

## Judging Others

Sometimes, when people feel as though they are being judged by another, they run for the shelter of **Matt. 7:1-5** where we are warned *not* to judge one another and to stop looking for the *splinter* in their eyes while we ignore the **beam** in our own. Although this is sound Christian teaching, there *is* a time for admonishment and correction.

Conversely, there are those who feel it is their duty to go around correcting everybody without exception, using very little tact or charity.

We must understand that just as our very ability to have faith is a grace from God – so is receiving correction when we are wrong. However – this goes both ways. We must do all things in charity and this sentiment is echoed in the many passages that instruct us to **lovingly** correct our brethren. For example, Jesus tells us in **Luke 17:3**, “*If thy brother sin against thee, **reprove him**: and if he do penance, **forgive him**.*” Charitable reproof is a common theme in the Scriptures (**2 Tim. 4:2, Gal. 6:1**).

In **James 5:20** we read that by helping a person to turn from the sinful ways we “*shall save his soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.*” As Christians, we know that we are saved only by Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf - but here, St. James is stressing the importance of **charitable** correction. Just as receiving correction when we are wrong is a grace from God – so is **charitably** dispensing correction and admonishment to our fellow man.

We must remember that as we judge, so will *we* be judged, and the measure with which we measure will be measured out to us (**Matt. 7:2**). As our Lord tells us in **John 7:24** – we must judge **justly**. We are told that we can judge a person’s fruits and that is how they will be known to us (**Matt 7:15-20**). However, only God knows what is in a person’s heart and it is not for us to condemn the person. We must condemn the **sin** – *not* the sinner, otherwise we ourselves will be held to that standard.

We must ask ourselves, “Am I judging **rightly** in the eyes of God – or am I simply being **judgmental**?”

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.catholic.com/thisrock/2007/0702btb.asp>

<http://www.catholic.com/thisrock/quickquestions/keyword/judging>