

FIRM FOUNDATIONS

Study #12 (Updated 8-11-17)

Read Matt. 7:1-12 (NIV)

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. ² For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

³Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ⁴ How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, **first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.**

⁶Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

⁷Ask and it will be given to you; **seek** and you will find; **knock** and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

⁹Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹ If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

¹² So in everything, **do to others what you would have them do to you**, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”

Q: Is Jesus’ command “not to judge” a literal, absolute command? (vs. 1-2)

- Jesus is using hyperbole again. Actually, Jesus commands us to judge (**John 7:24**), and Paul says we will judge the world, and even angles (**1Cor. 6:2-3**).
- Jesus is commanding us to treat others the way we want to be treated, because we will be treated the way we treat others! (**Luke 6:37-38**)

Q: What is Jesus saying about sawdust and logs? (vs. 3-5)

- Sawdust and logs are metaphors for some kind of fault or sin.
 - Sawdust and logs are both wood... just different sizes.
 - Both people in this passage have the same **kind** of problem... just different sizes.
- Both people have something in their eye, which means they both will have trouble seeing clearly until it is removed.

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

- If we only want the other person to see *their* fault, without dealing with *our own* faults **FIRST**, then we are not really concerned with righteousness.
 - That means we are just *acting* like we are concerned with righteousness.
- Conflict often causes us to point out the fault in others.
 - The one who wants righteousness will deal with himself first, and focus on “**what’s right**”, not “**who’s right**”.
- NOTE: Jesus isn’t saying we shouldn’t try to help others with their faults; in fact we are commanded to do just that (**Matt. 18:15; Gal. 6:1**). But we won’t be able to help anyone until we deal with our own faults first!
 - Since we will never be truly faultless, Jesus may be trying to adjust our attitude to one of humility, instead of self-righteousness, when dealing with other people’s weaknesses.

Q: Is Jesus calling us to judge, as to “who are dogs” and “who are pigs”? (vs. 6)

- Yes! Go back to the first question for that discussion.

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 we know about God.
 - There were things Jesus didn’t tell His disciples because they were not able to receive it (**John 16:12**).
- There will be times when you are trying to help someone, and it will become clear they don’t have a heart for God.
 - They can’t value the pearl 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’s the Holy Spirit that helps people understand truth (**1Cor. 2:13; John 14:26; Eph. 3:4-5**).
 - In time, the Spirit may move them to a place where they are able to value what you have to offer, and then you can help them.

Q: What is Jesus saying about prayer? (vs. 7-12)

- The way Jesus said this, in the original Greek, carried the idea that we are to **keep** asking, **keep** seeking, and **keep** knocking.
- Prayer is something we must rely on and do all the time. (**Col. 4:2; 1Thess. 5:17**)

Q: Is Jesus promising that everyone who prays will get exactly what they pray for, no matter what they ask for?

- Of course not. But **Psa. 34:9-10** says those who seek the Lord shall not lack any “good thing”.
 - If we lack anything, it’s because, for us, it would not be a “good thing”.
- We will get everything we want and ask for, **IF** it is The Lord we want and ask for! (**Psa. 37:4**)

Q: What are the “good gifts” God wants to give us?

- **Luke 11:11-13 (NIV)** *“Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”*
 - This is the parallel passage to **Matt. 7:9-11**.
- **Jesus identifies the “good gifts” as the Holy Spirit.**
 - God wants to give us more of Himself; but do we want Him enough to keep asking, seeking, and knocking for Him?

Q: Jesus ends His discussion, about judging righteously, with “The Golden Rule”. Then He says The Golden Rule sums up the Law and the Prophets. What’s the connection?

- Jesus also said, loving God and loving people summed up the Law and the Prophets (**Matt. 22:37-40**); 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 them (*pearls and pigs*);
 - and asking for more of God’s Spirit (*good gifts*);
 - is all about loving God and people... and that sums up the Law and the Prophets—it’s what God has always wanted from us.

What About You?

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

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

Q: When you disagree with someone... do you 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?