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"Relating to our Fellowman"

Part 4

Matthew 7:1-12

Introduction: In our study of the Sermon on the Mount we have been in **Matthew 7** now for several weeks. We are looking at **Matthew 7:1-12** in which Jesus is teaching us how to relate to our fellowman. The section can be divided into two parts, **7:1-6** tells us what not to do and **7:7-12** tells us what to do.

I. What not to do.

Part 4

Matthew 7:1-6

Notice Matthew 7:1-6

The principle of the entire passage is found in **Matthew 7:1a** and is seen within two words, "*Judge not*". This entire passage is taught in contrast to the religious leaders of Jesus day. The Pharisees were a self righteous people who had their own set of standards which they used to measure everyone. They were very judgmental and very critical of everyone who was not a part of their group.

Jesus is speaking out against the poison of the Pharisees in this text and He gives to us 3 reasons why we are not to be judgmental and critical.

1. We are not God.

Matthew 7:1

Judge not, that ye be not judged.

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This verse contains a reminder that there is a Higher Authority than you and me and He is God. We are not God and we cannot judge righteous judgment. 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 Judge.

The thought even goes deeper in 2 ways:

- a. **To play the part of the judge is to attempt to seize the Authority of God.**

James 4:11-12

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.

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

James is asking the question, "Who do you think you are to usurp the Authority of God?"

- b. **To play the part of the judge is to be influenced by the demonic world.**

Isaiah 14:12-14

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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:

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

Satan desired to sit on God's throne and to usurp God's Authority therefore when we play the part of the Judge we are influenced by the demonic world.

2. It brings upon us a greater degree of judgment.

Matthew 7:2

² For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

When we play the part of the Judge we can expect the very same degree of judgment from God as we hand out to others. James helps us to understand what Jesus is saying here:

James 3:1

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

I want you to notice the words of Matthew Henry on this verse.

"Those who thus set up for judges and censurers shall receive the greater condemnation. Our judging others will but make our own judgment the more strict and severe. Those who are curious to spy out

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the faults of others, and arrogant in passing censures upon them, may expect that God will be as extreme in marking what they say and do amiss."

3. We must not judge because when we do we give to others the wrong view of God and the wrong view of ourselves.

Matthew 7:3-4

³ And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

⁴ Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

We are to manifest Christ to the world around us and when we are judgmental and critical we manifest the wrong view of our Lord. He is very patient and merciful with His children and for us to be critical of others is not showing forth the fruit of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy [gladness], peace, longsuffering [patient or even tempered, not quick to react], gentleness [kindness], goodness [benevolence or generous], faith [faithfulness],

*²³ **Meekness** [gentleness and humility], temperance [self control or self restraint]: against such there is no law.*

Also to have a critical spirit is to give others the wrong view of what it is to be a believer. As believers we are to love one another. Satan is the "accuser" and he does not need any assistance. We are to help one another and when we are consumed with a judgmental and a critical

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spirit we are really looking to wound others. The one who is critical will watch people very closely (that is how you can see a mote or a splinter in your brother's eye) and they watch them only for the purpose of finding a fault and then exposing that fault to someone else. The motive behind the entire critique is to wound them because for some reason you just don't really care for them. Let me just say that the problem is not with the one we are critiquing but the problem is with us! There is a "beam" in our eye and I told you last week this sin of a critical spirit is pictured here by our Lord as a very "big" sin because when we play the part of the Judge we are playing God.

Now we are caught up to where we were last week and as we continue I think we need to spend more time on something which we only touched on last week.

As we begin to absorb these 3 reasons why we are not to be judgmental and critical there are immediately 2 dangers which we face.

Danger #1 - We want to step back and not get involved in a fellow believer's life because we don't want to be seen as critical.

Notice Matthew 7:5

When we read this verse we see that we are not to ignore sin in a fellow believer's life. We have already touched on this in our first lesson in Matthew 7 but it needs to be said again. If we allow a fellow believer to continue in their sin without confronting them the Bible tells us that is the same as hating them.

Leviticus 19:17

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

We must reach out to our fellow believer who has allowed sin to penetrate their lives. But we must first be sure we have looked into our own heart and if there is sin in our lives and we must deal with our sin first.

Let's take some time to consider what we need to do.

There is a word in verse 3 that we need to look at.

Matthew 7:3

*³ And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but **considerest** not the beam that is in thine own eye?*

The word "**considerest**" means "**to look at in meditative way, or to take a detailed long look**". Before we are going to be successful in helping a fellow believer get free from sin we must look in great detail at our own lives. But it does not end there for we must then confess and forsake the sin that is in our life.

1 Corinthians 11:31

³¹ For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

If we closely look at our own lives and we deal with the sin that exists in our lives then God does not need to chasten us and we are then free to help a sinning believer get free from their sin. That is the very order we see in Matthew 7:5.

Matthew 7:5

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⁵ *Thou hypocrite, **first** cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and **then** shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.*

We must help our fellow believer. We cannot just ignore the sin that is in his or her life. To ignore the sin is to hate them. But we must first of all deal with the sin in our own lives. Now some people would say, "Until you are perfect you have no right to point out sin in my life!" But that is not what Jesus is saying here. Let us keep in mind that the Sermon on the Mount is dealing with the attitude of the heart. That takes us right back to the Beatitudes.

It is like I told you last week; we do not come down from the top and drive the fellow believer in the ground, we come from underneath and pick them up with the spirit of humility.

Matthew 5:3-7

³ ***Blessed are the poor in spirit:** for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

⁴ ***Blessed are they that mourn:** for they shall be comforted.*

⁵ ***Blessed are the meek:** for they shall inherit the earth.*

⁶ ***Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness:** for they shall be filled.*

⁷ ***Blessed are the merciful:** for they shall obtain mercy.*

These verses describe the spirit in which we are to come to a sinning believer with. There is no pride or criticism anywhere in this text!

Let me show you some verses that will help us to see the proper order and the proper spirit:

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Psalm 51:10-13

¹⁰ *Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*

¹¹ *Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.*

¹² *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.*

¹³ **Then will I teach transgressors thy ways;** and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Galatians 6:1

*Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one **in the spirit of meekness**; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*

Luke 22:31-32

³¹ *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:*

³² *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted [restored], [then you may] strengthen thy brethren.*

The brackets here are mine to help you to see the order. The point is clear; we must first look at ourselves and deal with our sin before we can be effective in helping our fellow believer.

Danger #2 - We will be hesitant to draw any lines of discrimination.

Jesus knew this would be a concern and so He addresses this.

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Notice Matthew 7:6

There are 2 illustrations found here that help us to see we must discriminate.

1. Recognizing dogs.

We must understand that dogs in Jesus' day were not the cute little sweater wearing dogs we see today. They traveled in packs and they would roam the streets as scavengers. They were a very dangerous group of animals to encounter.

2 Kings 9:36

³⁶Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel:

But we need to know what the holy things were that were not to be given to the dogs. If you lived back then you would bring your sacrifice to the temple and the priest would offer for your sins. There was a part the priest kept and there was a part that was to be offered to God; that was the "holy" part. Jesus is saying that it would be wrong to give the holy part of the sacrifice to the dogs because that would be desecration.

In the same way it is wrong to give spiritual Truths to people who will not respect them and only do their best to tear them into shreds.

Now listen. The point here is that we must discriminate so as to be able to know who the dogs are.

2. Recognizing hogs.

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In the 2nd illustration Jesus tells us that it is not right to cast pearls before the swine. Pigs in Jesus' day were not as domesticated as they are today. So you would not want to get a herd of hungry hogs mad at you because they would eat you. If you were to cast pearls to hungry hogs they would spew the pearls out and would come after you. That is the thought here in this verse.

The point to be made is that we do not give to the "hogs" that which is priceless, meaning spiritual Truth. But again we must discriminate in order to know the "hogs".

Conclusion:

Let me help you to better understand this by making an application. There are people today who do not care what the Word of God says. They do not care if they are living in rebellion against God because the Word of God has no Authority in their lives. It is these people that we do not give the precious Truths of God's Word to. Someone may say, "Wait a moment. They need the Gospel." I say, "You are correct. But while they refuse to recognize the Authority of God's Word it will do no good to share the Gospel with them. That is giving that which is holy to the dogs and it is casting pearls before the swine." When someone has that rebellious, militant attitude about the Word of God we are to let them go. We pray for them but we do not give them the precious Truths of the Word.