

Extra Teaching Points

Chapters 11 & 12

Matt. 7:1-23

Matt. 7:1-2

Q: Is Jesus' command 'not to judge' a literal, absolute command?

- Jesus' command not to judge again appears to be hyperbole. It is not to be taken as absolute.
 - To not cast pearls before pigs, requires a judgment about who is a pig ([Matt. 7:6](#)).
 - To beware of false prophets, requires us to judge who they are ([Matt. 7:15](#)).
 - [John 7:24](#) Jesus commands us to judge.
 - [1Cor. 6:2](#) says we will judge the world.
 - [1Cor. 6:3](#) says we will judge angels.

[Luke 6:37-38](#) is the parallel.

- Jesus is commanding us to treat others the way we want to be treated, because we will be treated the way we treat others!
 - How do you want others to talk about you?
 - How do you want others to judge you?
 - Do you want others to take the time to learn the facts before passing judgment on you?
 - Then you'd better take the time to learn the facts before you pass judgment.
 - Do you want others to give you the benefit of the doubt?
 - Then you'd better give others the benefit of the doubt.

Matt. 7:3

Q: What is the significance of sawdust and logs?

- Sawdust and logs are both wood... just different sizes!
 - They both have the same kind of problem... just different sizes.
 - It seems likely this teaching is part of Jesus' teaching on not judging ([Matt. 7:1-2](#)).
- Having something in your eye makes it tough to see things clearly; it means you have a blind spot.
 - Having something big in your eye, means you have a big blind spot.
- **Jesus seems to be teaching that logs and specs are both blind spots that prevent us from seeing things the way God does.**
 - When we judge someone, we need to make sure **we see things the way God does first.** Otherwise, we will have the same problem they do... only bigger!
- Conflict usually makes it tough to see what God wants, or difficult to see the situation the way God does.
 - Both people in the conflict will have this problem.
 - The one who wants to judge righteously will deal with himself first, and focus on "what's right", not "who's right."

Matt. 7:4

Q: Why should you put emphasis on dealing with yourself first?

- You can't help someone else with their blind spot, if you have a bigger blind spot than they do!
 - You should not use a standard of judgment you couldn't stand to have used against you.
 - If you judge someone harshly for their blind spot, but you have an even bigger blind spot than they do, you are going to look much worse than the one you are judging.
 - We should use the same measure with others that we want to be used with us.

Extra thoughts on Judging:

We must not allow ourselves to have double standards!

- No one understands God perfectly in all things (except Jesus); therefore we should not judge

others harshly for their faults.

- We should not excuse someone else's faults, thinking ours will then be overlooked or excused.
 - Rather, we should admit we are sinners too, and encourage the other person to pursue righteousness, just as we commit ourselves to pursuing righteous.

If I wouldn't mind having others judge me in my weakness the same way I am judging others in their weakness, then I am not violating Jesus' command here.

- Most of us resent others looking down on us for our failures and sins.
- Likewise, most of us are encouraged by people who identify with us in our weakness, and encourage us to agree with God, just like they are trying to.
- If I am eager for people to see my sin, point it out to me, and help me repent, then there is nothing wrong with me treating others that way too.

[Matt. 7:5](#)

Q: Why does Jesus call the one with the log in his eye, trying to help his brother, a hypocrite?

- Jesus isn't saying we shouldn't help people get the spec out of their eye.
 - In fact, we must help people get the spec out of their eyes ([Gal. 6:1-5](#)).
- But **we can't see clearly** to help anyone **until** we get the log out of our own eye.
 - If we only want the other person to see their sin, then we are not really after righteous judgments or God's justice!
 - That means we are just acting like we are after righteousness.
- Asking someone to agree with God, while you are not worried about agreeing with God yourself, is hypocritical.
 - Asking someone to deal with their spec, while you ignore your log, is hypocritical.

[Matt. 7:6](#)

Q: Is Jesus calling us to judge who are dogs, and who are pigs?

- Yes!
 - [Phil. 3:1-2](#) Paul says some of the Jews were dogs.
 - Who Jesus had in mind here is not clear, though it may have been the same people Paul was talking about.
 - It might be that Paul was quoting Jesus when he warned the Philippians about dogs.
 - Jesus has been warning about the Pharisees throughout this sermon; it could be they are the ones He is referring to as dogs.

This passage is an example of Hebrew parallelism.

- It is two different ways of saying the same thing.
 - Giving what is holy to dogs is the same thing as giving pearls to pigs.
- Pearls and holy things are both valuable to people who value them.
 - Pearls have no innate value: they are rare and pretty, but beyond that they are good for nothing.
 - Pearls are only valuable if people want them... so are holy things.
- Any animal can recognize the value of a meal, or a soft bed, or something that brings comfort. But they can't recognize the difference between holy and common ([Ezek. 44:23](#)).
 - Only humans have a sense of the sacred, or the value of things like pearls and diamonds.
 - Pearls and holy things are very different, but they have at least one thing in common... **they are not valued by animals!**
- [Prov. 11:22](#) speaks of pigs.
 - A ring of gold is a thing of beauty. A pig is repulsive.
 - A gold ring would look much nicer somewhere else.

- Even though the ring is valuable, you wouldn't want to be near it because the pig is so repulsive.
- **Jesus is saying you shouldn't give your pearls or holy things to people who can't discern their value. You should give them to people who can discern their value.**

Extra thoughts on Pearls and Pigs:

Q: What is the valuable thing we are not to give to pigs and dogs?

- Jesus is probably saying we should not disclose everything we know to someone who is likely to abuse the information.
 - That would include things you know about God.
- There were things Jesus didn't tell His disciples, because they were not able to receive it ([John 16:12](#)).
- There are times when you are counseling someone, or discipling him or her, and it will become clear they don't have a heart for God.
 - They can't value the gem you are trying to give them because the Spirit of God is not moving them at that point.
- **If you persist in trying to get them to take the pearl you are offering, they will turn on you!**
 - **You have no obligation to try to get a pig to take your pearl!**
 - **Leave them alone, and go help someone else who values what you have to offer.**
- It is the Holy Spirit that helps people understand truth ([1Cor. 2:13](#); [John 14:26](#); [Eph. 3:5](#)).
 - If He has not been able to help them understand yet, then you won't be able to any more than He.
 - In time, they may be able to value what you have to offer, and you can help them then.

[Matt. 7:7-12](#)

Q: This section is obviously about prayer, but what is Jesus saying about prayer? Is this about prayer in general... or about a specific type of prayer? What are "good gifts?" Is this a promise, that everyone who prays will get exactly what they pray for, no matter what it is they ask?

- [Psalms 34:9-10](#) says those who seek the Lord shall not lack any "good thing."
 - If we lack anything, it is because for us it would not be a "good thing."
- [Psalms 37:4](#) says we will get everything we want and ask for if it is the Lord we want and ask for!

The parallel to this passage is in [Luke 11:9-13](#).

- **Jesus identifies the "good gifts" as the Holy Spirit.**
- It seems Jesus is making a statement, not about prayer in general, but about prayers for more of God.

In [vs. 12](#), "so" or "therefore" usually signals a concluding thought. Jesus concludes His thoughts by giving the "Golden Rule."

- [Matt. 7:1-2](#), "You will be treated the way you treat others" is the corollary of the "Golden Rule: to treat others the way you want to be treated."
 - These form bookends around what Jesus is teaching.
- **Jesus must see the "golden rule" as the conclusion to His teaching on not judging unrighteously.**
 - If this is true, then "getting the log out of your own eye", "not casting your pearls to pigs", and "praying for more of the Holy Spirit", are all part of the same discussion about judging righteously.
- [Matt. 22:37-40](#) Jesus also said loving God and people summed up the Law and the Prophets.

- So treating people the way you want to be treated by judging righteously as a fellow sinner (*log and spec*), not forcing spiritual things on people who aren't ready for it (*pearls and pigs*), and asking for more of God's Spirit, is, at its core, being loving toward God and people; and that sums up the Law and the Prophets... it's what God has always wanted from us.

[Matt. 7:14](#)

The parallel to this verse is [Luke 13:24-25](#).

- It is more than just entering this narrow gate; we have to “*make every effort*”, or “*strive to enter*.”
 - **It's not easy to enter the Kingdom of God.**
- We have to be determined to lay aside anything that won't fit through that gate with us.
 - That would include attitudes or possessions that get in the way.
 - **It could also include the self-righteousness and judgmental behaviors Jesus has just been teaching about.**

In [Luke 13:23-30](#), Jesus is talking about the narrow gate as the way to entering the Kingdom of God... being “saved.”

- It is more than likely Jesus means the same thing here in [Matt. 7:13-14](#).
- Jesus says some will want to enter, and won't be able to.

[Matt. 7:15](#)

Q: Who are the false prophets?

- False prophets are the ones who give a different message than Jesus.
 - It is popular today for churches to try to make being a Christian sound like an easy thing to do.
 - Like saying a prayer gets you “in” the narrow gate, and then you don't have to worry any more.
 - Could it be that Jesus is calling these kinds of teachers “false prophets?”

[Matt. 7:16](#)

Q: What is the “fruit” Jesus is speaking of? Paul had not written [Gal. 5:22-23](#), or [Eph. 5:9](#) when Jesus said this; so how would the disciples have understood “fruit?”

- Jesus said it was what grew from trees.
 - A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit.
 - False prophets will produce bad fruit.
- Jesus states more clearly what this fruit is in [Matt. 12:33-37](#).
 - **Jesus is calling the words a person uses, “fruit.”**
 - “Empty” or “careless” words are bad fruit, and a sign of a false prophet!
 - The words that slip out when you are not on your guard, show what is really in your heart; they reveal whether you are a good tree... or a bad tree.
- [Deut. 13:1-5](#) Moses tells us about false prophets, and how they work.
 - They may even have impressive insights, or “signs and wonders”; but if their words are different from God's, they are false prophets.
 - **No matter what a person looks like, or how smart they seem to be, if they are not telling you what God says about that narrow gate, he or she is a false prophet.**
- [2John 9](#) John says anyone who does not stay within the doctrine of Christ, does not have God... because he is not teaching the same doctrine Christ taught.
- [1John 4:1-3](#) says false prophets are those who deny Jesus came in the flesh the way He said He

did; They are antichrist.

- [1Tim. 6:3-5](#) again shows false prophets are identified by their fruit--their words.

Matt. 7:21-23

[Matt. 7:15-19](#) says one way to know false prophets is (by their fruit/their words); the other way is by what they do.

- Not everyone who says the right thing is really a Christian, but the ones who do the will of the Father.
 - Jesus goes on to tell us the will of the Father in [Matt. 7:24-27](#).
- False prophets sometimes teach the wrong things, but ***sometimes they teach the right things... but don't do them.***
 - The ones who called Him "Lord, Lord" ([Matt. 7:21](#)) had heard Him, but they didn't do what He said.
 - They must have only done ***some of the things*** He said; the ***things they wanted to do.***

Matt. 7:24

[Matt. 7:21-24](#) is a judgment scene. So is [Matt. 7:25-27](#). Those who pass the test are those who actually do the things that Jesus taught.

- The house that stands, is the person who stands uncondemned in the judgment.
 - The house stood because the builder heard what Jesus said, and did what Jesus said.
 - The person who falls in the judgment, is the one who heard what Jesus said, but didn't do it.

Jesus makes it clear... there will be people directing you to a different road than one He is pointing to. His road is harder, so more people will be interested in the easier one.

- You will know who these false prophets are when they tell you something He didn't say, or when they tell you what He said, but don't do it themselves.
 - [John 8:31](#) Jesus said, being His disciple means doing what He said.
 - The people in [Matt. 7:21](#) were not His disciples, because they didn't do what He said.

Chapters 11 & 12 Follow Up Assignment

Q: Are you treating people the way you want to be treated?

- Do you judge others in a way that you want to be judged?

Q: When you disagree with someone, do find yourself asking him or her to agree with you... or to agree with God?

- Who do you try to correct first: yourself... or the other person?

Q: When was the last time you tried to get a pig to take your pearls? How did it turn out?

Q: Are there any false prophets in your life? If so, who are they?

- How do you know they are false prophets?

Q: After studying the Sermon on the Mount, would you say you are building your house on the sand... or the Rock?