

There are two kinds of judging: final judgments, which we are forbidden to make, and intermediate judgments, which we are directed to make, but upon righteous principles. ...

... Let us consider some principles or ingredients that lead to a “righteous judgment.”

First, a righteous judgment must, by definition, be intermediate. It will refrain from declaring that a person has been assured of exaltation or from dismissing a person as being irrevocably bound for hellfire. ...

Second, a righteous judgment will be guided by the Spirit of the Lord, not by anger, revenge, jealousy, or self-interest. ...

Third, to be righteous, an intermediate judgment must be within our stewardship. We should not presume to exercise and act upon judgments that are outside our personal responsibilities. ...

Fourth, we should, if possible, refrain from judging until we have adequate knowledge of the facts. ...

A fifth principle of a righteous intermediate judgment is that whenever possible we will refrain from judging people and only judge situations.

(Dallin H. Oaks, “‘Judge Not’ and Judging,” Ensign, Aug. 1999, 7, 9–11)

