

James 4.11-12 Who is the Judge and Lawgiver?

Who is Above the Law? v. 11

- I. James begins by saying, “Do not speak against one another,” as in do not *slander* one another or speak to one another in a critical way.
 - A. Why? Because it depicts something that is not true, which involves **self-elevation** (Luke 17.7-10).
 - 1. The law of God is for all man, including ourselves. In Christ it is the law of love and the one who slanders or condemns a brother (behind the back or face to face), is guilty of breaking this law (Matt. 7.1-2; Rom. 11.32). It is hypocrisy.
 - a) We would be self-elevating ourselves to the judgment seat without being given the right. If we are busy judging others, then we are not busy doing God’s will.
 - (1) What about 1 Cor. 6.2?
 - (2) What about 1 Cor. 5.9-13? What about “the reviler?” He is the slanderer, the insulter, the faultfinder, passing critical judgment without humility and without doing a self-check. He is the one who sees the speck in his brother’s eye without removing the log in his own eye. And he is not seeking to restore anyone to fellowship.
 - (a) Motives are important. Why are we mentioning someone else’s struggle with sin, illness or problems in our conversations if it is not for their good? Why are we confronting someone? (James 3.17) Do we have their well-being in mind, while guarding their reputation?

Who is Above God? v. 12

- I. Not only is judging your brother a self-elevation above the law, but it is self-elevation above God, who knows and judges perfectly. We claim to know the heart of man, when we don’t.
 - A. Throughout the Scriptures, there is a common affirmation that God is the one ultimate judge. Where was man, when God gave Moses the two tablets of stone? Man was on the receiving end of the law.
 - 1. Jesus is the lawgiver (Matt. 5.21ff).

- B. There is a common affirmation in the world that, “Only God can judge me!” It is a true statement (Matt. 10.28).
 - 1. Jesus is the judge (Acts 10.42; 2 Cor. 5.10; Rev. 5.2; John 5.22-23; Matt. 28.18).
 - a) We are all sinners and can’t escape judgment. We can’t stand above the law. We can’t stand under the law to be judged by it. Where does that leave us?
 - (1) The good news is Jesus, as the just judge, is also able to save from judgment!
 - (a) And this ought to lead us to ask ourselves, “Who am I to judge my neighbor?” Where would I be if God was to hold every sin against me? Rom. 8.1. Our sin bearer bore our judgment at Calvary. Instead of judging our brothers, we ought to be reminding them of this truth. Amen.