



ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS -
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT
SESSION 21 - DO NOT JUDGE
(Mt 7:1-6)

Do Not Judge (Mt 7:1-6)

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

“Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.



Initial Questions

- What kind of judgment are we talking about?
- Can I not criticise at all?
- What is an example of a speck or a log?
- Who are the pigs and what are the pearls?

Context

- We've just been talking about :
 - *avoiding religiosity – hypocritical and showy fasting, prayer and giving.*
 - *True treasure – attitudes towards money and possessions.*
 - *Worldly mindsets that lead to worry instead of peace.*
- Now, in the navigation of life:
 1. *Don't be judgmental (7:1-5)*
 2. *Don't be indiscriminating (7:6)*
 3. *Persist in our pursuit of God (7:7-11 Ask, seek, knock)*
- Now heading towards the golden rule (7:12)

Do not judge (κρίνω – *krino*)

G2919 - *krinō*

Pronunciation: kree'-no

Part of Speech: verb

Root Word (Etymology): Perhaps a primitive word

TDNT Reference: 3:921,469

Outline of Biblical Usage:

- I.* to separate, put asunder, to pick out, select, choose
- II.* to approve, esteem, to prefer
- III.* to be of opinion, deem, think, to be of opinion
- IV.* to determine, resolve, decree
- V.* to judge

Do not judge (κρίνω – *krino*)

V. to judge

A. to pronounce an opinion concerning right and wrong

i. to be judged, i.e. summoned to trial that one's case may be examined and judgment passed upon it

B. to pronounce judgment, to subject to censure

i. of those who act the part of judges or arbiters in matters of common life, or pass judgment on the deeds and words of others

VI. to rule, govern

A. to preside over with the power of giving judicial decisions, because it was the prerogative of kings and rulers to pass judgment

VII. to contend together, of warriors and combatants

A. to dispute

B. in a forensic sense

i. to go to law, have suit at law

Do not judge

- Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you
- Is this saying “don’t judge others so that you don’t get judged back” or “don’t judge at all”, or something else?
- What kind of *judgment* are we talking about here? How do we find out?
- Jesus is prohibiting something... judgmental attitudes would fit. Also the next verse (log in your eye) is dealing with being aware of our perception.





What does this negative type of judgement look like?

- Making automatic ***assumptions*** based on race, age, ethnicity, gender etc.
- Reaction based on ***category*** rather than engaging with the ***person individually?***
- Lack of awareness of one's own ***biases***.
- Preservation of the norms of one's own cultural group (church, small town, nationalism etc)
- Fundamentally a lack of love. It's a way to put another down instead of lifting them up.

Judging

Why do we do it?



Judging

- Next, our Lord's injunction not to judge cannot be understood as a command to suspend our critical faculties in relation to other people, to turn a blind eye to their faults (pretending not to notice them), to avoid all criticism and to refuse to discern between truth and error, goodness and evil.
- How can we be sure that Jesus was not referring to these things? Partly because it would not be honest to behave like this, but hypocritical, and we know from this and other passages his love of integrity and hatred of hypocrisy. (Stott)
- What do you think?

Judging = Censoriousness (Stott)

- If, then, Jesus was neither abolishing law courts nor forbidding criticism, what did he mean by Do not judge? In a word, 'censoriousness'. The follower of Jesus is still a 'critic' in the sense of using powers of discernment, but not a 'judge' in the sense of being censorious.
- A censorious critic is a fault-finder who is negative and destructive towards other people and enjoys actively seeking out their failings. Such a person puts the worst possible construction on the motives of others, pours cold water on their schemes and is ungenerous towards their mistakes.
- Worse than that, to be censorious is to set oneself up as a censor, and so to claim the competence and authority to sit in judgment upon one's fellow human beings.



Judging

- ‘It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart.’ (1 Cor 3:4-5)
- for we cannot read each other’s hearts or assess each other’s motives. To be censorious is to presume arrogantly to anticipate the day of judgment, to usurp the prerogative of the divine Judge, **in fact to try to play God**. (Stott)
- “You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? (Rom 14:10)

Judging

To sum up, the command not to judge is not a requirement to be blind, but rather a plea to be **generous**. Jesus does not tell us to cease to be human (by suspending our critical powers which help to distinguish us from animals) but to renounce the presumptuous ambition to be God (by setting ourselves up as judges). (Stott)

You too will be judged...

- (Mt 7:2) **For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.**
- (Mt 5:14–15) “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy . . . For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.
- Same sort of principle – we should not expect that the response to our own actions or attitudes by God or others will be more generous than what we are prepared to offer to others.
- What do you think?

Spicks and specks

- Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You **hypocrite**, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.
- What is the real problem here?
- Paying no attention to one's own stuff.
- Hypocrite (again) – Actor.



Spicks and specks

Why do we do it?

we experience the pleasure of self-righteousness
without the pain of penitence.

Pointing out a fault

- If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. (Mt 18:15).
- How to reconcile with Mt 7:4-5 (taking a speck out of your brother's eye)?
- We need to be as **critical** of ourselves as we often are of others, and as **generous** to others as we always are to ourselves.





Pearls and Pigs

- **Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces. (Mt 7:6)**
- Who are the dogs or the pigs?
- Not Gentiles (en masse) – no contemporary Jewish usage of referring to Gentiles as “dogs”.
- Calvin - *that dogs and swine are names given not to every kind of debauched men, or to those who are destitute of the fear of God and of true godliness, but to those who, by clear evidences, have manifested a **hardened contempt of God**, so that their disease appears to be incurable.*
- “Watch out for those **dogs**, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh.” (Php 3:2)

Are they listening?



- If anyone **will not welcome you** or **listen** to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet. (Mt 10:14).
- On the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy. They began to **contradict** what Paul was saying and heaped **abuse** on him. Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: “We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you **reject** it and **do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life**, we now turn to the Gentiles. (Acts 13:44-46)
- Of them the proverbs are true: “A dog returns to its vomit,” and, “A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud. (2 Pet 2:22)

Pearls and pigs

- Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine **pearls**. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it. (Mt 13:45-46).
- “Your pearls” = message of the kingdom?
- So, putting this together, we actually need to exercise the kind of judgment that would fairly assess people’s receptivity to ongoing presentation of the gospel, lest it turns into an unnecessarily bad situation. What do you think?



In practice

God, in fact, exercises both justice and mercy, even toward his own people. Therefore his people must reflect God's character by living justly and showing mercy.

And because they are conscious of their own shortcomings and rebellion, they cannot but be profoundly grateful for mercy they have experienced even while they strive for perfection and magnify holiness.

This balanced perspective keeps them both from a judgmental spirit and from moral apathy. (Carson, 132).

In your own words

Do not judge...

Don't cast your pearls before swine...

How would you say it in your own words?



Reflection

- Do I have a habit of judging others quickly?
- Do I intentionally self-reflect? Looking for specks in my own eyes?
- Am I aware of my own biases?
- Not casting pearls to pigs - do I lack discernment here? Do I use this as an excuse *not* to speak?