

"Relating to our Fellowman"

Part 2

Matthew 7:1-12

Introduction: Last week in our study of The Sermon on the Mount we started into a passage which is focused upon our relations with our fellow man.

Notice Matthew 7:1-12

In our study last week we spent our time laying a foundation for this passage so that we could understand it in the proper context. We looked at 2 points last week:

1. We looked at what Jesus did mean when He said, "Judge not".

We must keep in mind the religious leaders of Jesus day had poisoned the minds of the people with their teaching in many different areas. Here in our text Jesus is addressing the critical spirit of the religious leaders. They were so self righteous that they had developed their own set of standards to live by. When someone did not live up to their standards they became the judge of that person. For example if someone did not live as they lived or did not dress as they dressed they saw that person as less spiritual and they became very critical of them. When Jesus said, "Judge not" He was saying, "Stop criticizing!"

John 7:24

²⁴ **Judge not according to the appearance**, but judge righteous judgment.

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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. So in the text we are looking at Jesus is correcting the teaching of the religious leaders.

Application:

I just need again to remind all of us that when someone develops their own set of standards in their mind as to how someone should live as a believer that person then makes themselves a judge and becomes very critical of those who do not measure up. That is the poison of the Pharisees and it is evident in the lives of many people today.

2. We looked at what Jesus did not mean when He said, "Judge not".

Some have used these verses in an attempt to say that we should never confront someone in their sin. They will say, "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone". As I told you last week we live in a day when people are very quick to pull this verse out of context in an attempt to keep someone from speaking words that would convict them in their lifestyle. We are living in a day when people do not want any lines of distinction drawn. They want to live with no boundaries and with no doctrine. There is an ecumenical movement sweeping through the church today and by that I mean people insist that we should all just get along and that we must set doctrine aside to come together as one. That, by the way, is the very spirit of the anti-christ.

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The Bible is very clear that sin is to be confronted and for us to ignore sin in the life of our fellowman is to hate him or her.

Leviticus 19:17

17 Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise [in every way] 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.

We must discriminate and draw lines of distinction.

Romans 16:17

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

There cannot be compromise when it comes to doctrine. We must stand for the Truth. We must be able to know the wolves from the sheep or the wolves will eat us up.

Matthew 7:15

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

Therefore, Jesus is not saying that we are not to discriminate, or that we are not to stand for the Truth, or that we are not to confront sin in

the life of our fellow man. The focus is on correcting the poison of the religious leaders which in this case was a critical spirit.

Now last week I told you that as we approach this text we need to understand that it can be divided into 2 parts. It is dealing with our relations to other people and in **Matthew 7:1-6** we are told what **not** to do. Then in **Matthew 7:7-12** we are told what **to** do. So this section can be divided into a positive and a negative.

I. What not to do.

Part 2

Matthew 7:1-6

Now as we continue on in this passage we are going to see 3 reasons why we are not to criticize and judge other people.

1. We must not judge because we are not God.

Notice Matthew 7:1

Within this verse there is a reminder that we are not God. There is a Higher Authority that will one day judge everyone and we are not that Higher Authority. When we do judge other people we are attempting to seize the authority from God and to take His place on the throne. Let me just show you where that very spirit comes from.

Isaiah 14:12-14

¹² How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

¹³ For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

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14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

It is clear when we read these verses that when we attempt to seize the authority from God and judge other people that spirit which has influenced us is straight from the pit of hell for it is the very spirit we can see in Satan.

Now since we are not God we cannot know the mind or the motives of the person we are judging. We may think we know why they do what they do but really we don't and so we have no right to play the part of the Judge.

I really like what one man wrote about this verse:

"Judge not."

"The workings of his brain and of his heart thou cannot see.

What looks to thy dim eyes a stain,

in God's pure light may only be a scar;

brought from some well-won field where thou wouldst only faint and yield."

When you and I look at someone we don't know their heart. We don't know their mind and how they think. We don't know what they have been through and how God may have wounded them in order to get them set free from some besetting sin. We don't know what they are living in their lives. We don't know the weight of the burden they may be carrying every single day of their lives. The bottom line is that we are not God and we cannot even come close to knowing enough to be the

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Judge. To usurp the authority of God is to be influenced by the demonic world.

James 4:11

¹¹ Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

James is saying here that when we judge others we are placing ourselves above the Law. But there is something far more serious here that I believe we need to see. James says that to judge a brother or anyone is to speak evil of the Law and to judge the Law.

What does he mean by these 2 statements?

We really need to get this. Jesus summed up the entire Law with 2 commandments.

Matthew 22:36-40

³⁶ Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

³⁷ Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

³⁸ This is the first and great commandment.

³⁹ And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

The entire Law is about loving God and loving our fellow man and when we judge our fellow man and we criticize our fellow man we are then

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speaking evil of these commandments because with our actions we are telling others the Law means nothing. We are saying, we do not need to love one another as Jesus said. You see it speaks evil of the Law in the sense that as God's people we are not living as Jesus told us to live.

Let me take this a little further down the path if I may. What happens many times when someone possesses a critical spirit is this; they judge someone when that person does not measure up to their own personal standards and then they will go to someone else and share the judgment they have just reached. Therefore, instead of loving their fellow man they have just slandered their fellow man and made themselves a talebearer and a gossip. Can you begin to see the seriousness of this sin of judging and criticizing?

But it does not stop there; to criticize our fellow man is to also judge the Law. This means that when we do not obey the command to love our neighbor then we are placing ourselves above the Law with our actions and really that is to again attempt to seize the authority of God. That is why James gave us the next verse.

James 4:12

12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

The end of the verse backs us right into the corner when James asks, "We are we to judge someone else?"

Before we move on let me just say again that this has nothing to do with confronting sin in a person's life. We are instructed to do that. This is about the person who has a critical spirit and sees themselves above others. Now let us look at the 2nd reason why we are not to judge.

2. We must not judge because it will bring upon us a greater judgment.

Notice Matthew 7:2

I really desire for you to understand what Jesus is saying within this verse. When we get the Truth behind this verse it will make us drop our gavel and our judge's robe and cry out, "I will not judge anymore!"

First of all let me say that this is not talking about our fellow man judging us. To us as believers is it no concern about how others judge us. We stand for the Truth of God and people will think what they will.

1 Corinthians 4:3

³ But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

Paul is not saying here that we should not be concerned about a good reputation. He is saying that he did not live to please man but he lived to please God and it did not matter how others viewed his faithfulness to God. Therefore, when we have that mindset we can say the very same thing.

So, Jesus is not saying that we need to be concerned about how others will judge us but we need to be concerned about the judgment of God.

Let me put this in a way you can grasp what Jesus is saying; when we place ourselves on a level above others and we make ourselves the judge of those people we are then claiming to have the "light" to make those judgments. Therefore, when we do this we have just raised ourselves up to place where we will receive a greater degree of judgment from God.

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"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

You see to make ourselves a judge is to say that we have the insight, knowledge, and the understanding to be the judge and if we have all of that then we become more accountable because of what we claim to possess. The level on which we judge others will be the very level we ourselves will be judged.

Now listen to this: We can be so much like the Pharisees if we are not careful. They had themselves elevated so much in their minds that very few people measured up to their standards. But the dangerous thing was that they thought they were exempt from the judgment of God. But they were wrong! Their judgment from God would be far more severe because of the light they claimed to have. That is the very same thoughts we think when we judge others. We look down on them and we criticize them thinking we are exempt from the judgment of God. But the Truth is that when we judge them we will receive a greater degree of judgment than they will for in our judging we are claiming to have the "light" to be the judge.

Jesus is saying, "If you know everything there is to make you a judge then you have just manifest the fact that you are responsible to have lived up to all that you know, perfectly. So this is the level you will be judged on".

The very same thought is seen in Romans.

Romans 2:1

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Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

Here in this verse Paul tells us that the one who judges condemns himself. How? When we judge we then claim to have the "light" to be the judge and when we claim to have the "light" to be the judge we have just manifest our responsibility to live in the "light" that we claim to have. But we are not perfect and all of us have failed. We do the same as those we are judging. The difference is we have just signed up to receive a greater degree of judgment.

Conclusion:

Do you still desire to be a judge?

You may lay your gavel and your judge's robe in the back before you leave if you desire.

Next week we will continue this thought and even go into the next couple of verses in which we will gather great spiritual riches.