

Part Ten
Judging Others
Matthew 7:1-11

Judging Others

¹ “Judge not, that you be not judged. ² For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. ³ Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

⁶ “Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

Ask, and It Will Be Given

⁷ “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

⁸ For everyone who asks receives and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. ⁹ Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

STUDY

1. **READ**

- a. What does Jesus say about the way we should handle judging others?
- b. Are we supposed to start with looking at others' faults or our own first?
- c. What kinds of analogies does Jesus use here to describe God's goodness?

2. **MEANING**

- a. Why is judging others not simply a one-way action?
- b. How does hypocrisy play a big role in this discussion?
- c. Why might persistence be the key when asking God for things in prayer?

3. **APPLY**

- a. Where in your life do you most struggle with judging others?
- b. What's an example you've had when someone in your life was hypocritical?
- c. How is Jesus' standard on judging others different from the standard of tolerance you often hear in our culture?

NOTES ON THE PASSAGE

v. 1 - Referencing the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, when God is evaluating us, it is the meek who are extended the most grace, because they understand that God is the judge.

v. 3-5 - Talking ourselves out of our own guilt ultimately blinds us in the end. If we were to have someone performing surgery on us, we would want them to be able to see really well, very much like we would want someone leading the way on a trail to be someone with great eye-sight.

v. 6 - When Jesus performed certain miracles and preached about the kingdom, he often looked for a certain measure of faith in his audience.

v. 11 - God understands us more than any human parent would understand their own child. He also is far more loving than any human parent can be with their own. And lastly, he is more generous with his children than any human parent could be, and his mercies are new every morning (Lam. 3:23).

COMMENTS

The crowd Jesus is addressing in the Sermon on the Mount would have been familiar with the Pharisees and other religious leaders of the day. The Pharisees made a name for themselves by judging others - almost professionally! Their way of judging others was often centered on the outward appearance and not focused on the heart. Furthermore, they believed that if they perfected the external things, that this made them more holy before God and before others. Jesus challenges this way of thinking by reminding his hearers of the reality that everyone has sinned (Romans 3:23). It is from this basis of an undeserving posture that reminds us of the futility of trying to judge others externally. The picture of someone pointing and three fingers pointing back at themselves comes to mind with this passage.

In the gospels, Jesus often refuses to do miracles in front of unbelievers. In contrast, Jesus performs miracles and carries out the preaching of the kingdom in places where he finds faith. Once again, Jesus is getting at the condition of people's hearts. He is encouraging the crowd to examine their own sense of faith.

In the verses about prayer, Jesus uses hyperbole here for effect with his hearers. Most fathers and mothers are kind, benevolent and generous. And yet, God encompasses these qualities in far greater measure still. This assurance of limitless spiritual resources is meant to encourage the crowd and us to be persistent in prayer. As Psalm 121:4 reminds us, "Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." And in the book of James, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." These qualities should encourage us to press into God's goodness and love for us, knowing that the depth of his connection far exceeds that of any parent with their child here on earth.

References

1. 7:1, 3-5 (The IVP New Testament Commentary Series. G. R. Osborne et al, editors. 20 vols. Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011.
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+7%3A1-11&version=ESV>).
2. 7:6 (The Reformation Study Bible. R. C. Sproul et al, eds. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995.
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3. 7:11 (Matthew Henry's Commentary Series. Peabody, MA : Hendrickson Publishers, 1996.
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