



Just Grow Up!

James - A Manual for Maturity

Stop Playing God

August 5 & 6, 2023

James 4:11-12 (NLT)

Don't speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters. If you criticize and judge each other, then you are criticizing and judging God's law. But your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you. God alone, who gave the law, is the Judge. He alone has the power to save or to destroy. So what right do you have to judge your neighbor?

"People literally evaluate who they think you are or who they've heard you are without knowing who you really are."

- Rick Long

When I judge others, I'm playing God.

Why do I judge people?

- **To make my sins seem insignificant.**

Romans 2:2-3a (MSG)

But God isn't so easily diverted. He sees right through all such smoke screens and holds you to what you've done. You didn't think, did you, that just by pointing your finger at others you would distract God from seeing all your misdoings and from coming down on you hard?

- **It appeals to my ungodly curiosity.**

Proverbs 26:22 (TEV)

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

- **It puts me in a position of control.**

Romans 16:17-18 (TPT)

And now, dear brothers and sisters, I'd like to give one final word of caution: Watch out for those who cause divisions and offenses among you. When they antagonize you by speaking of things that are contrary to the teachings that you've received, don't be caught in their snare! For people like this are not truly serving the Lord, our Messiah, but are being driven by their own desires for a following. Utilizing their smooth words and well-rehearsed blessings, they seek to deceive the hearts of innocent ones.

Three reasons I should never judge a person's heart:

1. We are all part of God's family.

James 4:11a (TPT)

Dear friends, as part of God's family, never speak against another family member...

Slander and gossip are of the Devil.

2. We are called to be loving.

James 4:11b (TPT)

...you violate God's law of love.

James 2:8 (TPT)

Your calling is to fulfill the royal law of love as given to us in this Scripture: "You must love and value your neighbor as you love and value yourself!" For keeping this law is the noble way to live.

3. We are not holy or righteous enough to judge anyone's motives.

James 4:12 (TPT)

There is only one true Lawgiver and Judge, the One who has the power to save and destroy—so who do you think you are to judge your neighbor?

James 1:26 (NLT)

If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless.

The 7 Qualifications for Judging Others:

1 I'm not practicing the same sin.

Romans 2:1-3 (TPT)

No matter who you are, before you judge the wickedness of others, you had better remember this: you are also without excuse, for you too are guilty of the same kind of things! When you judge others, and then do the same things they do, you condemn yourself. We know that God's judgment falls upon those who practice these things. God is always right, because he has all the facts. And no matter who you think you are, when you judge others who do these things and then do the same things yourself, what makes you think that you will escape God's judgment?

2 My judgement hasn't blinded me to my own faults.

Matthew 7:3-5 (TPT)

Why would you focus on the flaw in someone else's life and fail to notice the glaring flaws of your own? How could you say to your friend, 'Let me show you where you're wrong,' when you're guilty of even more? You're being hypocritical and a hypocrite! First acknowledge and deal with your own 'blind spots,' and then you'll be capable of dealing with the 'blind spot' of your friend.

3

I never draw conclusions based on a person's appearance of doing wrong.

John 7:24 (NIV)

Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly.

4

I know all the facts and have heard all the reasons.

John 7:51 (NLT)

"Is it legal to convict a man before he is given a hearing?" he asked.

5

I am not influenced by a person's religion or lack of religion.

Colossians 2:16-18 (TPT)

So why would you allow anyone to judge you because of what you eat or drink, or insist that you keep the feasts, observe new moon celebrations, or the Sabbath? All of these were but a prophetic shadow and the evidence of what would be fulfilled, for the body is now Christ! Don't let anyone disqualify you from your prize! Don't let their pretended sincerity fool you as they deliberately lead you into their initiation of angel worship. For they take pleasure in pretending to be experts of something they know nothing about. Their reasoning is meaningless and comes only from their own opinions.

6

I never speak evil about anyone, ever.

James 4:11a (TPT)

Dear friends, as part of God's family, never speak against another family member...

Ephesians 4:29 (TPT)

And never let ugly or hateful words come from your mouth, but instead let your words become beautiful gifts that encourage others; do this by speaking words of grace to help them.

7

I know every motive in a person's heart that has driven their action.

1 Corinthians 4:5 (TPT)

So resist the temptation to pronounce premature judgment on anything before the appointed time when all will be fully revealed. Instead, wait until the Lord makes his appearance, for he will bring all that is hidden in darkness to light and unveil every secret motive of everyone's heart. Then, when the whole truth is known, each will receive praise from God.

Jeremiah 17:9 (NLT)

The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?

Use TLC when discerning a situation:

- **Treat people the way I want to be treated when I stumble.**

Matthew 7:1-2 (NIV)

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

- **Look up to God as the only true Judge.**

Romans 14:12-13 (NLT)

Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God. So let's stop condemning each other. Decide instead to live in such a way that you will not cause another believer to stumble and fall.

- **Communicate the same grace and mercy God has given to me.**

John 8:3, 7, 10-11 (NLT)

As he was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd... They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!” ...Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, “Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?” “No, Lord,” she said. And Jesus said, “Neither do I. Go and sin no more.”

Memory Verse

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- **L** _____ up to God as the only true Judge.

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