

Jesus Taught About Judging Others

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand the seven reasons Jesus gave so we do not need to worry. Instead, we can turn our worries over to Him. Jesus went on to teach that we are not to judge. That will be the focus of this topic.

In Matthew 7:1-2, we read, “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.” The word translated “judge” means *to judge others with a self-righteous attitude that condemns others*. Jesus gave a parable about a Pharisee and a tax collector to illustrate this attitude. Luke 18:10-12 says, “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’” This Pharisee had the attitude that he was much better than any of the groups of people that he mentioned. He judged and personally condemned them by his words. This is the kind of judgment Jesus is condemning in these verses. It is not talking about a court of law.

First, we see that we should not have a self-righteous attitude and judge others, otherwise God and others will hear us and judge our self-righteous attitudes. God told Samuel, in 1 Samuel 16:7, “But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For *the LORD does not see as man sees*; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.’” It is impossible for us to know the heart of any person. Only God can know the heart of others. That is why it is important to leave all judgment to the Lord because He knows the hearts and will make a righteous judgment which we cannot do.

Second, we do not see and recognize our own attitudes when we judge others. Often, when one person judges another person, he will pick out the positive things in his own life and compare them to the failures and negative things in the life of the person that he is judging. Paul wrote, in 2 Corinthians 10:12, “For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” Here, we see that we are not wise when we compare ourselves with others.

Third, we see that when we judge others and measure others, the same measure will be used to measure our life. The word translated “measure” means *the rule or standard of judgment*. Mark 4:24 says, “Then He said to them, ‘Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.’” Then, Luke 6:38 tells us how to measure others, instead of judging them. That verse says, “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.” We want to avoid the attitude of the Pharisees by avoiding personal judgments.

Jesus went on to illustrate this principle in Matthew 7:3-5, where we read, “And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank *is* in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.” The word translated “speck” means *a piece of straw, a twig or a dry stalk*. The word translated “plank” means *a beam or*

large piece of wood.

By saying this, Jesus was showing what a lot of people do when they judge others. Some Christians may be quick to condemn someone else for something that person thinks is a sin, which the Bible does not call sin. An illustration of this is found in Romans 14:1-3, where we read, “Receive one who is weak in the faith, *but* not to disputes over doubtful things. For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats *only* vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him.” In the time of the New Testament, some people did not want to eat meat because it might have been offered as a sacrifice to an idol and so they only ate vegetables. Other people liked meat and so they did not worry about whether that meat might have been offered to idols. A person might condemn a person for eating or not eating meat; that person would be judging another Christian. This would be an example of a Christian with a large piece of wood (a judgmental attitude) in his own eye condemning another Christian. Jesus said that a person doing such a thing was actually a hypocrite.

Jesus said that the very first thing that person should do was to remove the beam (the judgmental attitude in this illustration). Then, the person would be able to help the other person, instead of judge the other person. Galatians 6:1-2 says, “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” These verses show how the person will respond once the beam is removed from his own eye, instead of judging the other person.

First, the goal will be to restore rather than condemn. God is the true Judge and He will judge according to righteousness, instead of with a judgmental attitude. Second, this restoration will be done with an attitude of gentleness. This is very important because it prevents an attitude that will cause a person to commit additional sins in addition to the judgmental attitude. Third, this will help the weaker Christian because someone has chosen to help him carry his load by encouraging and strengthening him. This fulfills the law of Christ because it demonstrates that love is patient and that love is kind. The law of Christ is given in John 13:34-35, where we read, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Jesus went on to say, in Matthew 7:6, “Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.” Two key words in this verse are dogs and swine. The word translated “dog” was often used to speak of a person that had an impure mind. The word is used five times in the New Testament. Philippians 3:2 says, “Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!” In this case, Paul was referring to Jews who were trying to force Gentiles to be circumcised. Then, Revelation 22:14-15 says, “Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.” In these verses, we see that those who are called dogs will not enter into eternal life or have access to the tree of life.

The word translated “swine” is used 14 times in the New Testament. In all of the other verses, the word is talking about pigs. As a result, in this verse, the words dogs and pigs are talking about those who are against Jesus and hate the truth. This meant that Jesus was warning us not to debate with those who hate the things that are holy (pleasing to God). Jesus warned, in Matthew 23:15-17, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. Woe to you, blind guides, who say, “Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged *to perform it.*” Fools and blind! For which is

greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold?” In these verses, we see that Jesus condemned the scribes and Pharisees who were doing everything that they could do to lead people away from the truth, instead of trying to bring them to the truth.

The word translated “pearls” means either *a pearl or a word of great value*. Those who are totally opposed to God do not want to hear His Word because the Word of God makes them angry. The word translated “trample” means *to trample, to treat with rudeness or to insult*. Hebrews 10:28-29 says, “Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on *the testimony of two or three witnesses*. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?” This verse reminds us that those who hate God and His Word will do everything possible to mock Christ and His Word.

However, many will also make personal attacks on those who are sharing the Word of God with them. Jesus said that after such people have mocked God and His Word, they will also turn and tear you to pieces. Jesus later told the disciples, in John 15:18-19, “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.” Then, Psalm 14:1 says, “The fool has said in his heart, ‘*There is no God.*’ They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good.” Jesus wanted to make it clear to His disciples that it is useless to debate with those who hate God. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand why this is true so that they will not take it personally when there are those who attack them for sharing the Word of God in love. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children to understand such attacks.