

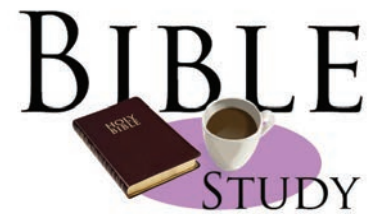


RDM Weekly Prayer Meeting

Time: 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM (Please arrive on time)
Day: Every Wednesday
Place: 4539 Deeboyar Avenue, Lakewood, CA
Emphasis: Prayer for the nation and the Body of Christ.

1 Timothy 2:2;
Matthew 9:38
Mark 11:24
Ephesians 1:17-23

Upcoming Meetings



Date: Most Tuesdays - see website
Time: 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
Place: 4539 Deeboyar Ave,
Lakewood, CA
Starting: **August 20th**
Subject: Exploring the Holiness of God

What is the very first thing you think of when God is mentioned? In His Word, He refers to Himself as being Holy. In this **NEW** study we will look at this aspect of God in various ways. It is a perfect follow up to the Fear of the Lord. We've been seeking the Lord about what to teach on next and the Holy Spirit put this title in our hearts. Come join us for this new study for the remainder of this year.

A Special Movie Showing of

Eric Mataxas' - "A Letter to the American Church"



Date: **Tuesday, July 30th**
Time: 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
Place: 4539 Deeboyar Ave,
Lakewood, CA

Please RSVP to raydelea@verizon.net or leave a voice mail at 562-377-8507 ASAP as space is limited



Who Am I To Judge?

by Denise Shick



Do not judge, or you 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. Matthew 7: 1-2

A friend and I were discussing our approach to LGBTQ issues recently. I said, "But God is so clear about his disapproval of same-sex relationships in the Bible" She said, "But who am I to judge other people? I'm a sinner too. And doesn't the Bible also say, 'Do not judge, or you too will be judged?'" "Yes, but ..." I said, then stopped. What could I say? I am a sinner, and Matthew 7 does tell us not to judge. "Let me think about that," I responded, and the conversation turned to a different topic. But my friend's comments stuck in my mind, and over the next few days, I studied God's Word in search of an answer to her question: Who am I to judge? According to Strong's concordance, one meaning of the Greek word translated "judge" in Matthew 7:1 is "to pronounce an opinion concerning right and wrong," as a judge does in a court case. Another meaning is "to pronounce judgment; to subject to censure," as "those who act the part of judges or arbiters in the matters of common life, or pass judgment on the deeds and words of others." In other words, Jesus is telling his disciples not to sit in the judge's seat and render verdicts on other people. In this sense, my friend is right.

God Is the Judge

As the holy, righteous creator and sovereign of the universe God alone has the right to judge whether an action or thought is sinful. As Isaiah says, "For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver" (33:22). In the New Testament, James writes, "There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy" (4:12). James then makes the same point my friend did: "But who are you who judge your neighbor?" (4:12). I'm not the judge, and neither is any other human being.

On the other hand, God is the judge. Jesus spoke of God judging sin many times. One example is Matthew 7:19: "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." Another example is John 8:16: "But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone in it, but I and the Father who sent me." In John 12:31, Jesus says, "He who rejects me and does not receive my sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day."

So, yes, God is the one with the authority to judge, and he will render the verdict.

We're the Reporters

Imagine yourself as a reporter in a courtroom. The judge hands down a guilty verdict. Your job is to convey the judge's verdict to your readers. But you think the judge rendered the wrong verdict. You think the defendant is innocent, so you go home and post an article on the internet saying the judge declared the defendant innocent.

Has your opinion changed the judge's verdict? No. Do you have the power to change the verdict by declaring the defendant is innocent? No. In fact, your lie may encourage others to commit the same crime under the erroneous belief that they won't be convicted either because the judge declared the defendant innocent. Your lie doesn't exonerate the defendant, and it may lead others astray. Far better to tell the truth in the first place.

Our role is to report what God says. We don't get to hand down the verdict, and neither can we change the verdict once it has been rendered. In the Ten Commandments, God declared a number of actions sinful - including adultery, murder, stealing, lying, and covetousness. We don't have the authority to change his verdict on any of those behaviors. They are sins - rebellion against God. Jesus never changed God's ruling on any of the sins in the Ten Commandments. In fact, he expanded the meaning of murder to include anger and hateful speech (Matthew 5:21-22); he also broadened the definition of adultery to include lust (Matthew 5:27-28)

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