

Conflict Resolution



Judging Righteous Judgment

That individuals judge is a given. People make judgments in most every decision they make. If you see an individual speeding, you make a mental judgment. If you see one individual violently attacking another, you make a mental judgment. Even when you choose one path of life over another, you've made a judgment. When you see one person offer unto another a hand up, or you see numerous good deeds throughout the day, you've made a judgment. One of the most memorable judgments was when Noah built the ark to the saving of his house. Do you realize that in doing so Noah condemned the world, the Hebrew writer saying, "By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith" (Hebrews 11:7), and did so without violating the words of the Lord, saying, "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matthew 7:1). I have never heard an individual that is doing right, say, "don't judge me," but I've heard it plenty from those who do wrong. Why is that? Glad you asked. "And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness

rather than the light; for their works were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reproved. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God” (John 3:19–21).

In the many cases you yourself may judge, whether they are good or bad the words of the Lord should resonate in your mind: “Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment” (John 7:24).

Throughout our study of Conflict Resolution an emphasis has been place upon the gathering of all the facts before rendering a verdict, and such is the case with the subject of this segments conflict.

The Conflict: “And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and the Pharisees bring a woman taken in adultery; and having set her in the midst, they say unto him, Teacher, this woman hath been taken in adultery, in the very act. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such: what then sayest thou of her? And this they said, trying him, that they might have whereof to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground. But when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground. And they, when they heard it, went out one by one, beginning from the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the midst. And Jesus lifted up himself, and said unto her, Woman, where are they? did no man condemn thee? And she said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said, Neither do I condemn thee: go thy way; from henceforth sin no more.” (John 8:1–11).

The reading identifies that the Conflict stemmed out of an attempt by the scribes and Pharisees to entrap the Lord, therefore the unjust means was based upon unjust motives. The Lord, undoubtedly surveys the situation, and Resolves the

Conflict by one simple statement: “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her” (John 8:7).

The scribes and the Pharisees bring before the Lord what appear to be a matter of law, to which Moses said, “If a man be found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall both of them die, the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away the evil from Israel” (Deuteronomy 22:22). What’s wrong with the scenario? According to the Pharisees “this woman hath been taken in adultery, in the very act.” However, the Pharisees “bring a woman taken in adultery.” Question: Where was the man? The Law, of which the Pharisees refer required that the man, and the woman be judged.

The Resolution: To this situation, Jesus said, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her” (John 8:7). This charge is used often, even today. An individual is guilty of some violation of law, and they say, “He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone.” However, Jesus is not speak of sin generically, but sin directly connected to the topic of discussion. These men were themselves guilty in the matter they brought before the Lord. Thus, when Jesus “stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground. And they, when they heard it, went out one by one, beginning from the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the midst” (John 8:8–9).

Following this event, “Jesus lifted up himself, and said unto her, Woman, where are they? did no man condemn thee? And she said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said, Neither do I condemn thee: go thy way; from henceforth sin no more” (John 8:10–11).

In this matter not only did the law say the guilty parties were to be stoned, of which the Pharisees had failed to bring the man, but also, “At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is to die be put to death; at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death” (Deuteronomy 17:6). Whatever the truth was, concerning his woman and her conduct, there were no witnesses to condemn her, not one. Therefore, Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn thee.”

What can we learn from the event? “Let no man deceive himself. If any man thinketh that he is wise among you in this world, let him become a fool, that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He that taketh the wise in their craftiness: and again, The Lord knoweth the reasonings of the wise that they are vain” (1 Corinthians 3:18–20).

The wicked are crafty, but when an individual gathers all the facts, and all the crafty twist and turns of the wicked are exposed, then indeed, the child of God can judge righteous judgment.