

THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

JESUS IS KING



Judgment and Discernment

Text: Matthew 7:1-6

1. Judge Not - Matthew 7:1-2

Here Jesus moved to another idea in the Sermon on the Mount. Up to this point Jesus has dealt primarily with themes connected with the *interior* spiritual life (attitudes in giving, prayer, fasting, materialism, and anxiety over material things).

Because these are attitudes of the heart Jesus moves to an important topic relating to the way we think of and treat others.

Jesus called for a righteousness that was greater than the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 5:20). The danger of righteousness, especially our own righteousness, is that we fall into the trap of thinking that our righteousness gives us a position be more judgmental of others.

Judge not, that ye be not judged: This is a warning from Jesus against passing judgment upon others, because when we do so, we will be **judged** in the same way.

The Christian is called to show unconditional love, but the Christian is not called to unconditional *approval*. We really *can* love people who do things that should not be approved of.

2. Consider Yourself - Matthew 7:3-5

The one person we all should judge is ourselves. **1 Corinthians 11:31** *“For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.”*

The figures of a **mote** and a **beam** are real figures, yet are used as humorously figures of speech. This seems to be a little sarcastic. Jesus shows how we are generally far more tolerant to our own sin than we are to the sin of others.

A beam is a large piece of wood. A mote is a tiny speck of dust.

Jesus indicates that the one with the **beam in his own eye** would not immediately be aware of it. He is blind to his obvious fault. It is the attempt to correct the fault of someone else when we ourselves have the same (or greater fault) that earns the accusation, **“Hypocrite!”**

First cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye: Jesus didn't say that it was wrong for us to

help our brother with the speck in his eye. It is a good thing to help your brother with his speck, *but not before* dealing with the beam in your own eye.

3. Balancing Love with Discernment - Matthew 7:6

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs: After He warned us against judgmental attitudes and self-blind criticism, Jesus tells us that He did not mean to imply that the people of His Kingdom have no discernment.

We must discern that there are some good, precious things that should not be given to those who will receive them with contempt.

We might say that Jesus means, “Don’t be judgmental, but don’t throw out all discernment either.”

Neither cast ye your pearls before swine: Our **pearls** of the precious gospel may only confuse those who do not believe, who are blinded to the truth by Satan and may only expose the gospel to their ridicule.

Of course, Jesus did not say this to discourage us from sharing the gospel. In this same sermon Jesus told us to let our lights so shine before men.

Conclusion: Throughout this sermon on the mount Jesus is calling attention to the heart.

It is so easy to get into trouble with our heart. Our heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. Even in calling out a

serious and wicked sin we can reveal a heart that is wrapped up in self-righteous pride.

The key to maintaining a right walk with God is to walk in humility.

We need to have to have the attitude of the Apostle Paul in **1 Corinthians 15:10** ***“But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”***

Don't lift up your heart in pride and say, “I thank God I am not like those other sinners!”

Remember that Judgement doesn't change the heart, but Jesus does!



GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What come to your mind when you hear the phrase, “Judge not, that ye be not judged”?
2. Do you feel like Christians are too judgmental? Why?
3. What does it mean to judge?
4. What causes us to judge others?

5. Does “not judging” mean that you are approving of sin?
Why or why not?
6. What does the beam and mote represent in this text?
7. Can judgement change a heart?
8. What does it mean to cast your pearls before swine?
9. Why should you have discernment when it comes to loving correction?
10. Why is humility so important in this context?