

## Judging Brethren and Presumptuous Plans [James pt. 9] (Js. 4:11-17)

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1. James continues a discussion of worldly wisdom and its results – namely worldliness. Js. 3:16-4:17
2. We considered last week the problems of wars and strife among brethren and becoming the enemy of God by loving the things of the world.
3. Today, we consider judging our brethren and making plans without considering God.

Discussion:

### I. SPEAKING EVIL AND JUDGING BRETHREN (James 4:11-12)

- A. James addresses the way they make judgments
- B. Judges with evil thoughts – **James 2:4**
  1. Doesn't condemn judging altogether
  2. The source of their judgement was flawed
  3. They were judging based on appearance – holding the faith with partiality and not loving their neighbor as God commanded (**James 2:8-9**)
  4. They made a judgement which God had not made – their standard of judgment was incorrect
- C. **James 4:11-12** – evil judgment because it was not according to the correct standard – God's word
- D. Judging based on appearance is condemned, righteous judgment is required (**John 7:24**) – acc. to God's standard
- E. **Matthew 7:1-6** – we are to make judgments but Jesus teaches the proper way to do so
  1. Don't judge with hypocritical judgment - first remove your plank
  2. BUT, don't ignore the speck in your brother's eye
  3. Remove your plank SO you can see clearly to remove their speck
  4. **:6** – make judgments on those unworthy
  5. **:15-20** – make judgments of false teachers by their teaching
- F. Do not speak evil of one another (**:11**)
  1. Don't slander (speak to tear down) your brother – **1 Pt. 2:1**
  2. Evil speaking (slander) comes from a lack of humility – refusal to esteem others better than self (**Phil. 2:3**)
  3. By this judgment, they were tearing down their brother (:11) and violating the royal law (**Js. 2:8**)
- G. They sat aside the law of God and became judges of the law – placing themselves in the place of the Lawgiver. When we make a judgment that does not originate with God's word, we are saying we know better than God or His law in insufficient!
  1. God's word is sufficient – **2 Tim. 3:16-17**
  2. Example: binding where God has not bound – going outside of His word to accuse a brother of sin
    - a. Eating of meats

- i. Offered to idols – 1 Cor. 8
  - j. Animals previously considered unclean in OT – Rom. 14
- b. Celebrating certain days – Rom. 14
- H. Recognize God is the only Lawgiver (:12)
  - 1. We will all be judged by His word – **Jn. 12:48**
  - 2. If we judge by ANY other standard than His, we assume His role – assume the power to save/destroy
  - 3. Again, we are still expected to make judgments based on His law
    - a. **Js. 5:19-20** – turn an erring brother back to God

## II. PRESUMPTUOUS PLANS (James 4:13-17)

- A. James rebukes those who make plans without considering God
  - 1. Life is temporary and uncertain, yet we make plans as though it were not (:13-14) (**Prov. 27:1** – don't know what a day may bring)
  - 2. We should rather consider God's will in our plans (:15) – remind ourselves that we are not in control – we should place our trust and our life in God's hands. – **Ac. 18:21; 1 Cor. 4:19; 16:7; Phil. 2:19; Heb. 6:3**
- B. The issue at the heart of this is, again, pride (:16) – they were failing to consider God and others in their plans – like the rich fool (**Luke 12:16-21**).
- C. Because of the realization that our time in this life is limited and may end at any time, failure to utilize opportunities to do good is sin (:17)
- D.

### Conclusion:

- 1. The results of earthly wisdom are ruinous, and every effort should be taken to avoid it
- 2. Make sure we consider God's will and control in all that we do.
- 3. Don't judge based on a faulty standard and speak evil of our brethren.
- 4. Make our appeal to God's wisdom in all that we do.