

## **"Relating to our Fellowman"**

### **Part 1**

#### **Matthew 7:1-12**

**Introduction:** Tonight in our study of the Sermon on the Mount we have come to a very interesting portion of Scripture.

#### **Notice Matthew 7:1-12**

These verses have been misquoted over the years and have been misapplied completely out of context by many people. In this section Jesus is going to teach us how we are to view our relationships with other people and He is going to sum it all up in just 12 verses. I believe these verses need to be considered as a whole.

Now, the entire way through the Sermon on the Mount we have been considering how the false teaching of the religious leaders had poisoned the minds of the people in Jesus' day. The religious leaders taught everyone that life was about an external righteousness but Jesus corrected their teaching by dealing with the heart in the Sermon on the Mount. The entire Sermon is focused upon correcting the false teaching of the religious leaders and the theme verse for the Sermon on the Mount is found in Matthew 5.

#### **Matthew 5:20**

*<sup>20</sup> For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

The religious leaders had taken the Word of God and had added to it and had subtracted from it just to make it fit the sinful desires of

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their hearts. They knew they could not keep the Law so they came up with their own version of the Law that would conform to their lives. Therefore, they had their own set of standards and anyone who did not follow their standards they viewed that person as someone who was far short of the level they had reached. They had themselves elevated in their own minds and were looking down on all others who did not live as they lived. They had become very judgmental of those who were outside of their circle. If someone did not dress as they dressed, or did not live as they lived they condemned them.

Let me just stop here and say that is still true of people today. When someone develops their own system of morality, they make their own standards, then that person becomes the judge who determines if others qualify. The people of Corinth wrote a letter to the Apostle Paul because there were some who were eating meat that was offered to idols and they wanted Paul to make a law that said they could not eat the meat. Paul refused to make a law and he refused to put anyone under the law because he knew that as believers they were under grace. This is exactly what happens when someone develops their own standards and others do not live like they think they should live and the one who has developed the standards becomes the judge and he or she becomes very critical of all others and they are constantly measuring others with their standards. That is what I would call the "disease of the Pharisees". That is exactly what the religious leaders of Jesus' day were doing. Let me just say this before we move on; if you are someone who is constantly criticizing others because they do not live up to the standards you have set then you will not grow spiritually. That very process you have established to measure others is sin as we

shall see as we move through the section that is before us. Let me just give you some verses so that you can see the attitude of the Pharisees.

### **Luke 16:14-15**

*<sup>14</sup> And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.*

*<sup>15</sup> And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.*

The religious leaders despised the teaching of Jesus because it completely shredded their teaching. Jesus told them while they saw themselves as righteous, God looked at the heart and He knew their true condition. These religious leaders had themselves elevated very high in their society. They really thought they were something.

### **Luke 16:9-14**

*<sup>9</sup> And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:*

Jesus is now going to address these people with this parable because they had become so judgmental. They looked down upon others and had themselves elevated so much they believed they were the ultimate example for others to follow. This parable shows them they were wrong.

*<sup>10</sup> Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.*

*<sup>11</sup> The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.*

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<sup>12</sup> *I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.*

<sup>13</sup> *And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.*

<sup>14</sup> *I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other:*

Here is a parable that would have sliced deep into the self righteousness of the religious leaders. The "publican" was a "tax collector" and they were a group the religious leaders truly despised. In this parable Jesus was making it clear; while they thought they had everything figured out they really had no idea of what true righteousness was. This parable was designed to show them their judgments were wrong. Notice the Words of Jesus to the religious leaders in John 7.

### **John 7:24**

<sup>24</sup> **Judge not according to the appearance**, but judge righteous judgment.

Here was the problem; they were making all of their judgments upon what they were seeing with their eyes. By what they saw with their eyes they thought they understood the entire picture and they were wrong. This critical, unmerciful, unforgiving, and judgmental practice of the religious leaders was the reason behind the teaching of Matthew 7:1-12. This practice of the religious leaders had also poisoned the people of their day.

Now as we approach this text we need to understand that it can be divided into 2 parts. It is dealing with or relations to other people and

in **Matthew 7:1-6** we are told what not to do. Then in **Matthew 7:7-10** we are told what to do.

## I. What not to do.

### Part 1

#### Matthew 7:1-6

#### Notice Matthew 7:1a

Before we go any deeper we need to consider what Jesus means when He tells us to "Judge not". This has been misapplied and it is used so much out of context in religious circles today. I have heard people use this when someone is confronted with their sin and say, "We are not to judge" or "Who are you to judge". I have heard many people say, "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone". Jesus does not mean that we are not to speak out against sin and I will show you that in a moment but there is something which needs to be said here first.

We live in a time when people are quick to misapply this verse. You see we live in a time when people do not want to be confronted with their sin. They want to live whatever kind of lifestyle they desire. They want to live together, they want to marry the same sex, they want to indulge in the lusts of the flesh and so they people today are quick to misapply this verse and when they are confronted with their sin they say, "Now you know what Jesus said", "You are not to judge". People want to be free to live in their sin today and they despise the person who stands against sin. They want to be free to compromise in every area of life. Today people hate the doctrine of God's Word. That is clearly seen in the attack on the Ten Commandments. There was a time when people who stood for the Truth were respected but that day is quickly getting away. People today want to erase the lines of separation and they want

everyone to accept each other regardless of their lifestyle. Therefore, we have a society that is quick and more than willing to misapply this verse. Let me give you 2 thoughts here that will make this easier to understand:

### **A. What Jesus did not mean.**

Jesus is not saying here that we are not to judge or discriminate. Consider the Sermon on the Mount which we are studying; it is all about being able to discern between false teaching and the Truth of God's Word. We must be able to discern and we must speak up for the Truth because if not people will be led into the torment of hell by false religion. Therefore, we must discriminate and the word "discriminate" means "to make a distinction". Let me show you some other verses which will support this.

#### **Matthew 7:6**

*<sup>6</sup> Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.*

We will get deeper into the meaning of this verse in other lessons but the point I want to make is this; we must be able to know the difference in hogs and dogs if we are to correctly apply this verse. That is discriminating or making a distinction.

#### **Matthew 7:15**

*<sup>15</sup> Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

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We must have discernment to know the difference between sheep and wolves or the wolves will eat us up. We must draw distinct lines between the two.

In Matthew 18 Jesus speaks of church discipline.

### **Matthew 18:15-17**

*<sup>15</sup> Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.*

*<sup>16</sup> But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.*

*<sup>17</sup> And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church:*

In the case of church discipline we must stand against sin in another believer's life. Notice what Paul said about the man who was living in immorality in 1 Corinthians.

### **1 Corinthians 5:9-13**

*<sup>9</sup> I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:*

*<sup>10</sup> Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.*

*<sup>11</sup> But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.*

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*12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?*

*13 But them that are without God judgeth. **Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.***

The man who was living in open rebellion against was to be put out of the church. That is not understood by many within the church today. Let me give you one more verse that will help you to see that we are to address sin in the life of our fellow man.

### **Leviticus 19:17**

*17 Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.*

Here we are told that to let our neighbor dwell in sin is to hate him or her. On the flip side we can say that love will point out sin in the life of our fellow man. When people say we should just look the other way and not address the sin the Bible tells us that is the same as hating our brother. True love confronts the sin in another person's life.

Let me just quickly address one more way people will attempt to get us to be silent on the subject of confronting sin. They will say, "Well, we all sin on a daily basis and therefore who are you to call me out on my sin?" The answer to that is very easy; the sin I commit in my life I am sorrowful over but the sin I am pointing out in their life is a sin they are not broken over. It is a sin they parade right out in the open with no sorrow or repentance, that is the difference. The purpose of me pointing out their sin is to help them to see the need to repent.

So in all of these examples we can know that Jesus is not saying that we are not to judge sin or that we are not to discriminate.

## **B. What Jesus did mean.**

Jesus is addressing the very attitude of the religious leaders. He is addressing a critical spirit. There are people who are like spiritual watch dogs. They see someone that does not live up to their standards and they watch them ever so closely and the moment they make a move that they do not agree with they run and tell someone else what they have done. That is the very attitude Jesus is addressing here. When He says, "Judge not" it could also read, "Stop criticizing". We are not to judge the motives of others. We are not to look down on them because they don't dress like we do, or because they don't live like we live, or they don't act like we act and so we become very critical of them. That is what Jesus is saying here.

Let us understand that we do not know the motives behind what others do and so we are not in any place to judge. Many times believers who have this critical spirit will be quick to judge someone else and what they are doing and that can often make you look very foolish.

### **Notice the example I found recently:**

*A certain steel company, feeling it was time for a shakeup, hired a new CEO.*

*The new boss was determined to rid the company of all slackers. On a tour of the facilities, the CEO noticed a guy leaning against a wall. The room was full of workers and he wanted to let them know that he meant business. He asked the guy, "How much money do you make a week?" A little surprised, the young man looked at him and said, "I make \$400 a week. Why?" The CEO said, "Wait right here." He walked back to his office, came back in two minutes, and handed the guy*

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*\$1,600 in cash and said, "Here's four weeks' pay. Now GET OUT and don't come back." Feeling pretty good about himself the CEO looked around the room and asked, "Does anyone want to tell me what that goof-ball did here?" From across the room a voice said, "Pizza delivery guy from Domino's."*

### **Proverbs 18:13**

*<sup>13</sup> He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.*

### **Conclusion:**

Let me leave you with Paul's words from Romans.

### **Romans 14:1-4**

*Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.*

*<sup>2</sup> For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.*

*<sup>3</sup> Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.*

*<sup>4</sup> Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.*

Paul asks the question, "Who are we to judge another man's servant?" That means the brother or sister you are judging or that you are being so critical of, is the child of God and God will be the One to judge

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them. He knows their motives and their hearts so we let that up to Him.