

1) Ok, here we are – let’s get started in the final chapter dedicated to the Sermon on the Mount...

Matthew 7:1–5 (ESV)

Judging Others

<sup>1</sup> “Judge not, that you be not judged. <sup>2</sup> For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. <sup>3</sup> 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? <sup>4</sup> 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? <sup>5</sup> 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.

1) This opening statement “**Do not judge, so that you will not be judged**” would not be as clear without the rest of what Jesus says.

- a) In fact, if taken by itself, it could simply say we should not judge so that we are not judged and that really might not be a bad thing, right?
- b) If I don’t judge, perhaps God will not judge me?
  - i) At the very least, maybe others won’t judge me.
- c) Nice thought but, we know that is not how things work.

2) When we look at the next statement, we start to see more clearly what Jesus is saying.

<sup>2</sup> **For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.**

3) This judging by us carries with it two ideas, first the **manner** in which we judge and second, the **standard** by which we judge.

4) So, what about **manner**? Why are we judging?

- a) There are several facets to the **manner** in which we judge, most of which are bad.
- b) One facet that we must consider – condemnation.
  - i) What is inferred here in what Jesus is saying is that we are judging to condemn the person for what they are doing.
  - ii) Perhaps even condemning them for the motives behind what they are doing.
  - iii) That means we had better be ready to stand up to the same judgement – without mercy?
- c) There is a nuance that we need to see here. Jesus asks a question ...

<sup>3</sup> **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?**

- d) To begin, we are dealing with two different words with similar but different meanings.
  - i) **To See** – to perceive with the eye, to see. (physically looking at) (βλέπω blepō)

## Matthew – Sermon on the Mount

- ii) **To Notice** - to look at in a reflective manner, consider, contemplate.<sup>17</sup> (κατανοέω katanoeō)
  - e) This speaks to **manner**.
  - f) We have this tendency “**to see**” to focus our attention on the sin we see in others before we even “**notice**” or consider our own.
    - i) We do that because it is easier.
    - ii) We also do it because it makes us feel better about ourselves – “thank God I am not like that sinner” – when the truth is we may be a worse sinner if we only take an honest look.
  - g) We may also condemn because it keeps us from considering our “log.”
    - i) In fact, Jesus tells us straight away that we may have an equal or even more egregious sin in our own lives.
- 5) Second, is the **standard** by which we judge.
- a) Another way to say “**standard**” in this case could be “**authority**” – by what **authority** we judge.
  - b) If our first thought is that we can judge with the **authority** of God.
    - i) We really should think twice about that.
  - c) James tells us clearly that there is only One Law giver and Judge and we are not Him.

### James 4:11–12 (ESV)

<sup>11</sup> Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. <sup>12</sup> There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

- d) Other **standards or authorities** we might try to judge by could be:
  - i) Our own ideas of right and wrong.
    - (1) Always a bad idea!
  - ii) Deciding that the person’s motives are such that we have the right to judge.
    - (1) We are judging doubly in that case which is even worse!
  - iii) Obviously neither of these are acceptable.

### So, if we are to judge what is the only standard we have left?

- e) The word.
- 6) Then, Jesus, in a very honest yet painful way, tells us where we **ARE** but should **NOT** be.
- <sup>5</sup> 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.**

---

<sup>17</sup> William Arndt et al., [\*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature\*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 522.

## Matthew – Sermon on the Mount

7) Let's see if we can connect the dots in this passage.

### What in your opinion are the points Jesus is making in this passage?

- a) Get our act together and deal with our more egregious sin, that's number one.
- b) We are to turn our judgement (condemnation) into help.
  - i) We are no longer looking at the spec to judge; we are looking at it to remove the spec from his eye.
    - (1) Of course, that would consider all we talked about in restoring one gently.
- c) The big takeaway here is that we see the full impact of what Jesus is talking about.
  - i) Looking at judgement and condemnation and self-righteousness then changing in the heart to seeing, without judgement, a sister or brother in sin and wanting to help them back gently in the correct way.
  - ii) While at the same time, watching our own lives and living by the power of the Spirit.
  - iii) That of course, means dealing with our own sins as quickly and thoroughly as we can.

### Comments / Questions / Thoughts?

1) There is a connection between what we just discussed (verses 1-5) and verses 15-20.

#### Matthew 7:15–20 (ESV)

##### A Tree and Its Fruit

<sup>15</sup> “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. <sup>16</sup> You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup> A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup> Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

2) Important question.

### Why is this not a contradiction to the not judging passage we just discussed?

- a) First, this is **NOT** a case of “judgement and condemnation” because of our self-righteousness as was the case in verses 1-5.
  - i) Instead, this is a case of “fruit inspection.”
  - ii) The difference is that instead of helping a brother, the implied idea is that we are dealing with a danger to the congregation.
  - iii) We are protecting ourselves and our brothers and sisters from a false prophet or prophets.
  - iv) The fruit inspection in this case is not self-righteous judgement but exposing false teachers.
  - v) I would however have to add here that in truth, there is obviously a “condemnation” side of this.
- b) This is also normally not dealing a single sin or bad act on the part of a brother or sister.
  - i) It is instead dealing with multiple bad “fruits.”

## Matthew – Sermon on the Mount

- ii) Jesus calls the trees bad or diseased, the word carries the meaning of rotten or putrid.
  - (1) The idea is that the entire tree is bad and ALL fruit is bad.
- iii) If it were a single bad teaching, this would fall more in line with verses 1-5.
- iv) That of seeing, confronting, trying to restore the person to proper thinking, not determining a false prophet to be avoided and shunned.

1) Ok, picking up back in verse 6 where we left off ...

### Matthew 7:6 (ESV)

**<sup>6</sup>“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.**

- 1) To understand this verse, we must answer two very important questions.
- 2) First, what is “holy” and what do “pearls” represent?
- 3) Second, of course, we must also define who the dogs and pigs represent, same or different characteristics?
- 4) Answering the first question.
  - a) Holy – normally refers to anything considered consecrated to or dedicated to God.
    - i) In the Old Testament, the food of the sacrifices and the implements of the temple are examples.
    - b) Pearls are things considered to have great value.
    - c) In this context, both would refer to the gospel of the kingdom and God’s holy word.
- 5) Now, the second question is what do dogs and pigs represent?
  - a) Dogs:
    - i) The inference is they are not very nice so, these dogs would probably be best considered as stray scavenger dogs rather than as family pets.
    - ii) “Dogs” therefore refers to people who treat sacred things with contempt – those who are hostile, mocking, or aggressively resistant to the truth.
  - b) Pigs:
    - i) Pigs are of course unclean animals to the Jew.
    - ii) In context, they would be animals that have no sense of value; hence, pearls being things of great value would be meaningless to them.
    - iii) Like dogs, they could also be dangerous in that they could be aggressive towards humans.
  - c) Pigs and dogs represent people who when presented with the gospel, treat it with scorn and contempt and perhaps even hostility or even total indifference.
  - d) Jesus’ point is not to promote contempt for people but to teach discernment.
    - i) Not every setting or audience is ready to receive something sacred.
  - e) We see the same principle practiced later in the early church.
  - f) In Acts 13 we read:

## Matthew – Sermon on the Mount

### Acts 13:44–47 (ESV)

<sup>44</sup> The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. <sup>45</sup> But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. <sup>46</sup> And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. <sup>47</sup> For so the Lord has commanded us, saying,

“ ‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”

### In view of all this, how does the idea of the Matthew passage impact our sharing of the Gospel?

- g) It does NOT mean that we are to stop sharing Jesus with everyone who “might” treat our efforts with scorn or contempt.
  - i) Unlike real dogs and pigs, sometimes it takes some interactions before we can tell whether someone is a dog or a pig in this context.
- h) However, I believe it is telling us that at the point where that actually happens, we are to consider seriously withdrawing from the situation, not unlike Paul and Barnabas.
- i) I’m sure that Paul and Barnabas and the others did not present the word and talk to the people with an attitude of “*ok, this is what I have to say. If you don’t get it then tough for you – goodbye!*”
- j) We must be careful not to have that attitude either.
- k) There has to be some time and discussion involved.
- l) It is only at that final rejection that they (and we) are allowed to shake the dust off our feet.