

"Don't Slander, Judge, or Boast, but Do the Good"
James 4:11-17 Pastor Bob Brandhagen

¹¹ Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. 1 Peter 2:12 1 Peter 3:16

We are commanded here not to slander *one another*. It is bad and wrong to slander those who *don't* follow Jesus, but here the focus is on not slandering your brother or sister in Christ.

Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. 1 Cor 5:12-13

Lovingly rebuking or correcting a believer is not prohibited (2 Tim 4:2), though slander is.

Judgment—but *only* of a believer—is sometimes permitted (1 Cor 5:12-13), though not always.

Slandering or carelessly evaluating a fellow believer is offensive to God, who takes it as a slandering and judging of His own law. Slander of God's child = slander of God's law.

When you judge the law, . . . by wrongly judging a brother or sister . . .

you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.

Our job is not to refuse God's law.

Psalms 78:10

God gives joy and inheritance so that we will keep His law.

Psalms 105:43-45

We need to pray that God would teach us His law.

Psalms 119:29

¹² There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, When it comes to lawgivers and judges, the Lord God is in a select company of One.

If there is only one bald eagle in the world, we say that creature is endangered.

There is only One Lawgiver and Judge. But God is not endangered. Rather, *He endangers*. The One Lawgiver and Judge endangers all who do not call upon Him, and follow His Son.

There are two senators in each of the fifty states. There are nine judges on the U. S. Supreme Court.

Whether they know it or not, whether they agree or not, that fact is, "there is only One Lawgiver and Judge."

Psalms 50:4 Psalms 58:11 Psalms 94:2 Psalms 96:13 Psalms 98:9

And, unlike earthly legislators and judges, only God, *the* Lawgiver and Judge is:

the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?

¹³ Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money."

James was not condemning the starting of businesses, nor industriousness, nor earning money.

¹⁴ Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. Matt 6:33-34

We may *think* we know what will happen tomorrow, but all we really have are plans and ideas.

What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Psalms 90

¹⁵ Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."

He is warning against a view of "tomorrow"—a view of Monday morning—that has a godless, prideful, willfulness about it that is *not* the Lord's will. James is condemning a modern-day reenactment of the Tower of Babel (Gen 11:1-9).

¹⁶ As it is, you boast Psalms 44:8 Prov 27:1 1 Cor 1:31 Jer 9:23-24

in your arrogant schemes. Psalms 21:11 Psalms 119:150 Rom 1:18-32

All such boasting is evil. ¹⁷ If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

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