in the manner the former chapter condemns are most apt to run into those sins of the tongue which this chapter condemns. And indeed the best need to be cautioned against a dictating, censorious, mischievous use of their tongues. We are therefore taught,

I. Not to use our tongues so as to lord it over others: My brethren, be not many masters, &c., v. 1. These words do not forbid doing what we can to direct and instruct others in the way of their duty or to reprove them in a Christian way for what is amiss; but we must not affect to speak and act as those who are continually assuming the chair, we must not prescribe to one another, so as to make our own sentiments a standard by which to try all others, because God gives various gifts to men, and expects from each according to that measure of light which he gives. "Therefore by not many masters" (or teachers, as some read it); "do not give yourselves the air of teachers, imposers, and judges, but rather speak with the humility and spirit of learners; do not censure one another, as if all must be brought to your standard." This is enforced by two reasons.

1. Those who thus set up for judges and censurers shall receive the greater condemnation. Our judging others will but make our own judgment the more strict and severe, Matt. vii. 1, 2. Those who are curious to spy out the faults of others, and arrogant in passing censures upon them, may expect that God will be as extreme in marking what they say and do amiss.

2. Another reason given against such acting the master is because **we are all sinners**: In many things we offend all, v. 2. Were we to think more of our own mistakes and offenses, we should be less apt to judge other people. While we are severe against what we count offensive in others, we do not consider how much there is in us which is justly offensive to them. Self-justifiers are commonly self-deceivers. We are all guilty before God; and those who vaunt it over the frailties and infirmities of others little think how many things they offend in themselves. Nay, perhaps their magisterial deportment, and censorious tongues, may prove worse than any faults they condemn in others. Let us learn to be severe in judging ourselves, but charitable in our judgments of other people.

II. We are taught to govern our tongue so as to prove ourselves perfect and upright men, and such as have an entire government over ourselves: If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. It is here implied that he whose conscience is affected by tongue-sins, and who takes care to avoid them, is an upright man, and has an undoubted sign of true grace. But, on the other hand, if a man seemeth to be religious (as was declared in the first chapter) and bridled not his tongue, whatever profession he makes, that man's religion is vain. Further, he that offends not in word will not only prove himself a sincere Christian, but a very much advanced and improved Christian. For the wisdom and grace which enable him to rule his tongue will enable him also to rule all his actions. This we have illustrated by two comparisons:—

1. The governing and guiding of all the motions of a horse, by the bit which is put into his mouth: Behold, we put bits into the horses' mouths, that they may obey us, and we turn about their whole body, v. 3. There is a great deal of brutish fierceness and wantonness in us. This shows itself very much by the tongue: so that this must be bridled; according to Ps. cxix. 1, I will keep my mouth with a bridle (or, I will bridle my mouth) while the wicked is before me. The more quick and lively the tongue is, the more should we thus take care to govern it. Otherwise, as an unruly and ungovernable horse runs away with his rider, or throws him, so an unruly tongue will serve those in like manner who have no command over it. Whereas, let resolution and watchfulness, under the influence of the grace of God, bridle the tongue, and then all the motions and actions of the whole body will be easily guided and overruled.

2. The governing of a ship by the right management of the helm: Behold also the ships, which though they are so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things, v. 4, 5. As the helm is a very small part of the ship, so is the tongue a very small part of the body: but the right governing of the helm or rudder will steer and turn the ship as the governor pleases; and a right management of the tongue is, in a great measure, the government of the whole man. There is a wonderful beauty in these comparisons, to show how things of small bulk may yet be of vast use. And hence we should learn to make the due management of our tongues more our study, because, though they are little members, they are capable of doing a great deal of good or a great deal of hurt. Therefore,

**III. We are taught to dread an unruly tongue as one of the greatest and most pernicious evils.** It is compared to a little fire placed among a great deal of combustible matter, which soon raises a flame and consumes all before it: Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, &c., v. 5, 6. There is such an abundance of sin in the tongue that it may be called a world of iniquity. How many defilements does it occasion! How many and dreadful flames does it kindle! So is the tongue among the members that it defileth the whole body. Observe hence, There is a great pollution and defilement in sins of the tongue. Defiling passions are kindled, vented, and cherished by this unruly member. And the whole body is often drawn into sin and guilt by the tongue. Therefore Solomon says, Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, Eccles. v. 6. The snares into which men are sometimes led by the tongue are insufferable to themselves and destructive of others. It setteth on fire the course of nature. The affairs of mankind and of societies are often thrown into confusion, and all is on a flame, by the tongues of men. Some read it, all our generations are set on fire by the tongue. There is no age of the world, nor any condition of life, private or public, but will afford examples of this. And it is set on fire of hell. Observe hence, Hell has more to do in promoting of fire of the tongue than men are generally aware of. It is from some diabolical designs, that men's tongues are inflamed. The devil is expressly called a liar, a murderer, an accuser of the brethren; and, whenever men's tongues are employed in any of these ways, they are set on fire of hell. The Holy Ghost indeed once descended in cloven tongues as of fire, Acts ii. And, where the tongue is thus guided and wrought upon by a fire from heaven, there it kindleth good thoughts, holy affections, and ardent devotions. But when it is set on fire of hell, as in all undue heats it is, there it is mischievous, producing rage and hatred, and those things which serve the purposes of the devil. As therefore you would dread fires and flames, you should dread contentions, revilings, slanders, lies, and every thing that would kindle the fire of wrath in your own spirit or in the spirits of others. But,

**IV. We are next taught how very difficult a thing it is to govern the tongue:** For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed, of mankind. But the tongue can no man tame, v. 7, 8. As if the apostle had said, "Lions, and the most savage beasts, as well as horses and camels, and creatures of the greatest strength, have been tamed and governed by men: so have birds, notwithstanding their wildness and timorousness, and their wings to bear them up continually out of our reach: even serpents, notwithstanding all their venom and all their cunning, have been made familiar and harmless: and things in the sea have been taken by men, and made serviceable to them. And these creatures have not been subdued nor tamed by miracle only (as the lions crouched to Daniel, instead of devouring him, and ravens fed Elijah, and a whale carried Jonah through the depths of the sea to dry land), but what is here spoken of is something commonly done; not only hath been tamed, but is tamed of mankind. **Yet the tongue is worse than these,** and cannot be tamed by the power and art which serves to tame these things. No man can tame the tongue without supernatural grace and assistance." The apostle does not intend to represent it as a thing impossible, but as a thing extremely difficult, which therefore will require great watchfulness, and pains, and prayer, to keep it in due order. And sometimes all is too little; for it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Brute creatures may be kept within certain bounds, they may be managed by certain rules, and even serpents may be so used as to do not hurt with all their poison; but the tongue is apt to break through all bounds and rules, and to spit out its poison on one occasion or other, notwithstanding the utmost care. So that not only does it need to be watched, and guarded, and governed, as much as an unruly beast, or a hurtful and poisonous creature, but much more care and pains will be needful to prevent the mischievous out

breakings and effects of the tongue. However,

V. We are taught to think of the use we make of our tongues in religion and in the service of God, and by such a consideration to keep it from cursing, censuring, and every thing that is evil on other occasions: Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be, v. 9, 10. How absurd is it that those who use their tongues in prayer and praise should ever use them in cursing, slandering, and the like! If we bless God as our Father, it should teach us to speak well of, and kindly to, all who bear his image. That tongue which addresses with reverence the divine Being cannot, without the greatest inconsistency, turn upon fellow-creatures with reviling brawling language. It is said of the seraphim that praise God, they dare not bring a railing accusation. And for men to reproach those who have not only the image of God in their natural faculties, but are renewed after the image of God by the grace of the gospel: this is a most shameful contradiction to all their pretensions of honouring the great Original. These things ought not so to be; and, if such considerations were always at hand, surely they would not be. **Piety is disgraced in all the shows of it, if there be not charity.** That tongue confutes itself which one while pretends to adore the perfections of God, and to refer all things to him, and another while will condemn even good men if they do not just come up to the same words or expressions used by it. Further, to fix this thought, the apostle shows that contrary effects from the same causes are monstrous, and not be found in nature, and therefore cannot be consistent with grace: Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig-tree bear olive-berries, or a vine, figs? Or doth the same spring yield both salt water and fresh? v. 11, 12. True religion will not admit of contradictions; and a truly religious man can never allow of them either in his words or his actions. How many sins would this prevent, and recover men from, to put them upon being always consistent with themselves!

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, **without partiality**, and without hypocrisy

6. Heavenly wisdom is without partiality. The original word, *adiakritos*, signifies to be without suspicion, or free from judging, making no undue surmises nor differences in our conduct towards one person more than another. The margin reads it, without wrangling, not acting the part of sectaries, and disputing merely for the sake of a party; nor censuring others purely on account of their differing from us. The wisest men are least apt to be censurers.

-Matthew Henry  
<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/henry/mhc6.Jam.iv.html>

## Geneva Bible

*It was from reading the Geneva Bible that I realized that James 3 was even talking about judging and slander. So I went and looked up Matthew Henry and found the above treasure chest of insight and wisdom!*

### Notes on verse 1

• *My brethren, be not many masters* – Let no man usurp (as most men ambitiously do) authority to judge and censure others righteously.

• *Knowing that we...* - A reason: Because they provoke God's severity against themselves, which do so curiously and rigorously condemn others, being themselves guilty and faulty.

• *...Shall receive greater condemnation* – unless we surcease from this master-like and proud finding fault with others.

### Notes on verse 9

• *Therewith bless we God even the Father, and therewith curse we men, which are made after...* - Amongst other faults of the tongue, the Apostle chiefly reproveth backbiting and speaking evil of our neighbors, even in them especially which otherwise seem godly and religious.

• *Similitude of God* – He denieth by two reasons, that God can be praised by that man, that useth cursed speaking, or

to backbite: first because man is the image of God, which, whosoever reverenceth not doth not honor God himself.

Verse 17, "But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, **without judging**, and without hypocrisy."

Re:, on: 2008/3/5 22:41

This morning during qt I was so surprised to find two subjects come together that I have been studying, judging and ([https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic\\_id22240&forum34](https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id22240&forum34)) slander! I was amazed to read this:

Psalm 50:20 Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son.

Slandering (v. 20): "**Thou sittest, and speakest against thy brother, dost basely abuse and misrepresent him, maliciously judge and censure him, and pass sentence upon him, as if you wert his master to whom he must stand or fall**, whereas he is thy brother, as good as thou art, and upon the level with thee, for he is thy own mother's son. He is thy near relation, whom thou oughtest to love, to vindicate, and stand up for, if others abused him; yet thou dost thyself abuse him, whose faults thou oughtest to cover and make the best of; if really he had done amiss, yet thou dost most falsely and unjustly charge him with that which he is innocent of; thou sittest and doest this, as a judge upon the bench, with authority; thou sittest in the seat of the scornful, to deride and backbite those whom thou oughtest to respect and be kind to." Those that do ill themselves commonly delight in speaking ill of others.

-Matthew Henry

To slander someone is to usurp the throne of God in judging and censuring them!

Still learning... :-D

Re:, on: 2008/3/6 8:54

Quote:

-----To slander someone is to usurp the throne of God in judging and censuring them!  
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Oh But thank Martin Luther for those 96 stones he threw, rocking his generation out of the establishment.

I guess it depends on what side one stands as to whether one is considered unloving or judgmental. I'm sure the Catholic Church called him a slanderer censuring them!

All things should be JUDGED against scripture, as Martin Luther did.

We also shouldn't judge those whom God has raised up for these things. That would be judging too.

Judge nothing before it's time when God will  
bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will manifest the councils of the Heart.

Katy

Re: God's faithful working in me..., on: 2008/3/6 10:08

Quote:

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Roniya wrote:

**Judging**

Why do we condemn those with whom we disagree? Why is it so difficult to accept a brother or sister who seems different? Or believes differently? Why can't we love them?

*"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful, disputations." Romans 14:1*

*Judge: Forming a negative mental opinion, about someone else who does something you would not do yourself - God commands us not to do this of our brethren!*

*"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Romans 14:1-12*

We shall each stand before the Bema Seat of Christ and give account of ourselves. This judging spirit will probably be far more grievous in the eyes of Christ than that which we judged in our brother or sister.

*"Take this for a general rule: spend your zeal in those things wherein you and all the people of God are agreed and do not dispute matters that are doubtful." - Matthew Henry*

*"We make ourselves our brethren's Masters and do in effect usurp the throne of God, when we take upon us thus to judge them, especially to judge their thoughts and intentions, which are out of our view, to judge their persons and state, concerning which it is hard to conclude by those few indications which fall within our cognizance." - Matthew Henry*

*"In judging and censuring our brethren, we meddle with that which does not belong to us. We have work enough to do at home, and if we must needs be judging, let us exercise our faculty upon our own heart and ways." - Matthew Henry*

*"Christ is the gain we aim at, living and dying. We live to glorify Him in all the actions and affairs of life...Christ is the centre, in which all the lines of life and death do meet. This is true Christianity which makes Christ all in all." - Matthew Henry*

*"Now if Christ paid so dearly for His dominion over souls and consciences, and has such a just and undisputed right to exercise dominion, we must not so much as seem to invade it, or entrench upon it, by judging the conscience of our brethren, and arraigning them at our bar." Matthew Henry*

*"A believing regard to the judgment of the great day would silence all these rash judgments." Matthew Henry*

*"...He that is strict in judging himself and abasing himself will not be apt to judge and despise his brother." Matthew Henry*

*"Those are most pleasing to God that are best pleased with Him." Matthew Henry*

*"Acceptance of God is to be desired and aimed at in the first place, because, sooner or later, God will bring all the world to be of His mind." Matthew Henry*

When you see a brother or sister failing in an area in which God has worked in your life, don't judge them as being failures but rather in humility thank God for what He has done in your life, express grateful praise to Him, then humbly ask Him to work in that brother or sister and lead them in the way of truth. Cause for humility: Why should God reveal a certain truth to you? For what reason are you worthy of all the mercies He has given you? Should it not put us in the dust that God has worked thus in our lives?!!

*"Lord, help us always to assume the good in a brother or sister." Prayer of a Christian*

*"Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God." Psalm 50:19, 20, 23*

Instead of slandering a brother, offer praise to God for what He is doing in that brother or sister's life. Then God will be glorified. We must leave the perfecting process in God's Hands.

*"Thus let us endeavour to make the name of God glorious and renowned. If God seek our good, let us seek His glory. If He make all things tend to our edification, let us make all things tend to His exaltation." Thomas Watson*

*"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6*

*"The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands." Psalm 138:8*

*"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God"*

od our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Jude 24-25

The above thoughts and quotes come from the Lord's working and revealing these things to me. The Matthew Henry quotes are from his commentary on Romans 14.

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A couple weeks ago the Lord was revealing to me a very critical and judgmental spirit in me toward my brothers and sisters in Christ. It just broke me to realize there was such pride in me, and that I would treat my fellow brothers and sisters with such unkindness; even if they do not know of my thoughts about them, it is a grief to the body of Christ that I would do this. And it is a reproach to my Father, because just as He is working in me, so He is working in His other children. And to criticize a brother or sister in Christ is criticizing God's very work in their lives! Oh! To be critical of the working of God, that is so serious. The Lord has been so gracious to me in revealing this to me. With His grace and help I am seeking to love my brothers and sisters and accept them where they're at. How needy I am! And, how I praise God for His perfecting process in not only me but also in my brothers and sisters in the Lord. Praise God for His faithfulness! I would ask my brothers and sisters to pray for me that God would work in me a spirit of love and humility toward the body of Christ. I can testify that He is already doing this, and in revealing these things to me He has been changing my heart.

These last couple weeks as I have prepared and prayed for the upcoming conferences I will be attending God has really been working on me and peeling back the layers and showing me the need in my own life. It is good to set aside times of prayer and self-examination of our own lives as we prepare for the upcoming revival conference. It's amazing what God reveals to us if we will only humbly come before Him and make ourselves available for the searching light of His Holy Spirit.

I do realize that there is to be a proper spirit of judging in the body of Christ toward sin that is manifested by professing Christians. (https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id19141&forum34) This article is an excellent example on that type of judging. But how often do we overlook these big sins because we fear to offend someone, yet have no difficulty whatsoever nitpicking, slandering, and tearing down the character of a brother or sister who is seeking God? I confess, my natural, fleshly tendency has been to do the latter...but with God's grace and help I am determined not to do this.

I didn't undertake this study for the sake of SI, it was for me, and to retain this lesson that God is teaching me that I might review it and not forget His gracious workings. But I wanted to share it here for others who are earnestly seeking God to go deeper with Him and live lives that are pleasing and glorifying to Him.

Blessings,

~Joy
~~~~~

Wow, I must say Roniya, I was a little shocked when I read this. I'm sorry if I misjudged you from your article ([https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic\\_id22240&forum34&43](https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id22240&forum34&43)) HERE. It seems like such a huge contrast but if we combine these two articles I completely agree with you sister. :-)

**Re:, on: 2008/3/6 10:19**

Quote:

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Heismypeace wrote:

Wow, I must say Roniya, I was a little shocked when I read this. I'm sorry if I misjudged you from your article (https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id22240&forum34&43) HERE. It seems like such a huge contrast but if we combine these two articles I completely agree with you sister. :-)

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Thank you, sister! This is such an encouragement (and relief!) for me to read; I'm so glad to know that we are actually on the same page! In the last couple of days I have been seeing how these two threads really do tie together. God is good to lead us along and teach us these things!

May His peace be with you today, sister, in a very real and tangible way.

With love,  
Joy

Re:, on: 2008/3/12 13:47

Life is hard for most people

(J. R. Miller, "Counsel and Help" 1907)

*"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love." Ephesians 4:2*

We should train ourselves to such regard, to such respect for others, that we shall never hurt the heart of one of God's creatures, even by a disdainful look!

Our love ought also to be patient. Our neighbor may have his faults—but we are taught to bear with one another's infirmities. If we knew the story of men's lives, the hidden loads and burdens which they are often carrying, the unhealed sore in their heart—we would have most gentle patience with them. **Life is hard for most people; certainly hard enough without our adding to its burdens by our censoriousness, our unkindness, our jeering and contempt.**

*"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Colossians 3:12*

Re: - posted by bonni (), on: 2008/6/21 20:54

Roniya quoted

"We should train ourselves to such regard, to such respect for others, that we shall never hurt the heart of one of God's creatures, even by a disdainful look!"

This is so good, it reminds me of the quote from Robert C Chapman from the booklet, Agape Leadership.

"To forgive without upbraiding, even by manner or look, is a high exercise of grace-- it is imitation of Christ"

Blessings, bonni

Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2008/6/21 21:07

Quote:

-----"To forgive without upbraiding, even by manner or look, is a high exercise of grace-- it is imitation of Christ"  
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Great quote bonni. Thanks for sharing it.



I'm glad this thread resurfaced. I needed to read it again.

Grace and peace

Re:, on: 2008/6/21 21:11

Quote:

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bonni wrote:

"To forgive without upbraiding, even by manner or look, is a high exercise of grace-- it is imitation of Christ"

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Wow, that *is* a great quote! Thanks, Bonni, for adding it to this thread!

Re:, on: 2008/10/13 12:15

More nuggets from Matthew Henry in John 7

*"Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?" John 7:19*

"(1.) He argues against them by way of recrimination, convicting them of far worse practices, v. 19. How could they for shame censure him for a breach of the law of Moses, when they themselves were such notorious breakers of it? Did not Moses give you the law? And it was their privilege that they had the law, no nation had such a law; but it was their wickedness that none of them kept the law, that they rebelled against it, and lived contrary to it. Many that have the law given them, when they have it do not keep it. Their neglect of the law was universal: None of you keepeth it: neither those of them that were in posts of honour, who should have been most knowing, nor those who were in posts of subjection, who should have been most obedient. They boasted of the law, and pretended a zeal for it, and were enraged at Christ for seeming to transgress it, and yet none of them kept it; like those who say that they are for the church, and yet never go to church. It was an aggravation of their wickedness, in persecuting Christ for breaking the law, that they themselves did not keep it: "None of you keepeth the law, why then go ye about to kill me for not keeping it?"

**Note, Those are commonly most censorious of others who are most faulty themselves. Thus hypocrites, who are forward to pull a mote out of their brother's eye, are not aware of a beam in their own.**

"Those who would be like Christ must put up with affronts, and pass by the indignities and injuries done them; must not regard them, much less resent them, and least of all revenge them. *I, as a deaf man, heard not. When Christ was reviled, he reviled not again.*"

"It is very absurd and unreasonable for us to condemn others for that in which we justify ourselves."

*"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." John 7:24*

"He concludes this argument with that rule (v. 24): Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. This may be applied, either, First, In particular, to this work which they quarrelled with as a violation of the law. Be not partial in your judgment; judge not, *kat opsin*—with respect of persons; knowing faces, as the Hebrew phrase is, Deut. i. 17.

**It is contrary to the law of justice, as well as charity, to censure those who differ in opinion from us as transgressors, in taking that liberty which yet in those of our own party, and way, and opinion, we allow of; as it is also to commend that in some as necessary strictness and severity which in others we condemn as imposition and persecution.**

Or, Secondly, In general, to Christ's person and preaching, which they were offended at and prejudiced against. Those things that are false, and designed to impose upon men, commonly appear best when they are judged of according to the outward appearance, they appear most plausible *prima facie*—at the first glance. It was this that gained the Pharisees such an interest and reputation, that they appeared right unto men (Matt. xxiii. 27, 28), and men judged of them by that appearance, and so were sadly mistaken in them. "But," saith Christ, "be not too confident that all are real saints who are seeming ones."

With reference to himself, his outward appearance was far short of his real dignity and excellency, for he took upon himself the form of a servant (Phil. ii. 7), was in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. viii. 3), had no form nor comeliness, Isa. liii. 2. So that those who undertook to judge whether he was the Son of God or no by his outward appearance were not likely to judge righteous judgment. The Jews expected the outward appearance of the Messiah to be pompous and magnificent, and attended with all the ceremonies of secular grandeur; and, judging of Christ by that rule, their judgment was from first to last a continual mistake, for the kingdom of Christ was not to be of this world, nor to come with observation. If a divine power accompanied him, and God bore him witness, and the scriptures were fulfilled in him, though his appearance was ever so mean, they ought to receive him, and to judge by faith, and not by the sight of the eye. See Isa. xi. 3, and 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Christ and his doctrine and doings desire nothing but righteous judgment; if truth and justice may but pass the sentence, Christ and his cause will carry the day.

**We must not judge concerning any by their outward appearance, not by their titles, the figure they make in the world, and their fluttering show, but by their intrinsic worth, and the gifts and graces of God's Spirit in them."**

(<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/henry/mhc5.John.viii.html>) Matthew Henry

**Re:, on: 2008/10/13 12:24**

This is a great thread, Joy. I was thinking of making my own thread on God's faithful working contentment in me. : ) Someone quoted Jeremiah Burroughs to me because they thought I was acting discontent. Well that's why I like Jeremiah Burroughs because I do struggle with contentment. Oh, I would love to say though I have mastered contentment. Wow, could you imagine that? : ) Hopefully soon, yep God's faithful working in me too sister!

**Re: , on: 2008/12/15 21:02**

I just read this excellent piece by A.W. Pink on another thread. It fits in well with the topic of judging and censuring our brethren so I thought I would add it for the edification of anyone who might happen to read this thread.

### **Keep watch over the door of my lips!**

(Arthur Pink, "Evil Speaking" 1935)

"Do not speak evil against each other, brethren." James 4:11

That which is here forbidden, is the saying of anything, be it true or false, to the harm of another. God requires that our words should be governed by "the law of kindness" (Proverbs 31:26), and anything which would hurt or injure the reputation of another, is to be rigidly shunned. Whenever I cannot speak well of my brother or sister, I must say nothing at all. To speak evil of others, proceeds from ill will or malice--desiring that they should be made odious in the esteem of others.

It is devilish to take delight in exposing the faults of fellow-Christians, and stirring up prejudice and bitter feelings against them (Rev. 12:10). God requires that our words should agree with love--as well as with truth. Since Christians are brethren, the last thing they should be guilty of is defaming one another!

Except where the glory of God plainly requires it, and the good of that person demands it--we must refrain from all evil speaking of others. If we are duly occupied with and humbled over our own many faults--we shall have neither time nor inclination to dwell upon or publish those of others! If we properly heed the exhortation of Philippians 4:8, we shall cultivate the habit of admiring the graces in our brethren--instead of being like filthy flies, settling on their sores!

Well may we pray, "Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord! Keep watch over the door of my lips!" Psalm 141:3

([https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic\\_id26414&forum45](https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id26414&forum45)) Taken from this thread

**Re: , on: 2009/5/8 17:12**

ADVOCATE OR ADVERSARY

by Alan Martin

How can we know whether we are walking as advocates or adversaries towards fellow believers and other people in our lives? We can't know it by truth alone, for truth can be used effectively to advocate or accuse, for and against others. Jesus Christ was sent into this world not merely full of truth, for truth was already in the world through the Law of Moses (Romans 2:20); Christ came full of GRACE and truth! Truth not mixed with grace will produce the same effect that the letter of the law has always produced, DEATH: "The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life." Commands, principles, rules, and laws, by themselves, can never produce life; rather, its intended purpose was, "That every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God."

Few people are aware that the law was actually written down and preserved as a witness against Israel Deuteronomy 31 : 24-27 states, "After Moses finished writing in a book the words of this law from beginning to end, he gave this command to the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord: Take this Book of the Law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God. There it will remain as a witness against you. For I know how rebellious and stiff-necked you are." Paul was given great insight into this mystery, and it was he who wrote, "He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross," Colossians 2:14

We would do well to ask ourselves, are we known as advocates for others, or for the many things that we are against. Are we viewed as advocates or adversaries? Many of us have taken clear stands against certain modes of dress, against observance of worldly holidays, against traditional church services, against popular ministries and movements etc; but are we equally known as passionate advocates for sinners in the same way that Christ was while He walked among men. "He bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors." Are we known for all the things we are willing to bear? Paul was, "Therefore, I endure everything for the sake of the elect that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Jesus Christ." Here was a man compelled by the love of Christ, who bore all things, hoped all things, believed all things, and endured all things. How many of us are experiencing this love of Christ?

It is not surprising that it says of Christ, "To Him was given the Spirit without limit," for He did as He taught. He continually prayed to His Father like the man who went to his neighbor seeking to obtain provisions for them. Christ sought no spiritual highs, no new and exciting experiences; rather, He sought what men needed, grace and reconciliation with God. He was selfless in His seeking, His groans, tears and agonies were for others' infirmities, and sorrows. He was pierced for our transgression, and took the punishment that brought us peace. How many of us, like Christ, see men's transgressions clearly, yet not with adversarial eyes? Remember how Paul described Christ's ministry: "That God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them." The question is not whether we can see men's sins clearly, this is no great feat; Satan is better at seeing men's sins than all of us combined, and he is more than willing to lend us a hand if we have failed to notice a particular fault in someone. The real difference is seen in how we react when we see men's sins; do we count them against them, or like Christ, see them and rather than count them against men, choose to make intercession as their advocate.

Seeing sin clearly is not a clear manifestation of spirituality or righteousness; who on earth sees sin better than Satan? It is worth noting that the same Greek word used in II Corinthians 5:19 for "counting against" is also found in I Corinthians 13:5, as an attribute of love: "Love keeps no record of wrongs." In both passages the word denotes that sins were not registered in the memory bank to be used like a prosecutor to prove the criminality of someone. This practice is called "accusation" and comes from the Greek word "katagoras," we derive our English word "to categorize" from this term. Truth apart from grace serves only to categorize men as sinners and to condemn them as guilty by the light of scripture. Prosecutors use the facts of truth to categorize those they are standing against, and to convince jurors and judge

s that men or women are guilty beyond any reasonable doubt. If Christ were to take this role towards us, we would all be found guilty beyond all shadow of doubt; however, He chose the role of an advocate pleading not for our innocence, but for our pardon. His groans before the Father came from the perfect love that knew His grace could rehabilitate the vilest sinner He had seen.

Who knew this reality better than Paul, the persecutor, the violent blasphemer, public enemy number one to the church. "Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst, But for this very reason I was shown mercy so that in me the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display His unlimited patience as an example for those who would later believe on Him and receive eternal life." When God wanted to demonstrate His love and patience, He used Saul of Tarsus, who was persecuting Christ Himself, and showered him with grace, love, and mercy; too few know all too little of this love. Can we even endure dull services without powerful praise and worship, or an assembly of people in much need of grace and help from God? There are those who almost boast that they are against Sunday school, against stifling traditions, against One Pastor churches, against Calvinists, against eternal security, against instruments, against contemporary praise choruses etc., etc. and on and on. Such standards, if not taken in the love and grace of Christ, serve only to puff up the mind of the flesh in vain pride unto a subtle form of Gnosticism, the subtle cult of the "we have more knowledge"!

Will we wake up to the reality that when such divisions are among us, they likely indicate what Paul said, "you are completely defeated already!" O that God would raise up men and women who know how to contend for others rather than against them, "striving to preserve the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." Where are men like Paul, who say, "I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish" and I have become all things to all men that I might possibly win some"? There are families who want no part of feeling obligated to anyone, much less to commit themselves to help a local assembly of believers whose condition repels them. It seems more believers can relate to having dreams like "take my son and flee to Egypt" than are compelled by dreams with "someone in Macedonia saying, come over and help us"; something is very wrong about this picture!

Are we advocates for others, for the church, for the wise and the foolish alike, or are we adversaries taking a firm stand against anything we deem as untrue? What if God were to act towards us in the same way we act towards others; would we experience His patience, kindness, gentleness and mercy; or would we find that He has withdrawn from us like we have from those we have judged as incomplete, or impure? If we would be filled with the Spirit of Christ, it will not be for a self-fulfilling end. Why should God the Father send His precious Spirit just to make us feel good, and enjoy some new spiritual high? This attitude knows nothing of the spirit and purpose of the cross of Christ. Those who spend themselves on behalf of the hungry, who give themselves to make intercession for the transgressors, will be the ones who experience the Spirit of God in power and might. Consider the promises given ONLY to God's servants in Isaiah 65: 13-14, "My servants will eat, but you will go hungry, my servants will drink, but you will go thirsty, my servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame. My servants will sing out of the joy of their hearts, but you will cry out from anguish of spirit."

Does this describe our lives: servants with a lavish supply of grace and mercy, sharing spiritual bread with the hungry and destitute? Are we eating and drinking the full supply of the fruit of the Spirit, rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory, singing out of the joy of our hearts? Those ministering in the Spirit experience the "living water flowing out of their innermost being." If we only live in the truth of the Law, we experience a yoke of bondage that Peter said, "Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear?" The Spirit is given to those asking to be filled, not for themselves but to enable them to minister the grace of God to others in need.

One last word just in case someone is wondering: "What about Laodiceans?" We should remember two things: the Spirit directed John to write "to the church of Laodicea" not just about it; secondly, Paul agonized in prayer for (as an advocate) this very church, as did Epaphras. It takes spirit filled, faith filled, and wisdom filled saints, to advocate for the body of Christ, any backslider in heart can categorize and tear down assemblies. One more thing, even Jesus' words to John indicated He was knocking on the door seeking to enter rather than exit.

Are we advocates or adversaries?

Re: Christ Anointed at Bethany, on: 2009/8/24 14:30

### Christ Anointed at Bethany.

6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, 7 There came unto him a woman having an alaba-ster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. 8 But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? 9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. 10 When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. 11 For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. 12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. 13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her. Matthew 26

In this passage of story, we have,

#### I. The singular kindness of a good woman to our Lord Jesus in anointing his head, v. 6, 7.

It was in Bethany, a village hard by Jerusalem, and in the house of Simon the leper. Probably, he was one who had been miraculously cleansed from his leprosy by our Lord Jesus, and he would express his gratitude to Christ by entertaining him; nor did Christ disdain to converse with him, to come in to him, and sup with him. Though he was cleansed, yet he was as called Simon the leper. Those who are guilty of scandalous sins, will find that, though the sin be pardoned, the reproach will cleave to them, and will hardly be wiped away. The woman that did this, is supposed to have been Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. And Dr. Lightfoot thinks it was the same that was called Mary Magdalene. She had a box of ointment very precious, which she poured upon the head of Christ as he sat at meat. This, among us, would be a strange sort of compliment. But it was then accounted the highest piece of respect; for the smell was very grateful, and the ointment itself refreshing to the head. David had his head anointed, Ps. xxiii. 5; Luke vii. 46. Now this may be looked upon,

1. As an act of faith in our Lord Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah, the anointed. To signify that she believed in him as God's anointed, whom he had set king, she anointed him, and made him her king. They shall appoint themselves one head, Hos. i. 11. This is kissing the Son.

2. As an act of love and respect to him. Some think that this was she who loved much at first, and washed Christ's feet with her tears (Luke vii. 38, 47); and that she had not left her first love, but was now as affectionate in the devotions of a grown Christian as she was in those of a young beginner. *Note, Where there is true love in the heart to Jesus Christ, nothing will be thought too good, no, nor good enough, to bestow upon him.*

#### II. The offence which the disciples took at this.

They had indignation (v. 8, 9), were vexed to see this ointment thus spent, which they thought might have been better bestowed.

1. See how they expressed their offence at it. They said, To what purpose is this waste? Now this bespeaks,

(1.) Want of tenderness toward this good woman, in interpreting her over-kindness (suppose it was so) to be wastefulness. Charity teaches us to put the best construction upon every thing that it will bear, especially upon the words and actions of those that are zealously affected in doing a good thing, though we may think them not altogether so discreet in it as they might be. It is true, there may be over-doing in well-doing; but thence we must learn to be cautious ourselves, lest we run into extremes, but not to be censorious of others; because that which we may impute to the want of prudence, God may accept as an instance of abundant love. We must not say, Those do too much in religion, that do more than we do, but rather aim to do as much as they.

(2.) Want of respect to their Master. The best we can make of it, is, that they knew their Master was perfectly dead to all the delights of sense; he that was so much grieved for the affliction of Joseph, cared not for being anointed with the chief ointments, Amos vi. 6. And therefore they thought such pleasures ill bestowed upon one who took so little pleasure in them. But supposing that, it did not become them to call it waste, when they perceived that he admitted and accepted it as a token of his friend's love. *Note, We must take heed of thinking any thing waste, which is bestowed upon the Lord Jesus, either by others or by ourselves. We must not think that time waste, that is spent in the service of Christ, or that money waste, which is laid out in any work of piety; for, though it seem to be cast upon the waters, to be thrown down the river, we shall find it again, to advantage, after many days, Eccl. xi. 1.*

2. See how they excused their offence at it, and what pretence they made for it; This ointment might have been sold for

much, and given to the poor. Note, It is no new thing for bad affections to shelter themselves under specious covers; for people to shift off works of piety under colour of works of charity.

**III. The reproof Christ gave to his disciples for the offence at this good woman (v. 10, 11);**

Why trouble ye the woman? Note, It is a great trouble to good people to have their good works censured and misconstrued; and it is a thing that Jesus Christ takes very ill. He here took part with a good, honest, zealous, well-meaning woman, against all his disciples, though they seemed to have so much reason on their side; so heartily does he espouse the cause of the offended little ones, ch. xviii. 10.

Observe his reason; You have the poor always with you. Note,

1. There are some opportunities of doing and getting good which are constant, and which we must give constant attendance to the improvement of. Bibles we have always with us, sabbaths always with us, and so the poor, we have always with us. Note, Those who have a heart to do good, never need complain for want of opportunity. The poor never ceased even out of the land of Israel, Deut. xv. 11. We cannot but see some in this world, who call for our charitable assistance, who are as God's receivers, some poor members of Christ, to whom he will have kindness shown as to himself.

2. There are other opportunities of doing and getting good, which come but seldom, which are short and uncertain, and require more peculiar diligence in the improvement of them, and which ought to be preferred before the other; "Me ye have not always, therefore use me while ye have me." Note,

(1.) Christ's constant bodily presence was not to be expected here in this world; it was expedient that he should go away; his real presence in the eucharist is a fond and groundless conceit, and contradicts what he here said, Me ye have not always.

(2.) Sometimes special works of piety and devotion should take place of common works of charity. The poor must not rob Christ; we must do good to all, but especially to the household of faith.

(<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/henry/mhc5.Matt.xxvii.html>) Matthew Henry's Commentary on Matthew 26