

**THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK**

“Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.”

John 12: 32-33

Halfway through my years in the Seminary, in the late 1960's, there was a book published that became increasingly popular. The title? I'm Okay; You're Okay. The author's name is Thomas Anthony Harris. It was written in reaction to the very pointed and judgmental attitudes that were rather common in the early 1960's. The book was received as a breath of fresh air by many because the emphasis was placed on ending prejudice and sometimes brutal condemnations of people and individuals.

However, the book also had some unintended consequences. It became the basis for things like No-Fault Divorces. Prior to that time getting a divorce was not an easy thing to do. There was strong societal support for marriage. There had to be grounds for one person to sue another to end a marriage. With No-Fault Divorce, getting a divorce would be a whole lot easier. And it was. And very quickly the frequency of divorce skyrocketed. What was once around 1 in 20 marriages ending in divorce quickly escalated to 1 in 15; then 1 in 10; then 1 in 5; then 1 in 3; then 1 in 2. No fault. No judgment. Easy. BUT. Not good. Not good for husbands and wives. Not good for families. Not good for children. Not good for the Church. Not good for the country. But isn't removing judgment of people a good thing?

Judgment is part of our lives as human beings. We form judgments all the time. About what is right and wrong, about what is good and bad. This is necessary. What was wrong was moving from forming a judgment about some thing to forming a judgment about some person. And then condemning them. That is something beyond us. It is to be reserved to God. But all of that was done away with. And what happened? Well, look around now, it has returned—in spades. We went from accepting everyone as they are (I am okay and you are okay too), to a world where those who espouse a particular way of looking at life and the world are okay and everyone else is decidedly not okay.

My friends, there is a judgment coming but it will not be of our own making. It will come from the God whose Son was incarnate and crucified for us, to save us from our selfishness and sin—if we embrace his way, the truth that he is and the life he brings. God's economy is decidedly not one based on a very tentative human statement which is not rooted in the truth. Are we listening? That is the question of the week.