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Judging Hurts People, so It's Okay for Me to Judge You for Judging

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#STRask - Stand to Reason

Questions about how to respond to the claim that it's okay to judge someone who is hurting another person by judging them and good ways to respond to the claim that we are just animals.

* How should I respond to someone who claims it's okay to judge me because I'm hurting another person by judging them first?

* What are good ways to respond to the claim that we are just animals?

Transcript

Welcome to another episode of the hashtag, St. Rask Podcast. At least I hope it's another one. You've been listening for a long time.

But if this is your first one, hey guess what? We have tons of archives going back to, I don't know what year you started. Maybe it was 2016 even. I didn't start till the end of 2017, but I think there were already a couple years at that point.

So there are hundreds and hundreds of episodes and a lot of times, Greg, what's your favorite part of this? Well, a lot of times, we do not repeat things for the most part. I'll wait if we talked about something a few years ago, then maybe from a little bit different angle, then I will bring it up again. But for the most part, these questions are unique.

There's like a hundred a year. So we're talking five, six hundred questions. I mean, I've had 600 episodes with two, three, four questions each one.

So if you're looking at any kind of topic, go to our website, stira.org, and see what you can find because we have talked about so many things. And there's always something new because people come up with interesting questions all the time. So let's start with the first one today, Greg.

This one comes from Eric Stevens. How should I respond to the claim that it's okay to judge me because I'm hurting another person by judging them first? In this case, I'm holding to a biblical view of sexuality and being told that it's morally wrong. So presumably, the person is making the case, moral case against homosexuality and is being challenged by somebody that says you should not judge.

Is that the way you take it? Yes. And he's saying, but it's okay for him to judge because he was judging first. Part me for laughing, but the last time I heard that was, I think in first grade, you did it first.

Okay. So there's lots of things wrong with this. So judging is okay if you do it second.

I mean, I'm just thinking from judging. I assume that's what he means. It's okay to judge people for judging in order to stop from judging, I guess.

So well, the big problem here is this because apparently the Christian Eric in this case is kind of following the pattern I've mentioned and maybe in tactics if somebody says, you know, it's wrong to judge, then why are you judging me? Because you judge first, I'm judging you for judging. Okay. Well, I don't know how that exonerates the person first of all.

If it's wrong to judge, it's wrong to judge. Jesus said it's wrong to judge. Don't judge lest you be judged.

Okay. That was the first part of that verse. So I don't know why.

Well, I'm judging you for judging someone else. Well, why is that the only thing worth judging? By the way, that isn't the only thing that judge Christians on. Okay.

In any event. So if, let me see if I get a judge me about something, then I can then freely bring a judgment against you and you won't complain that I have done something you'll listen. I mean, this is this is so childish.

Because couldn't you turn around and just say it back to them? Yeah. Okay. You judging me.

Yeah. That's right. That's what you are.

What am I? That's what you are. What am I? That's what you are. I don't wear back to first grade again.

Okay. So the key here is why is it wrong to judge? Why is it wrong to judge? Well, what they think they're doing is they think they're citing Jesus. Okay.

Okay. Where did Jesus say that? I will tell you, Christian, Eric, anyone, it's easy to remember Matthew seven. First verse.

The problem is it's a pericopy. That is, it's a section or paragraph. All right.

And in the original, there are no verses. Jesus didn't say do not judge period and the issue. Other passages, he said, judge, judge with righteous judgment.

That's also Jesus. Okay. I do talk about this in the tactics book in the chapter, just the facts, ma'am.

And I think I called this little subset just the context of him. Because any judgments where we, I mean, obviously a judgment is an assessment of something either true or false or right or wrong. Okay.

Accurate, inaccurate, one category or immoral or moral, another category. When you look at the passage, when somebody says this, it's always a good thing. Well, Jesus said not to judge your, Christian, you're supposed to follow Jesus.

Where did he say that? Oh, silence, right? Simon, a go-fungal sounds of silence. Well, he said in John, in the beginning of John chapter seven. And when you go back to John chapter seven, you find, I'm sorry, Matthew, Matthew seven, my bad.

It's towards the end of the sermon on the Mount. Now, what's curious is Jesus said a whole bunch of stuff on the sermon on the Mount that is not going to be acceptable to your challenger. Nevertheless, they certainly going to quote this one.

Okay. So let's go and see what he said. He said, do not judge so that you will not be judged.

Hmm. What's that about? For in the way you judge, you will be judged. And by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.

Oh, so there's a way of judging that's not appropriate. And one of the reasons is it's going to come back on you. But then Jesus keeps talking.

Why do you look at the spec that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, let me take that spec out of your eye and be hold the logs in your own eye? You notice if you've got, if you're sight impaired, you're not going to be able to get a little bitty, small thing out of somebody else's eye. That's the kind of the metaphor here. You hypocrite.

Oh, so the person who's judging inappropriately is a hypocrite because of the way they're judging. First, take the log out of your own eye and then you will see clearly to take the spec out of your brother's eye. So that's the first five verses.

He has more. Don't give what is holy to dogs. Don't throw your pearls before a swine.

Wait a minute. That requires a judgment. Who are the dogs? Who's the swine? What are

the holy things? What are the pearls that you're supposed to withhold? That all requires judgment.

Jesus is not teaching against judging here in another passage. Like I said, he said, judge with a righteous judgment. Paul says, do not participate in the evil deeds of darkness, but even expose them.

So people who cite this passage generally are citing it completely disingenuously. They don't care about judging. They just want to get you to shut up, the Christian to shut up.

And they don't care about what Jesus means because they don't care about what He means in other passages. What He makes, He invades against their views and other things. This is the one they find convenient to cite to try to shut you up.

But it turns out that Jesus is talking about a peculiar kind of judgment in which there's a log in your eye and you're straining at swallowing the camel, another way He put it. You're missing the big thing, your problem, and just trying to fuss with the little bitty problem. These Pharisees were, were great at that.

They were masters at that. And this is what He's, He's telling people not to do deal with the log in your own eye first. Then you will be able to deal with the spec.

That's in another person's eye. Of course, when we're talking about sexual sin, we're not talking about specks and other people's eyes. And if we're sleeping around and then we complain about somebody else sleeping around, well, Jesus verse here applies.

But if that's not what we're doing, we're trying to let them know, this is God's plan and it's His good plan. It's for human flourishing that we do best under this plan. And then they object and then you respond, well, if you're judging, you know, what's wrong with judging, well, why are you judging me? Which is the way I teach in tactics.

And they respond, I'm, it's okay for me to judge you because you judged first and I'm judging your judgment. If you're capitalizing on Jesus' point, then look at it. If judging is wrong, then even the judging you're doing is wrong.

All right. But it turns out that judging isn't wrong. That isn't what Jesus is teaching in Matthew seven.

A kind of judgment is wrong, but other judgments are required. And that's clear on the New Testament text. I think that's, that's really helpful because I think a lot of Christians are really confused about judging because it's such a, it's such a big topic in our culture.

This is such a go-to response. People don't judge. So I think how I would start responding to this person is I would say, look, you know what, I suspect by the way you phrase that, that you are misunderstanding my position.

So do you mind if I, if I explain this to you a little bit and then maybe they'll be open to it because I think the key here is he says it's okay to judge him because he's hurting another person by judging them first. So the key here is it's okay to judge him because he's hurting another person. So I would, I would zero in on that statement and say, it sounds to me like you're saying that it's okay to judge things that are hurting other people because it's, you know, we shouldn't hurt other people.

And I agree with you. I agree with you on that. That's, that's a place where you can find common ground.

I agree with you that it's okay to judge things that hurt other people that are wrong. Yeah. Of course, properly qualified, you know, about hurting other people because right now there's a radical over sense that to say, if you disagree with me, I cry foul, but you've offended me and you can't do that.

Right. But that, but see that brings it to the right question because then the, then you can say, look, so the problem here is not that you can judge and I can't. It's really has nothing to do with judgment.

The problem is what is hurting somebody in this conversation? Who is right about where the hurt is coming from? You're saying that I'm hurting people by saying what they're doing is wrong and I'm saying that what they're doing is hurting people. So we're both hurting ourselves or themselves. So we're both saying that there's hurt involved and we're both judging because we both think there's hurt involved.

So what's happening here is that we have a disagreement about whether or not it's wrong. That's that's really what this comes down to. Where the hurt really is.

Where the hurt really is and whether or not homosexuality or whatever kind of unbiblical sexuality, whether it's sex outside of marriage or adult or whatever it is, we disagree on whether it's wrong. And but when you say don't judge, that's kind of a way of ending the conversation. It's a way of avoiding the real question, which is, is this really wrong? Because we both agree that we should tell if if someone is doing something wrong that hurts people that we should speak up.

We don't want to see that happen. You're saying that to me. I'm saying that to you.

We both agree on that. There's no point in arguing over who's judging when the question is is it wrong? Well, this frustrates me a little bit. You're much more kindhearted than I feel at the moment because I have very little patience for you disagree with me.

Therefore, you're hurting me. And so therefore, I can hurt you back. That's what it amounts to.

You already judge and you're hurting. So I can judge you because you judge first. And if

judging is hurting, then it's okay for me to hurt you in that way.

Why would anybody be hurt if somebody said that they're wrong if they think their behavior is wrong? This is this is a whole huge thing. I remember where I was at. That's very popular now is a Washington University in Topeka, Kansas.

And I gave a talk on the problem of evil. And there was something about it. This professor who came up to the microphone didn't like and he identified himself as a philosophy professor.

And then he said, the first thing, I'm offended by what you said. And I had a maneuver carefully because of the nature of this situation. I've thought a lot about that conversation before and I might have said now, professor, in your class in philosophy, when you make a case for something like I just did regarding God and the problem of evil and you make a case for something and lay it out and you want the students to assess it.

If one of the students says, that offends me. Would you give him a high mark or a low mark for his assessment? I know he was not going to give him a high mark, right? Because whether or not a person is offended by some point of view that's been advanced carefully is irrelevant to whether the true view is true, whatever. But here's the professor of philosophy advancing that as the very first thing.

You know, he has no excuse. I mean, a lot of people really haven't thought through this carefully. They learn the response.

That's what they're judging. And then they just repeat it. Oh, my feelings heard.

My feeling, by the way, that's that is the second time that a professor has said that in a public forum regarding something I've said as a response that offends me. That offends me. What it shows to it, I know what it was that offended them.

I won't get into the details, but it shows that they did not understand the philosophic way. I was arguing. Are you kidding me? You don't understand this particular mode.

You didn't see what I was doing. You know, do you have anything substantive to offer other than that your feelings are hurt? I thought I was talking to a grown up. You know, I didn't say any of that, obviously, but that's what went through my mind.

The problem is they're not equally applying the principle here. And so you either have to point that out for the sake of the people around you, or you have to find some way out of this self-refuting loop, because otherwise you're just going to be saying, but it's okay for me to judge you. Okay, then it's okay for me to judge you forever.

Yeah. And there's no way out because it does not make sense. So if there's a way

forward to actually address the issue, then do that.

If you would like to make the point that this response is just nonsensical for the sake of the other people around, then I would press that. But just, you know, if you can find a way to continue the conversation on the topic, that's... Yeah. That would be great.

But people are... This is the only verse in the Bible that whole, a whole lot of people think is actually inspired by God or worthwhile, or Jesus really meant we ought to listen to. But they don't take the verse in this context. They just take the first few words instead of understanding the flow of thought there.

But I think this has gone so far into our culture that they don't... They don't even bother to try and say, well, doesn't Jesus say don't judge anymore? I think it's just... It's such an assumed part of the morality of our culture, not to judge that they feel free to judge you if you judge, and not realizing it's completely self-refuting. You know, I'm just thinking of some questions too. If they said, why is it wrong? Why is it okay for you to judge? Well, you judge first.

I say, okay, so this is your... Is it evil for me to judge? Yes. So now you're returning evil for evil. You're saying that's the right thing to do? That would be another way to do it.

Notice there's your question, Smith, that pushed the ball in their other court. And just see how they respond. This is so infantile, but in any event, that's what we're faced with in culture right now.

It's very widespread, that whole response. Let's go on to a question from Lars. I'm trying to find good ways to respond to the claim that we are just animals.

I think the fact that we are not animals is intuitive. We don't prosecute animals when they kill each other, for example. But as this claim is proclaimed everywhere, I'd like to have something else to argue with.

Okay, well, does that mean we can treat each other like the animals we are? I mean, it seems to me that's a pretty straightforward question. We are just animals, therefore, we can be treated like animals. Why not? If we are animals, if we are simply animals, well, that statement implies simply animals that there is nothing qualitatively different between us and other creatures.

So I'm not sure how I don't know what they could say, because what? You treat equals equally, right? Whatever is true of one, if it's true of another, then you're free to treat the other the same way as the first. So what would be their complaint then? What would be their... I don't know why that... I don't get it. I mean, there are lots of times, you tell me something, I'm like dumbfounded shaking my head, like this is not that hard.

It's not rocket science. Okay, we're just animals. So when all these, all these Jews were

herded into cattle cars and shipped off for slaughter, and they were actually used because they took their baggage, they took all their gold out of their teeth, they took their hair, they took their clothing, this was a commercial product.

And then with that, they got what was used from the animal, those that were shipped in cattle cars, to Auschwitz and Treblinka and my Donak and the other cow know and the other killing camps, then they discarded them. Okay, if we are just animals, what was wrong with that? I'm interested to hear what they have to say. Yeah, I think his suggestion here to talk about not prosecuting animals is a great one because it shows moral responsibility, it shows accountability.

These are things we don't. It shows that there's something more about us as human beings that is not present in animals. Now, I think there's a problem with saying, should we treat people like animals because I think people can follow that reasoning in two different ways.

So they might say, oh, no, we don't treat human beings like animals, or there's a difference, or they might say, there's no difference, we need to treat animals like animals. I just saw somebody made a joke on Twitter about PETA saying that it was wrong to go to KFC because if you eat fried chicken, you're eating some of these family members and the guy responded, that's why I always get the bucket. No family member left behind.

But the problem is people are following these lines of thought when we try to make arguments, they're following them to the absurd conclusion, because you can always follow it the other direction. They're following these arguments to the absurd conclusion rather than to the reasonable one. And so that might be something you might run into.

But of course, they're assuming that we have the just animal human being, we have moral obligations toward, okay? By the way, we have moral obligations towards other animals, apparently, that other animals do not have toward us. So in what sense, why do we have the moral obligation? Oh, we've evolved that way. Well, maybe you've evolved that way.

I didn't, because I don't agree with you. And if all of my, excuse me, beliefs are a function of my evolution, then all you're saying is that you have one set of beliefs and values that is consistent with your evolution, but obviously it's not consistent with mine and a whole host of other individuals in this world. So it seems to me, if we're just, look at if it's all, if there is no God as Dostoevsky famously said, then all is permitted.

So it's just a crapshoot. No God, just evolution, we're animals, we act like whatever is consistent with what we desire. And that's the way animals act.

They are not constrained by morality. That would be an argument against morality for

humans, not for morality for animals, because morality entails obligations regarding behavior and where do the obligations come from? And if the obligation is just a result of my evolution, then when we violate the so-called obligation, all we're doing is going against the revolution. And we had an atheist on this program, not this program, my program, the other one, the Stand A Reason program that made that a mission.

Yes. And of course, I don't even know how it's possible to violate your evolution. I've got brown eyes.

You got like hazel eyes, right? They're kind of muddy brown. Muddy brown. Okay.

I have crystal clear brown eyes. The thing is, I can't just deny my evolution of my eye color. It's all genetic.

I can't deny all of that stuff. So how can you deny your evolution regarding morality? This does not add up is the point I'm making. It is not the smart answer given what we know.

Yeah. We can all see that there is a dignity that human beings have that other animals don't have. We can see this.

We wear clothes. We speak a language. We create things.

We create beauty. We communicate. We reason.

We have emotion. And some of these things, you know, there might be some rudimentary, you know, parallel in some animals. But there is a dignity to human beings and a sacredness human beings that is not present in other animals.

And we can see this. And I think everybody knows this. So I think it would be worth saying in a conversation about this, explaining why you think that's the case.

And you might even say, look, I suspect the reason why you're denying these, this, this qualitative difference between animals and humans is because you don't really have a way to explain it. You believe in evolution? Where do these things come from? It seems to be more than just, I have, we have more of something than the animal has. There's a qualitative difference between an animal that has obligations to morality and one that doesn't.

And so you don't really have a way to explain that. So I can, I can understand why you're insisting it, even though I think we all know that's not the case. But I can explain it.

I think we were made in the image of God. I think there are ways that we are like God that the animals are not like God. Even though we are animals and we have many things in common with animals that we don't have in common God, there is something about us that bears the image of God that didn't just evolve from materialistic things.

And so it's worth explaining that, you know, it's not just that we have gained some functions and we have these functions better than the animals. It's that we were actually made in the image of God and the fact that there is a personal, rational being that explains why we are personal, rational being and moral beings. And by the way, you cannot just look at higher functions and attach moral value to the higher function.

That's a category error. They're unrelated. And if you do that, then when you have down syndrome children that don't have the higher functions, at least like most human beings do, then you then you then they don't have the value.

This is instrumental value. And it's I was walking through the airport where Albuquerque two days ago, four days ago, whatever it was. And it said, every down syndrome child has a name, his LAX has a right to a job.

Okay, what's curious to me is every apparently, every down syndrome child has a right to a job, but every down syndrome child does not have a right to life. And for example, in Iceland, they've gotten rid of down syndrome. Really? Yeah, hardly ever did they have a down cell.

Why? Because they kill them in the womb. They do amniocentesis, which is a search and destroy mission and they take their life through abortion in the womb. Okay.

So see how conflicted this is? What is it going to be? You know, do they have value? And even in this country where people are saying they have a right to a job, if you have a down syndrome child, they find this out in advance, you are pressured to have an abortion. You are pressured to have an abortion. You know, so it's just it's all mixed up and convoluted here.

You know, since these two questions, they both illustrate the beauty of the clarity of the Christian worldview. Because it's true, we can make sense of all these things. We can talk about them in ways that are consistent.

We can talk, we can use principles consistently because it's true. And so there are always, you will always be able to find ways that things are not working in their system as they try to put it together and they try to make certain principles fit together that don't fit together. And this is just part of the beauty of Christianity.

I call it the expil, explanatory power of the Christian worldview over and above the other options. And when my daughter asked me many years ago, why do we, when she was eight years old or so, why do we think God is true as the way she put it? I thought about it for a moment and I simply said, and this has been a hallmark of my explicit hallmark of my work ever since though it's been implicitly in place, I simply said, the reason we believe God is true is because he's the best explanation for the way things are. Not the only explanation is the best explanation.

This is what you're getting at. So if you have questions about that, go to our website, str.org. So many articles, so many videos, so many podcasts, and we talk about all of these things. Maybe you stumbled across this podcast and you've never thought about the arguments for Christianity.

So we've been doing it for 30 years this year. And of course, we don't have a backlog of 30 years because for a number of those years at the beginning, there was no place to place it. There was no worldwide web.

But as long as we've been able to store things, we've been doing that. That's why there's so much on our website that you can review and search on and get the kinds of answers that Amy and I have been offering here. So take a look today at str.org and we'll see you next time on hashtag [str.org](https://twitter.com/strorg). This is Amy Hollen, great coco for stan to reason.