

Contempt And Christianity Are Not Compatible

Matthew 5:22 [Message Bible] *“Carelessly call a brother ‘idiot’ and you might find yourself hauled into court. Thoughtlessly yell ‘stupid’ at a sister and you are on the brink of hell fire.”*

Jesus is **not** saying that we will be punished in hell fire for calling another human being a fool, but is **showing that such contempt for another person reveals a state of heart that will fit us for hell fire as our final destination.**

It is the serious sin of contempt that endangers our future.

Contempt for a human being is an affront to God almost as grave as idolatry.

Idolatry is disrespect for God Himself.

Contempt is disrespect for a being God made in His own image.

Genesis 1:27 [NIV] *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”*

Both men and women are equally made in the image and likeness of God.

To show such contempt as to call a person “*stupid*” or “*idiot*” is to attach to that person no value whatsoever.

The person guilty of such appraisal of another human being is evil for a number of reasons.

Contempt is an emotion only possible where there is great personal pride.

Such an error of moral judgement that so undervalues another person always springs out of the error of overvaluing ourselves.

As a contemptuous person we esteem ourselves too highly for reasons that are invalid.

Our high opinion of ourselves is not based on being made in the image of God, as we all are, but on fancied virtues which we do not really possess.

The error of judgement is moral not intellectual.

Romans 2:1-4 [NIV] *“You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. Now we know that God’s judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God’s judgment? Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realising that God’s kindness leads you towards repentance?”*

Only God can make moral judgements, only He knows the true value of a person, their “heart” value.

John 7:24 [Amplified Bible] *“Be honest in your judgement and do not decide at a glance, superficially and by appearances, but judge fairly and righteously.”*

Sadly it is in the realm of religion that contempt finds its most fruitful soil and flourishes.

The cold disdain with which the respectable “*church woman*” regards her “*worldly sister*”.

The scorn heaped on the unmarried couple who live together by the legally married wife and husband.

The sober deacon who finds it hard to conceal his contempt for his neighbour who drinks.

The professional minister who leaves you with no doubt that he feels himself superior in every way to the lay preacher.

Religion that is not purified by humility and love is the breeding ground for contempt.

As Christians we cannot close our eyes to the good and evil in other people.

As Christians we cannot avoid making moral judgements on the deeds of other people; in fact, we are commanded to do so.

Matthew 7:15-20 [NIV] *“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognise them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognise them.”*

We are to recognise false teachers by making moral judgements as to the result of their teaching and lives.

Such a judgement must never turn into contempt for their humanity for that has divine origin.

John 3:16-17 [NIV] *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*

No-one for whom Christ died can be common or worthless.

John 1:14 [NIV] *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

In the incarnation God gave glory to the human state.

To esteem anyone worthless who is in the form of a human being is to make us guilty of an affront to Jesus the Son of Man.

Philippians 2:3-8 [NIV] *“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross!”*

We hate the sin that is in a person but love the person, even as Jesus the Son of Man did.

1 Corinthians 13:7 [Message Bible] *“Love always looks for the best, never looks back but keeps going to the end.”*

1 Corinthians 13:7 [Amplified Bible] *“Love is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances.”*

It is always true that we can make people what we believe them to be. If we act in such a way that we show that we do not trust them, that we regard them with suspicion, we encourage them to be untrustworthy.

If we act in such a way that we show people that we trust them absolutely, we encourage them to become trustworthy.

Where the Love of God reigns there is no place for being cynical or expressing contempt.