

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT: Matthew 7:1-12

A Christian's Relationships

I. Chapter Divisions of the Sermon on the Mount

- A. Chapter 5 – The Kingdom of God and its Implications (Beatitudes, Salt and Light, Christ and the Law)
- B. Chapter 6 – The Fatherhood of God and the Freedom it Gives (Sincere Piety, Prayer, Trust for Provision)
- C. Chapter 7 – The Judgment of God and its Impact on Christian Living

"We cannot read the Bible without coming to the conclusion that the thing that really differentiates God's people from all others is that they have always been people who walk in the consciousness of their eternal destiny. ...[The Christian] should always know that he is walking in the presence of God, and that he is going on to meet God; and that thought should determine and control the whole of his life." - Martyn Lloyd-Jones, 425.

II. God as Judge

"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." (Matt 7:1-6)

1. How do many people understand verse 1 ("Judge not, that you be not judged")? Is this what the verse means? What would you say in response? In what sense will our judgments "be measured" to us?

"Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith...through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared [as with a hot iron; NIV]..." (1 Tim 4:1-2)

2. Consider Jesus' illustration. How does this type of attitude begin to function as a defense mechanism?

"Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse, and he who reproveth a wicked man incurs injury. ⁸ Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you." (Prov 9:7-8)

3. How do you respond to criticism? What is your first reaction? How do you respond to the sins of others? What is your first reaction?

"...to have strong feelings about the sins of others that are not matched by a ruthless dealing with our own sin is hypocrisy." - Sinclair Ferguson, 153.

"Resolved, to act, in all respects, both speaking and doing, as if nobody had been so vile as I, and as if I had committed the same sins, or had the same infirmities or failings as others; and that I will let the knowledge of their failings promote nothing but shame in myself, and prove only an occasion of my confessing my own sins and misery to God." Jonathan Edwards, Resolution No. 8

4. Describe the discriminatory judgment Jesus commands in verse 6. What are some examples of this in Bible history?

III. God as Father

"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! ¹² "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets." (Matt 7:7-12)

1. In what way(s) should Christians remember God as their Judge and their Father? How do both together magnify His grace to you?

2. How does Jesus' "Golden Rule" in verse 12 compare to teachings of other religions? Which is more expansive? More demanding?

Buddhism: "Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful." Udana-Varga 5:18

Confucianism: "Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you." Analects 15:23

Hinduism:

"This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you." Mahabharata 5:1517

3. Do we "do unto others" *in order that* they might do the same unto us?

4. What does it mean that "this is the Law and the Prophets"? Does this mean the Golden Rule is all we need to know?

Come, my soul, thy suit prepare,
Jesus loves to answer prayer;
He Himself has bid thee pray,
Therefore will not say thee nay.

Thou art coming to a King,
Large petitions with thee bring;
For His grace and pow'r are such
None can ever ask too much.

While I am a pilgrim here,
Let Thy love my spirit cheer;
As my Guide, my Guard, my Friend,
Lead me to my journey's end.

-“Come, My Soul, Thy Suit Prepare” by John Newton