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LETS NOT JUDGE, LETS LOVE!

Listening again to the story of the prodigal son, started off a train of thought. I pondered the fathers response when his lost son returned; happiness, relief and rejoicing. No condemnation, no recriminations, just forgiveness, welcome and jubilation. How often have we been in that position? The sinner who has returned yet again to the Lord for forgiveness, after going our own rambunctious way and ending up in trouble, yet again..... What happens? Does God chastise us, hold up our previous sins as a mirror, tell us how very bad we've been, or does He just forgive and welcome us back into His loving arms, entreating us not to wander off on our own again.

Why then do we judge anybody, and I include myself in the big we. We "Christians" are in danger of outdoing the "Pharisees" in their critical attitudes. They felt so self-righteous that they "Killed God". Just because Jesus preached a message different from theirs and all his T's were not crossed and his I's not dotted. They completely missed the essence of who Christ was, and what his message brought; forgiveness repentance and love, most especially love. Do we show love to all, as Jesus instructed; to the lepers, prostitutes and Samaritans in Jesus time, to the paedophiles, drug addicts and suicide bombers of our own time.

There will always be actions and crimes abhorrent to the majority at any point in time, and while we should abhor heinous acts, we shouldn't condemn the sinner; after all did God condemn us? Be honest, judge yourself, do you deserve to be here? I know I don't..... I know that if I'm to be judged fairly, they should lock me up and throw away the key. But, I'm here and thriving only by the amazing Grace of God. I hear some of you [Christians] saying that salvation is also there for them, [non-Christians] true.....! The big problem is that they don't know it. Like the prodigal son living in a foreign land in a time of want and famine, they are yet to return home. We should be out there, beating drums, engaging in riotous celebrations so that the noise of our merry-making and jubilations may carry on winds, to the far off lands of famine and call them home.

Instead we adopt an even worse attitude than the 1st son [we the returned prodigals.....] and stand in judgment and condemnation of those we consider unsaved. Shouldn't that term unsaved, even engender in us pity for people who know no better? Jesus won his converts by love and forgiveness, not by moralizing and judging as the Pharisees did. Check yourself, how judgmental are you? Do you consider some sins unforgivable or disdain and avoid some people because they engage in acts that are wrong? Do you choose not to have anything to do with people who have different belief systems to yourself? Including some of our brethren, who are on the extreme fringes of Christianity. How will they ever learn the truth if we don't tell them? And I'm not talking about big crusades, I'm talking about everyday interactions that we have with people of all faiths and persuasions.

We are uniquely blessed to be in the UK, in London, which is the most cosmopolitan, ethnically diverse city in the world, where people of different races, faiths and cultures live side by side. God is The Master-planner as we know. Do we really think it's by accident that one of the smallest countries in the world, [an Island....] has people of every race and religion living in it, in such close proximity one cannot avoid coming into contact with someone from another faith every day. Do our lives, attitudes and speech reflect love and the message of peace? Do we make any attempt to see things from the other person's point of view, and then we could get a handle on why people behave in certain ways. Only then could we reach out to them and bring them back into the fold. After all, that's part of what Jesus came to do for us, as well as dying to redeem our sins.

He came and lived on earth as a man, so he could experience everything we experienced, feel everything we felt, be better able to understand us, so he could be an advocate for us with the Father when he returned to Him. He didn't come just to condemn people, he didn't say anyone was beyond salvation; he just loved us, even before we repented of our sins and returned to the Father. If we really have life in Christ, we should be increasingly like him; **we should strive to love all our fellow men**, not just the Christians amongst them. If we do this, I believe it could be one of the most effective tools of evangelism of our time. Maybe I'm preaching to the converted, maybe I'm alone in my rant for better understanding and tolerance of our lost brethren, who have not yet returned to the Father. If that's the case, I leave you all to continue walking in love, while I go back to the Father and ask Him to show me how I can better love and reach out to His lost sheep.

Musings of a child of God.