

Jumping At Conclusions

By
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My "Potent Point" for this month has to do with "Jumping at Conclusions." "Jumping at Conclusions" doesn't really sound like anything very bad. I suspect this is because we are nearly all guilty of it, and most of the time we have a tendency to think what we are doing is perfectly right. But, you may be sure, if it is wrong before God and if it hurts others, it is certainly not right. Surprisingly, "Jumping at Conclusions," is sometime practiced by members of the church who are otherwise considered strong in the faith. But, of course, this doesn't make it right.

Perhaps you are wondering what I mean by the expression, "Jumping at Conclusion." Is it physical exercise? If it were, I must admit that it would be about all the exercise some people ever get, but, of course, I am not talking about bodily exercise. Let me tell you a little story I heard one time and I think it will help to illustrate my point.

As the story goes, a man and his wife had just finished breakfast and she was doing the dishes. He had gone into the living room and was looking out the picture window toward the street. As he looked out the window he simply remarked; "there goes that woman that Mr. Jones is in love with." Crash, went the dish in her hand. She sprang out of the kitchen through the dining room, where she almost toppled a chair, and into the living room where she brushed a lamp. Finally, standing before the picture window and gazing out, she dejectedly replied; "you dope, that's nobody but Mrs. Jones." His reply was, "who did you expect?" Why did she say what she did? She "jumped at this conclusion"

because her frame of mind allowed her to "think that which was evil," even in the absence of any concrete evidence.

What is wrong with us when, like a flash of lightning, we put an evil construction on what we hear without a consideration of the facts? Would it surprise you if I told you that we are LACKING IN LOVE? Well, surprise or not, that's the truth. In giving the qualities of love, Paul says, in I Corinthians 13:5, that love "thinketh no evil." This means that love puts the best possible construction on the motives and conduct of others that it possibly can. It simply means that under the influence of love a person is not malicious, he is not censorious, and he is not given to constant faultfinding nor the imputing of improper motives to others. You see, one of the beautiful things about love is that it is not careful to retain the memory of evil and never does keep a record of evil for the purpose of returning it to others.

Another bad thing about "jumping at conclusions" is that it often causes us to "judge" others. James wrote; "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" (James 4:11-12) The judging under consideration is not mere correction of error in another, but goes beyond this and aims only at tearing down the good name of a brother by imputing to him false motives and intents. It is a conclusion that has been reached on the basis of personal feelings and not on the basis of facts. There is nothing which is condemned more strongly in the Scripture than the habit of pronouncing a judgment on the motives and conduct of others without the facts. And I add, I can think of nothing in which we are more likely to err, or to indulge in wrong feelings than in judging. Conclusions

which involve us in "judging" cause us to set aside the law of God as "unworthy," and in turn we set up our own law and judgment.

There are not many things that I know of that can stir up more unnecessary trouble, arouse more suspicion, and deal out more hurt than "jumping at conclusions." We are told to "judge righteous judgment," true enough, but no judgment is righteous which does not include the facts. My brethren, love" will not permit it, therefore let us refrain from it. Taken from Searching the Scriptures, March 1975