

# Not Yet Time

by Bill McLeod

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer and the dangers of judging others, reminding us that it's not our responsibility to sit in judgment on others.*

**Duration:** 55:29

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 7:14, Isaiah 45:23, Matthew 21:13, Romans 14:1, Romans 14:12-13

**Topics:** "Waiting On God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the consequences of judging and criticizing others, particularly fellow Christians. He uses the example of King David, who committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband killed. As a result, David faced severe consequences, including the death of four of his sons. The preacher emphasizes that it is not our place to judge others, as God has already received them. He also warns against listening to the devil's lies and allowing him to destroy our spiritual lives and testimonies. The sermon concludes with a reminder that what comes out of our mouths reflects what is in our hearts, and we should be cautious of the words we speak.

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## Transcript

I want to ask an embarrassing question. Do you mind? Well, even if you do, I'm going to ask it. How many people remember to take some time to pray for this service? Maybe last night or this morning somewhere you prayed for God's blessing on this service.

If you did, can I see your hands? All right. I would say probably less than half. And so if the rest of you get a rotten message, you know who to blame.

Right? You know, you don't pray before you go to a football game or a hockey game or a circus unless you pray that nobody will get your wallet, you know. But you ought to pray. We ought to pray.

Don't ever go to a meeting of God's children anywhere without taking some time to pray because we're not performers. We're just God's servants and so often it's what you put into it that you get out of it. I used to wonder as a pastor, you know, when people are going out Sunday morning and somebody would shake your hand and they'd say, Well, pastor, oh, you know, I don't know, I just fell asleep when you were preaching this morning.

The Lord just wasn't here. And somebody else comes down the line, shakes your hand, and they're crying and say, Oh, pastor, God was here in such power this morning, He just broke my heart. So I say to myself, who's right? You know, Jesus said, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.

He never called it a house of preaching. He didn't call it a house of singing. He didn't call it a house of fellowship.

He didn't call it a place of good works. He called it a house of prayer. And dear people, if it's not first and foremost a house of prayer, then the preaching and the singing and the rest of it doesn't really accomplish much that's lasting.

So this means, of course, that all of us have a responsibility to be involved. I want to read from Romans 14, and I'll begin to read from verse 1. It says, Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. I think the context indicates that the marginal reading is a little more accurate here, but not to judge his doubtful thoughts.

For one believes that he may eat all things. Another, who is weak, eats herbs. A vegetarian.

Let not him that eats despise him that eats not, and let not him who eats not judge him that eats, for God has received him. Who are you that judges another man's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Yes, he shall be held up, for God is able to make him stand.

One man esteems one day above another, another esteems every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regards the day, regards it unto the Lord, and he that regards not the day to the Lord, he does not regard it.

He that eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks, and he that eats not to the Lord, eats not and gives God thanks. For none of us lives to himself, and no man dies to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord.

And whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died and rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

But why do you judge your brother? Why do you set at naught your brother? Or it means to reduce your brother to nothing. For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, for it is written, and now he quotes from Isaiah 45. As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

So then, this is Paul's conclusion, so then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. Just that far.

All of us are acquainted, and most of us perhaps could quote accurately 2 Chronicles 7, 14. If my people who are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. But how many of us have ever noticed that this is God's response to Solomon's prayer, I should say prayers, in chapter 6. Ever checked it out? Do you know in chapter 6 there are 12 places where Solomon begs God to hear when his people pray? And he creates all kinds of scenarios there, possibilities.

You know, supposing, God, he says, supposing we're put to the worst before the enemy because we've sinned against you and then we pray, then hear from heaven. And maybe, Lord, you might send blasting or mildew or something, or maybe a pestilence, a disease in the nation, and we pray, then, Lord, be sure and hear. And maybe a stranger, not one of our people, but a stranger, he may call on your name in this house, the temple, the dedication of the temple was in mind.

Then, God, he says, hear. And so he says this 12 times. Hear from heaven.

Hear from heaven. And 2 Chronicles 7.14 is God's answer, God's response to Solomon. He says, Solomon, listen, if my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, sometimes we pray in pride, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then, Solomon, I will hear from heaven.

I'll forgive their sin. I'll heal their land. Paul said whatever things were written before were written for our learning, our instruction.

So that was written for us. It's still true today. The favorite indoor sport of evangelicals worldwide is what? Judging others.

Judging others. There's not a person in this building that hasn't done it. And it's very possible that many of us are doing it still when God says, don't.

In the second last chapter of the Psalms, it talks about the saints, that's the people of God, and declares there's a time coming when the saints will judge even kings and nobles and bind them with chains. But it says they'll judge these people according to the judgment that is written. That is, God will enable them to judge these people.

Now, I don't know if Paul had this in mind when in 1 Corinthians 6 he said, don't you know that someday we're going to judge the world? Don't you know, he said in the same chapter, that we shall judge angels? That's when Christ returns. And we're not given any details, but what was said in Psalms is enlarged on a little by Paul when he says what he said. Don't you people understand that someday the saints will judge the world? The saints will actually judge angels.

But in 1 Corinthians 4, Paul said, judge nothing before the time, the time being the return of Christ. Judge nothing before the time until the Lord comes who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of the heart, and then shall every man have censure of God. No, no, that's not what it says.

And then shall every man have praise of God. In the weakest saint that ever lived, God will find something to pray. In the meantime, God says, judge nothing.

It's not the time. Normally when we think about this, this favorite indoor sport of evangelicals, we think to ourselves, well, didn't Jesus say somewhere in Matthew? Oh yeah, Matthew 7. Didn't Jesus say we're not supposed to judge? And usually we think that's really all the Bible has to say. It's not really an important theme because Jesus only mentioned it once.

Well, if you ever get into it, you'll be amazed at what Peter said, what James said, what Paul said, what they all said in regard to this particular problem. Jesus said, judge not that you be not judged, for with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged. And James picks up on that and says, he shall have judgment

without mercy that has showed no mercy.

Now he's saying the same thing in different words. And in the context of Matthew 7, Jesus went a little further and illustrated that people who judge other people are hypocrites. They are hypocrites.

Remember what he said in that context of Matthew 7? He said, you judge, here you are trying to take a tiny splinter out of your brother's eye and you've got a huge beam stuck in your own eye. He said, you hypocrites, first take the beam out of your own eye and then you'll see clearly to take the splinter, the mote, out of your brother's eye. Paul picked up on that in Romans 2. He said, wherefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whoever you are that judges, for wherein you judge another, you condemn yourself, for you the judge are doing the same things.

It's well known that when people have a particular problem or some problems, they're always looking to find the same kind of problems in other people so they feel better by judging them. They're aware of these things because it's a problem in their own heart. And that's what Paul was saying in Romans 2. You are absolutely inexcusable, you who judge, because you're doing the same thing.

And then he asked this question in the context, and you think that you're going to escape the righteous judgment of God? Don't do it. Why? Well, because the Bible says to begin with, we shouldn't do it. Secondly, God is the judge.

I mean, it actually says that God is the judge in the Psalms. God is judge himself, it says in the Psalms. Abraham said, Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? In Genesis 18, of course he will.

When Jephthah was king over Israel and the enemy came into the land, one of the things he said to the enemy was this, The Lord, the judge, be judged this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon. He was calling on God to judge their cause. But he addressed him as God the judge.

When I judge other people, here's what I'm doing. I'm assuming something that is God's responsibility alone. He's the only one that has all the facts.

I don't have all the facts. I have a few of them. And maybe I'm misinterpreting some of the facts I have.

It is not my business to sit in judgment on somebody else. And by the way, you don't have to say anything about anybody to be guilty of judging them. Jesus went into Simon the Pharisee's house.

And a woman in the street came in. You remember the story in the Gospel of Luke. And she stood behind him weeping.

And she began to wash his feet with her tears. And Simon judged Jesus in his heart. And he said to himself, This man, if he was really a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that touches him, for she is a sinner.

Probably a woman of the streets, a prostitute. And Jesus knew exactly what Simon was thinking. Simon never said anything.

Sometimes we're very critical of our wife, our husband, or somebody else. We never say anything. We're sweet and we're nice.

But in our hearts, we're condemning, condemning, condemning. And God sees that. And we're just as guilty as if we said something.

Now, Satan is called in Revelation 12 the accuser of the brethren. The accuser of the brethren. In 1 Timothy 3, verse 8, it says that deacons are not to have a double tongue, a forked tongue, a serpent's tongue.

It also says in the same chapter that deacons' wives are not to be slanderers. The Greek word is diabolos, from which we get the word devil. When you slander others, when you speak with a forked tongue, you're doing Satan's work.

And I heard a story about a man, a preacher, preaching in a church, invited to a certain home for dinner. And the pastor didn't say much. He just said, be very careful when you're in that home.

So he was on his guard. And sitting around the table, they began to judge this person and criticize this Christian worker. And they kept on, and he saw they were trying to drag him into it.

So he totally ignored it and went on eating the turkey and the peas and everything. And they kept on trying. They couldn't get him into it.

So finally, somebody said something derogatory about a Christian worker that they knew he knew very well. And after he said this, he turned to this man and said, Now, what do you think about that? And here's what he said. I'd like to tell you people what I think about what's going on around the table.

Satan is the accuser of the brethren, and I refuse to do his dirty work. Good answer. Every man shall kiss his lips.

That gives the right answer, it says in Proverbs. He deserved to be kissed. Judge not that you be not judged.

For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged. Let's not forget that. You criticize others, others will criticize you.

You criticize others, you can get away with it for a lifetime. You have to answer for it someday. Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Sam Jones was a very well-known Southern Methodist evangelist. And he had great crusades. He was a contemporary of Dwight Amud's.

They were good friends, by the way. And he was very hard on the Christians. In a crusade, he'd often stay for a month or maybe a month and a half.

And the first two weeks, he spent knocking the crockery around in the amen corner, if you know what I mean. Working the Christians over. And sinners came by the hundreds, you know, to hear.

Because they knew all about the foibles and the weaknesses of the Christians. And they really enjoyed it. Then after he got the church straightened up, then he turned on the sinners.

But he says, somebody came to me after one of these earlier meetings and said, Well, Sam, you're so hard on us Methodists. Why don't you give the Catholics a going over for a change? And he said, Brother,

listen. By the time I get through with the Methodists, it's time to go to bed.

And he was right. It's Satan's work. He is the accuser of the brethren.

I remember once, counseling in a counseling room. And a fellow came and sat. He came in late.

He was just sitting there. And there was a dear old saint there. She must have been in her 80s.

And she went over and started to counsel with this fellow. And I listened. It was really neat.

He started telling her all about the problems he had and this and that. And he was critical of this person and critical of that person. And it went on and on.

And then she said, Listen, son. She said, Let me tell you something. Satan comes like a shining angel.

He really looks beautiful. But he always has with him a black bag filled with garbage. And he's been dumping this garbage on you.

Why do you listen to the devil? It's a good question, people. Satan walks around, shining angel, dumping bags of garbage on Christians, fouling us up, short-circuiting us spiritually, destroying our testimony. Remember that Jesus said, both in Matthew and Mark, It's not what you eat that goes into your mouth that defiles you.

It's what comes out of your mouth that defiles you. He said, Because that which comes out of the mouth it comes forth from the heart. So the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

And when I'm critical of other people and judgmental of people I work with, my neighbors or whoever, the Bible, after all, says speak evil of no man. It doesn't say speak evil of no Christian. It says speak evil of no man.

It's not the time, dear people, for judging now. So judge nothing before the time. You know, even Shakespeare knew better.

He said, We are sinners all. We are sinners all. Do not judge one another.

He understood that. You know, one of the basic problems here is James 2.10. Some of you will know what that says. It's one of the hardest verses in the Bible.

It's not hard to understand what he's saying, but it's very hard to accept what he's saying. Do you know what it says there? It's not James. Forget about him.

It's God the Holy Spirit speaking to us through James. And here's what he says. Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

Do you believe that? People, it's very hard to accept because all of us have broken the law of God, the laws of God. You might be a very self-righteous person. I have never, I have never done this, and I have never done that, and I have never done this, and I have never done that.

But you have to confess and admit that you have sinned. There's not a just man upon earth that does good and doesn't sin. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

So, if you keep the whole law of God and offend in one point, God says, you are guilty of breaking every item in My law, which means that every person in this room is guilty of adultery. You're guilty of murder. You've been stealing.

Now why would God say things like that? Because the law of God is an indivisible unit. It doesn't really matter where you break it. If you break it, you've broken the law of God.

And remember, it's an indivisible unit. To break it anywhere is to break the whole thing. What right have I then, guilty of murder, adultery, sodomy, every kind of sin you can think of, what right have I got to sit in judgment on somebody else? Absolutely none.

I have no right to even open my mouth. Now in Romans 14, he says, you're not to sit in judgment on a weaker brother who perhaps will not eat meat. He's a vegetarian.

God has received him. It doesn't matter to God whether you eat meat or just vegetables. And likewise, God says to the vegetarian, you are not to sit in judgment on the person that eats meat.

As a matter of fact, if you notice carefully what he says here, he says the person that is a vegetarian is a weak brother. Because every creature of God is good and not to be refused. If it's received with thanksgiving, because it's sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.

Forbidding to marry, Paul said, and commanding to abstain from meat is a doctrine of demons. It doesn't mean that a vegetarian is sinning. But it does mean the vegetarian must not sit in judgment on people that eat meat.

Because God has created every creature. They're all good. As far as meat eating is concerned, the Bible approves it.

Then he says, who are you that judges another man's servant? What business and right do you have? Supposing you're a farmer and your farmer neighbor, your good friend, he's going to Hawaii for three weeks. And he tells you that his hired man is supposed to paint the barn in his absence. And you see his hired man sitting at the front of the house day after day, reading books, drinking, doing absolutely nothing.

Is it your business to go over there and tell him to get the barn done? No, it's not. You tell him, he'll tell you to get lost. He's not your servant.

And that Christian brother or sister that you are so busily judging is not your servant. To his own master he stands or falls, and his master is God. He goes on to say, yes, he shall be held up, for God is able to make him stand.

The person you're criticizing may turn out to be a far stronger person than you are. The last chapter has not been written in anybody's life in this building today or anywhere. You never know.

Some people, they travel at a very slow, turtle speed for maybe ten years after they become a Christian. Then all of a sudden they take off praying hide in India as a young missionary, one of the fellow missionaries fell into the sin of adultery. And the world got a hold of it and it hurt the work of God in the entire area.

And Hyde got down to pray regarding this missionary. And his prayer was to this effect, Dear God, judge this brother, judge him. Lord, it would be better if he took his life.

It's terrible the reproach he's brought on your name. He's praying this way and he says he heard a voice and the voice said, touch him not, he's the apple of my eye. He opened his eyes to look around, there's nobody around.

Well, he just was hearing things, you know. So he began to pray again, he heard it again. But there was nobody in the room.

He heard it the third time, touch him not, he's the apple of my eye. It suddenly dawned on him that God was saying something that he needed to hear. And he tells how he repented of his judgmental attitude towards this missionary and began to pray, Dear God, revive my brother.

He's one of your children. Revive his heart. Bless him, dear God.

Deliver him from Satan's power. Fill him with your Holy Spirit. And that very day, the man was touched mightily of God and lived a consistent godly life until he died.

Touch him not, he's the apple of my eye. The first year I was out preaching, an old man came and preached in my church. And I thought to myself, and remember thoughts to God are words.

There's a verse in Proverbs, by the way, that indicates that. I thought to myself, Man, was that ever dead. Man, he had nothing to say.

No zip. Nothing. Very judgmental.

Later on, I was talking with this brother that preached. And he said to me, Brother Bill, I gave it all I had this morning. You know, God rebuked me through that.

He did his best. And it says about a certain woman, she's done what she could. Somebody sings and they, they miss something, they, you know, perhaps they stand to forget a line or whatever.

I even heard of somebody singing and falling asleep and missing a whole verse. It actually happened down in Florida. And he never even knew he missed a verse.

The pianist kept playing and he happened to come back to life again just as he was starting the next verse and of course he just got right in and sang to the end. And if you think that's bad, I know of a preacher that fell asleep preaching in Canada. I had a school teacher that fell asleep.

We know how to put her to sleep. Just be quiet. And she'd fall asleep.

And just taught, we were all hoping of course as kids, grade seven or whatever it was, that she'd fall over. But she seemed to have her shoes nailed to the floor. She never did.

You know. I shouldn't tell you what happened. One of the guys brought a trumpet and one day when she fell asleep he gave a blast on the horn.

I better quit now. Or somebody's preaching. You know, preachers have a bad, bad habit of sitting in judgment on other preachers.

I could have said that better. Hey, he misquoted that verse. Why didn't he bring these verses in? That would have made it a lot plainer.

Man, what a weak invitation. Preachers do it all the time. Do you know how I know? I've done it.

That's how I know. We have a kind of a tendency. You come to a meeting, you sit in judgment, maybe you don't say, maybe you do say something.

Maybe not in the building, but when you get home, you tear the whole thing apart. And some people are doing that all the time and then they wonder why their kids drift away from God. Dad and Mom don't believe in the preacher.

Why should I? They don't love the preacher. Why should I? They learn from us. Oh, dear people, listen.

Judge nothing. Now James says, Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaks evil of his brethren and judges his brethren speaks evil of the law and judges the law.

That is the word of God. Why does he say that? If you judge someone else, in what sense are you judging the law of God? In this sense. The law of God says, Don't do it! And you're doing it.

So you're really saying, I'm superior to the law of God. I'm judging the law of God. I'm disobeying the law of God because I don't think it's right.

If I want to say something against somebody, I'll say it. Well, you may. But I'll tell you something, you'll grieve the Holy Spirit in a bargain.

And many of us don't have to look any further than this to understand why it is. They don't have any spiritual power. As I said at the beginning, it's the favorite indoor sport and sometimes outdoor sport of evangelical believers.

Some people have a tongue so long they can shoot it out the side window of their car and use it for a windshield wiper. You know. The tongue is a little member and boasts great things.

And James says, How great a matter a little fire kindles. One tiny match can set a whole forest on fire and burn off 50,000 acres. And your tongue is like that.

The Bible says the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity among our members. It sets on fire the wheels of nature. And he says, James does, it's set on fire of hell.

Hell strikes the match that sets your tongue on fire. Do you remember in James it talks about two kinds of wisdom? A wisdom that comes from God that's pure and peaceful and gentle and needs to be entreated. And wisdom that comes from demons.

And in that context, there's envy and strife and two-mouthed confusion. And that's Satan's work. Do you remember David after he sinned? He had Uriah killed on the battlefield.

Arranged it. A contract murder. Because he'd sinned with Uriah's wife and she was pregnant and he was facing an embarrassing situation.

And instead of dealing with it honestly as a believer, somebody said, watch slimy self at work. So he has the guy killed. You read Psalm 32 and this is how he felt after his sin.

The child is born. One day God said to Nathan the prophet, take this message to David. So in parable form, he said, David, there was two men.

One was very rich and one was very poor. The rich man had all kinds of flocks and herds, animals by the thousands likely. The poor man had just one little lamb.

That's all he had. And the rich man had a traveler friend come to stay with him and he instructed his servants to go and steal the poor man's lamb instead of killing something out of his own flock. And David just about exploded.

The man that did this was a son of death, he cried. He's worthy to die. Nathan said, David, you're the man.

That's what you did. Remember, you that judge another, condemn yourself, for you that judge are doing the same things. Uriah was the man with nothing but a lamb.

David was the rich man with thousands of beasts. He had a wife. He wound up with six or seven of them.

I'm not sure how many he had at that time. He steals the poor man's wife. Matter of fact, you remember what David said? The man that did this will restore fourfold.

You know what happened to David? Four of his sons died. Three of them violently. Amnon, Adonijah, Absalom, they died violently.

He paid an awful price. Nathan said, David, the Lord's put your sin away. You won't die.

But he sure paid the price. Dear people, what business have you got to judge somebody else's servant when God has received him? That's why in Romans 15 it says, Receive one another as Christ received us to the glory of God. Christ has received that weak Christian.

Christ is not complaining to you about this weak Christian. Why are you so concerned? And running this person down and running that person down. And wherever you go you hear it.

Judging, judging, judging, judging. Dear people, what some of us need to do is nail our tongue to the cross in the prayer room. This problem is a problem, a deep problem because it really goes beyond the tongue people down into the heart.

My heart isn't right. And I'm disturbed because my heart isn't right. And so I take it out on other people.

And I feel better. If I can show that somebody is worse than me, so we walk around with eagle eyes looking for people that are stumbling and falling so we can jump on them and say, well, at least I'm better than they are. Well, whatever you do, dear people, don't forget James 2.10. That reduces every one of us to a wicked sinner.

The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Your heart. My heart.

He says, why do you regard your brother as nothing? Why do you set it not to your brother? We'll all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. You're going to stand there. You're going to be judged.

Every one of us should give account of himself to God. And Paul picks up and says, Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more. We've been doing it.

Let's not do this any more. But judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. The kingdom of God, he goes on to say, is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

For he that in these things serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men. But dear people, this particular sin of judging, you have to deal with it in the light of the Word of God. It's an extremely evil thing to God that a poor, weak sinner, but of yesterday, who knows nothing like you and me, should be guilty of doing that which only God is capable of doing.

That which is His work alone. If you see a brother or sister sinning, go to them in a spirit of love and humility. You don't talk down to them.

You talk with them gently. My brother, my heart is grieved. I see this happening in your life.

I'm no better than you are. Can we pray together? You know, it's surprising what happens. Cecil Carter, a friend of my wife and I's over in British Columbia, I hope when he dies, somebody writes his life story.

He's had a tremendous ministry for God. The first time I ever saw a revival, way, way back, long before 1971, I saw his ministry at a Bible camp with 24 Christian workers. He was a Plymouth Brethren elder.

Still is. And a man from their assembly fell into terrible sin. And of course, all the tongues are wagging like crazy.

You know what people say when a Christian sins like this? I knew he was a phony. I never believed. I always knew the bell was cracked.

You know, when he gave his testimony in front of our church before he joined, I just, I could see it wasn't real. And on and on the tongues go. Let me add to what he did.

I heard, I saw, somebody told me, and on and on it goes. And it happened to this fellow. Now Cecil was a tremendous runner.

He took top honors two years in a row for the whole of British Columbia in running the mile. And one day, he used to call up the guy's house, he'd phone, and the fellow answered the phone, heard his voice, he'd just hang it up. He talked to the guy's wife, and she said, well, my husband's not home.

Cecil would sit in the car down at the end of the block and see the guy go into his house. He'd drive around the block and come. He wouldn't drive up in the car.

He'd beat on the door. And the guy might be, even in the act of opening the door, he'd slam it shut when he saw Cecil. But Cecil never gave up.

He kept praying. He loved that brother. And one day, he saw him walking on the street, and the guy saw him and started to run, and he never had a chance.

Cecil caught him. And the guy just hit him and said, leave me alone. And Cecil said, I stood there and said, brother, we've missed you so much at the assembly.

And he said, I couldn't help it. He just started to cry. What happened? He wound up with a guy in his arms on the sidewalk, and together they wept their way to God.

People, that's how to handle it. That's not how we handle it. Because, dear people, we're dead, to a large extent.

How dare we think, in terms of doing Satan's work, we do it? I don't even feel proud about it. I'm better. Not really? You're worse.

So, how do we handle this? Ah. Read Psalm 27. Or is it 26? It says, the first two verses, judge me, examine me, prove me, try me.

It doesn't say judge him, try him, prove him, examine him. No, no. It's me.

It's a prayer. We know Psalm 139.23 and 4. Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me.

And lead me in the way everlasting. Sometimes we sit in judgment on some person because you overheard him trying to witness to somebody else and he did a poor job at it. And we sit in judgment on him.

We criticize him. And here we have him open our own mouth for God for five years. Haven't talked about Jesus Christ to anybody for months on end.

Somebody got after Dwight L. Moody because he was so blunt when he went to talk to sinners. I mean, he was so blunt. He didn't have a nice approach.

He just said it. And they criticized him, this person did, to his face. And Moody said, Well, I like the way I do it better than the way you don't do it.

But dear people, how can we do this? In 1 Corinthians 11, the Apostle Paul said this. He said, If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world.

If we would what? If we would judge ourselves. In 1 Corinthians 4, Paul said, I know nothing against myself. Yet am I not hereby justified, but he that judges me is the Lord.

Am I right with God in all respects? Sometimes when God disturbs us about a certain sin, we push it out of our mind. We stick it on the back burner. We put it in the closet.

Every time the Spirit of God comes to us about this, we set it aside. We push it away. And after a while, He doesn't bother anymore.

Why should He? He won't get any better treatment in the future than He's had in the past. We don't want to be talked to about that. I heard about a young man that came to his pastor with a list.

It was revival time. And this kid had 35 sins on the list that he told the pastor, God has talked to me about. So the pastor goes down the list.

And he said, Hey son, the pastor knew this kid had a terrible attitude to his dad and mom. And he said, I don't see anything on here about making things right with your father and your mother. And the kid grabbed the list and said, You leave them out of this.

These 35, you know, he was dealing with them because the other things that were really important were bugging him. He was trying to buy God off by making things right that were probably not even wrong. Hoping that God would get off his back about his father and his mother.

Dear people, we can't do it ourselves. We need to have the power of God to search our hearts. It's the hardest thing in the world to just sort of lay your heart on the table and say, Lord, take it apart.

Take it apart. Show me my sin. And then deal with it.

Deal with it. How do we treat other people? Love them. Have fervent love among yourselves for love shall cover the multitude of sins.

1 Peter 4, 8. In the light of that verse alone, how can I judge my brother or sister? Receive them. Receive one another as Christ received us to the glory of God. In Romans 15.

Forgive them. Be kind, it says in Ephesians 4, tenderhearted, forgiving one another. The Holy Spirit foresaw that Christians would sin against Christians.

Maybe some Christians sinned against you. Christians have sinned against me. I'm sure have sinned against other people.

Be kind, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you. Then there's the word esteem. Let each esteem other better than themselves.

Of course, you know what people say. How can I esteem my wife or my husband or whoever better than myself when I know they aren't? Now, the people that say that, of course, have never understood James 2.10. Or they would never see that or feel that way. But to esteem each other better than ourselves.

Boy, that takes care of judging very effectively, doesn't it? If I esteem my brother or my sister better than me? Well, God says so. In honor, preferring one another, which means pushing the other person forward in front of yourself. Then it has the word, we have the word forbearance.

Forbearing one another in love. Forbearance is, it means having patience with and make allowances for your brother or sister. Just as you'd like to have people have patience with you and have, you know, make allowances for your weaknesses.

Esteem, prefer, forbear, receive, love, forgive. One other word. It says submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

And sometimes God wants to bring a blessing to you through a person that you've been very guilty of judging. But you can't receive anything from that person because you've been sitting in judgment on them. And so, I heard this story.

I don't remember where it came from. And maybe you've heard it before. A pastor, he hurt his back.

The doctors told him it would get progressively worse and he'd end up in a wheelchair. He had a fellow in his church that was what people called, you know, have you ever heard of this degree called M.M.? The M.M. degree? Motorized mouth? Well, apparently this dear brother had this. Big talker and a big voice.

And the preacher saw him in this big store and tried to hide because he knew this guy would come up with a great big voice that everybody could hear. He'd start talking about God or whatever, you know, make a fool of himself. But he saw the preacher.

Hey, pastor! And he came tearing over. He said, pastor, I heard you have this sore back and God told me I'm appropriately healed. Get down on your knees.

I'm going to pray right now. Well, everybody, people gathered all around, you know. How embarrassing.

How embarrassing. And the guy laid hands on him and prayed for him and he was healed. Needless to say, his attitude to this dear brother was radically altered.

I remember in my church one time we had a fellow in our church, a great Christian, intelligent person, and he was sort of a financial, hmm, I'm not sure what you'd call him, his job anyway was to promote financial stewardship among the people. And he did a very stupid thing. Do you know what he did? I spent some time with this.

He never said a word to me. I'd have chopped the thing down in a moment if I'd have known. But here's what he did.

And he meant well. He sent letters to all the people in the congregation. And he went like this.

Now you have this job and you would be making approximately this much money a year. And if you paid the tithe, you would be giving this much a year to the church. Well, this last year you only gave half that, so obviously you're not tithing.

Why? Can you imagine that? My phone started to ring. It just about burnt off the wall. And I had to go around the congregation and put out little fires.

And I remember talking to this one couple and they were so angry. They said, That character, a year ago he wasn't tithing himself. They said, Pastor, listen, if you had told us, we could have accepted it, but not from him.

And I said, Well, you know, I said, Balaam got a message from a donkey, can't you? I don't think the brother in question ever heard that part of it. I hope he didn't. I wasn't sitting in judgment on him, but it just came into my mind.

What I'm really doing is blaming the Holy Ghost. But dear people, just to have a tender, loving, kind heart. You can forgive anything, no matter what they say.

Just love them. Receive them. Forgive them.

Pray with them. Help them. Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

All of you be subject one to another. Likewise, you younger be subject unto the elder. Yes, all of you be subject one to another.

And be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble. We want revival. If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I'll hear from heaven, I'll forgive their sin, I'll heal their land.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/bill-mcleod/not-yet-time/>

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