

## **Matthew 7:1-6**

### **Are You Living Below Who You are in Christ?**

Well, let's jump right in this morning as we return to our look at Matthew. We find ourselves in the midst of what has been titled the sermon on the mount. A sermon Jesus delivered while He was sitting on the hillside with His disciples and many others gathered around.

If you read through this sermon, which is found in Matthew 5-7, you will soon see that Jesus, in rapid fire succession, hits a number of kingdom principles that teaches His disciples how they should behave now that they are in the Kingdom of God.

That is something we all need to understand and appreciate isn't it. Even though we live in the flesh we no longer live by the flesh or the world's value system. We have been elevated to a higher plain, to a higher standard of living, to kingdom living.

This is where we find ourselves this morning. Imagine if you will, Jesus sitting high on a hillside and sharing this teaching. Jesus continues...

**Matthew 7:1-6, "Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take that speck out of your eye, and behold, the log is 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 what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces."**

There is a couple of thoughts I think Jesus wants to get across here.

First and pretty obviously is the fact that we shouldn't judge others. As Christians we know that is a pretty obvious do not do thing. But boy, it is I our human nature isn't it? We see someone doing something we don't like or don't think they should be doing and we are quick to judge them and even possibly talk about them.

This is one of those ingrained in our human nature things that Jesus wants to help us get rid of. Jesus tells us that if we get caught up in this kind of behavior, that certain things will happen. Look back at what He says.

**Vs. 2 “For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.”**

The is the law of reaping what you sow. I used to think when Jesus said you will be judged it meant that God would judge us or the standard of measure we use it will be measured to you by God. I don't think that is the case though.

I think what Jesus is saying is

- 1. If you are constantly judging and critical of people, people will be constantly judging and critical of you. What goes around comes around right?**

When we come into contact with someone who is always judging other people, talking about the things that someone is doing or not doing, invariably we begin judge them and to talk about that person's negative attitude or critical spirit.

We will get back to this thought in a minute but let's look at another thing that God may be doing when we see someone doing something we can easily find ourselves being critical of.

One of the things I believe

**2. As we see imperfections in others, God uses these imperfections as mirrors into our own hearts.**

When we see that another person is prideful or unforgiving or the many other things we can see, I believe God will use our insight into their behaviors to have us look within ourselves to see if we are dealing with the same issue or issues. We might pray, hmmm, God, I see this in them, is this something within me that you want to deal with.

Now, in this teaching Jesus doesn't tell us that we shouldn't help someone who has an issue but He does say... **“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.”**

Jesus tells us, yes, you can help someone with a speck in their eye only when after we have dealt with the log in our eyes. I think it is something like this.

The teaching of Jesus is not that we can't help a person but to what? First deal with the log in our own eye before we try and help someone else with the speck that is in theirs.

Let's go on now to verse 6. It is really an interesting verse in midst of this teaching of Jesus. Read it again with me.

**Matthew 7:6, “Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.”**

I think we understand what Jesus is talking about when He says the dogs or swine will turn and tear you to pieces. When you are constantly critical of others, it is not long before the masses get tired of your

criticalness and they begin to make you their target. Jesus wants to protect us from that.

But what about this statement, **“Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine...”**

Here’s what I think Jesus might have meant by this in light of judging others.

Why are you, someone who has been exalted high up in God’s kingdom, stooping down to the level of common humanity? Don’t you know that you have been given a great and honored position with Christ?

As the title of this sermon says,

### 3. Are you living **below** who you are in Christ?

I wonder if Jesus is saying this kind of judgmental behavior is so beneath you that you have to stoop down to the dog and swine level to do it. You are hanging out in the pig sty or running with the dogs when you are being critical of others? Why would you want to do this. By doing so you are being hypocritical of who you are now in Christ.

So many times, when we hear the word hypocrite we automatically think about it in the negative sense. Typically hypocrite means when someone is acting one way, putting on a show but in their heart they are something else. Someone may act loving but in their heart they are anything but loving. They may act or say they are forgiving but they really aren’t.

But I wonder if Jesus is saying here that when a follower of Christ is being judgmental they are not being true to their new nature, the new nature that has been created holiness and righteousness of Christ.

Let's think about who you have been exalted to be now that you have come into a relationship with Christ by looking at this next passage.

**1 Peter 2:4-8, "And coming to Him (Jesus) as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this is contained in scripture, 'Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone, and they who believe in Him shall not be disappointed.' This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, 'The stone which the builders rejected, this became the very corner stone and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense,' for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also destined for."**

Within this passage there are multiple privileges and honors Christians have received that the world has not. Let's take a look at a few of them.

#### **4. Blessings of being in a relationship with Christian**

##### **a. Believers have the privilege of coming to Christ**

**Vs. 1, "And coming to Him (Jesus) as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God."**

This is not just when we come to Jesus for salvation as great that was for you. But this is the ongoing ability to come to come into the presence of the Son of God. The one who is choice and precious in the sight of God. Those who have rejected the Son of God do not come into His presence. They are not able to come boldly and confidently into the throne room, seeking grace and mercy in their time of need.

I believe that God hears all prayers but when certain prayers are lifted up by individuals who do not have a relationship with His Son, then I wonder if any of their prayers are answered? Some maybe but without a relationship with Jesus, they don't have the ability to come into the presence of God. Not so for you. We get to come hand in hand with God's own Son into the throne room. We come as royalty, as family, as those who walk in privilege.

Look at this next blessing.

**b. Believers have the privilege of being built into the house of God**

**Vs. 5, “you, also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”**

We have the privilege and honor of being placed together and next to other believers to create a spiritual house, not just a church building like this one, but a spiritual environment where God's kingdom is lived out and promoted to the community around us.

That is what we want isn't it? To be used by God to create an environment where people can get connected to Jesus and the healing and salvation He offers.

We are the ones God has chosen to do this with. We are His living stones. But not just this...

**c. Believers have the privilege of being Priests, offering sacrifices to God.**

In the original covenant with God, offering up sacrifices was limited to a few, the tribe of Levi. They were descendants of Aaron, Moses' brother. They were chosen by God to offer up prayers for the people and to offer up sacrifices for the people's sins.

As followers of Christ, we have been sprinkled by the blood of Jesus and because of this we can offer up prayers for people and know they are heard. This plays into when we see someone doing something that we know is wrong or that we don't like. Instead of judging them, our response is to offer up prayers for them. We do this humbly though, knowing our own struggles.

But we also can offer up sacrifices for others meaning we don't return evil for evil. Just as Jesus did, when someone comes at us, we take the hit. We absorb it without ever opening our mouths against them.

I read something the other day that was so true. When you don't give any energy to something negative that happens to you, it dies and goes away. When you give it energy, it takes on a life of its own and can grow and have a bigger, more negative impact upon your life and the lives of others.

As Christians, we have the honor and the power to make personal sacrifices for the good of others by not giving whatever negative thing they do or say any energy. We can lift up sacrifices in many other ways but this is the one that fits our passage in Matthew about not judging others.

#### **d. Believers have the privilege of sharing in the honor of Christ**

We know that Jesus Christ has been exalted to the right hand of God. He sits on a throne right next to the Creator of the Universe.

**John 17:22a, "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them..."**

When you know that Jesus has been glorified in great and special ways. As you follow Him, you too will be glorified. True, some may reject you but others will see the glory of the Risen Christ on you and in you and they will seek to know what it is that you have.

The honored and blessed place of a believer. Holiness, glorification, able to offer up prayers for others, make sacrifices on the behalf of others, being built up into a spiritual house in hopes that that more and more people will be drawn to Christ.

Such a honored position, such a blessed position. Why would you lower yourself to the level of the pig sty or running with the dogs by judging others.

We need help in this though don't we. For some, myself included, this is something that runs deep within our human nature. It comes out quickly and sometimes in ways that are not so pretty.

But the presence of the Risen Lord is with us amen? Each time a thought of judging another person comes to our mind we can quickly run to Jesus and say, I know this is not from you Lord. Cleanse my heart and help me to live from that place that You filled me with Your compassion. Help me to live at the honored level as royalty in Your courts. Holiness and pearls you have given me and I thank You.

Let's pray