

Message on Matthew 7:1-12

Matthew 7:1-6 (ESV)

“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?

Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye’, when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.

Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

Judgment v Discernment

This is a matter of the heart – operating from flesh or in Spirit.

Luke 6:37-42 “Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven.”

Judgment has the sense of finality, having made a decision about someone. It closes us off to being open to discussion or mutual understanding. Judgement also includes condemnation.

To judge is to operate in the flesh, from our personal perspective, opinion.

Discernment is about seeking insight and understanding before coming to a conclusion. This is done in the Spirit and the Spirit gives wisdom and understanding. Discernment is about responding from love, rather than being reactive, so we can make appropriate choices for ourselves and for the good of others. Do our words come from a place of peace and compassion, and a genuine attempt to understand? Or do they come from anger, insecurity or stubbornness. Matthew 12:36 says God will call us to account for every careless word we utter.

In John 8:3-11 The Pharisees brought a woman caught in the act of adultery to Jesus and questioned him regarding the law. Jesus said “if anyone is without sin among them to throw the first stone at her. The Pharisees left, and Jesus tells the woman he doesn’t condemn her either and she should go and sin no more.

Jesus is the only one who can judge, because He is without sin and has no speck or log in His eye. , and His heart is pure. Jesus died on the Cross to forgive us of our sins and we are no longer under condemnation, but are free. He is the righteous judge.

Our seeing is flawed, because we are not yet perfect. We are in process. Fault finding is a common part of life, because of our own hurts and pain, our experiences,

what people have said to us etc. As we are healed of past traumas and pain, this influences us less in our relationships and our perspectives of others.

Romans 14:10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

Verse 12 Each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Romans 14:13 “Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.”

This is a warning to us.

Micah 6:8 The Lord requires us to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God.

We are to have mercy, love and compassion to others. It is easy to be fault-finding and criticize others but this belongs to our sin nature or flesh, not our new nature in Christ, where we are led by the Spirit.

Jesus asks us to check our own hearts first, just as He did with the Pharisees and the adulterous woman. What do we need to repent of, receive healing for, in ourselves? Then we will see others more clearly, instead of through a murky filter. .

We can be quick to criticize others for what they did or said, without considering the cause of it or the context of it. We can point the finger at others but reject others doing it to us. We can misjudge another person who is trying to help us improve and grow, by thinking they have turned against us.

Matthew 7:12 “So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

The world’s way is to be negative and fault-finding with others. However we are called to encourage one another and build each other up.

The greatest commandment is love – loving God and loving others. We cannot love others if we are judging, criticising them. Sometimes the very thing we are criticising another for, is something in our own lives we need to deal with. We are just deflecting our stuff onto someone else. Just as the Word of God is a mirror for us, so too can others reflect back to us something that God wants us to see in ourselves. This is so we can take it to God for healing or to have it cut out.

We must be careful not to judge a brother or sister in Christ on the basis of something he does or doesn’t do, if it doesn’t violate any commandment of God. If a Christian bows down to worship an idol or tell a lie, we are to admonish him humbly and lovingly.

A person may be doing something out of ignorance or because they lack understanding. An example is Apollos in Acts 18:24-28. Aquila and Priscilla take him aside and correct him. Apollos is grateful for the correction. However, if they had been judgmental and critical of him, and written him off as a false teacher, he wouldn’t have been corrected.

We are to keep ourselves well spiritually to remain qualified to help restore those who have sinned. In the process of restoring them, we should maintain a spirit of meekness not a fault-finding spirit. Our aim is to encourage and build up, to assist them to overcome and move forward. Not to condemn. It is an attitude of the heart.

Jesus calls us to be merciful, compassionate and forgive. We are to deal honestly with our own hearts before having the responsibility to help others.

Matthew 7 Verse 6

Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

We need discernment to know someone's spiritual condition or character.

In Jewish culture, dogs were wild animals, roaming the streets in packs looking for food and attacking weaker animals. Pigs were unclean under God's law. They are voracious eaters and not especially selective about food. Pigs can become aggressive when hungry. Giving pigs something inedible when they expect food, antagonizes them.

It is a warning to Christians not to waste time or invite harassment by sharing the truth of the gospel with those who are obviously hostile.

Reminds me of Matthew 10:14 where Jesus says "And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town."