

How We Treat Others

Matthew 7:1-12

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Introduction

Tonight, we will continue in Jesus' masterful sermon. He has addressed the character of kingdom citizens (5:1-12), explained our duty in the world as influencers like salt and light (5:13-16), and made a shocking statement concerning righteousness which must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees (5:17-20). Jesus had not come into the world to relax the righteous demands of the law but to uphold them. He addressed the danger of anger (5:21-26), lust and adultery (5:27-32), oaths (5:33-37), retaliation (5:38-42), and even loving our enemies (5:43-48). Jesus spoke of practicing righteousness before the Father rather than being more concerned with being seen by others. Jesus taught about worshipping in spirit and truth when giving (6:1-4), praying (6:5-15), and fasting (6:16-18). Jesus addressed man's ambitious nature: will we serve God or money? He reiterated the importance to seeking the kingdom of God first and trusting God to provide for all our needs (6:19-34).

This brings us to Matthew 7. The topic we will address is "**How We Treat Others.**" Do you realize the most important part of our lives is our relationships? It is not the place we live or the things we possess. Jesus declared this truth in the Great Commandment calling us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves (Matt 22:37-40). In Matthew 7:1-12, Jesus delivers powerful truths about having a clear vision of God and others and treating them with love, wisdom, and grace. As we consider Jesus's commands, each command reveals something about the nature of God.

Outline

A. Judge not. Why? God is the Judge (Matt 7:1-5)

- (1) Who has the right to judge (1 Sam 16:7; Gen 18:25, Acts 17:31, James 4:11-12, Rev 19:11)?
- (2) These verses do not prohibit practicing spiritual discernment.
- (3) Judge not:
 - (a) In context, Jesus is warning against having a judgmental and critical spirit towards others (Luke 18:9-14)
 - (b) Webster's 1828- To censure rashly; to pass severe sentence.
 - (c) A.T. Robertson- The habit of censoriousness, sharp, unjust criticism. Our word critic is from this very word. It means to separate, distinguish, discriminate. That is necessary, but pre-judice (prejudgment) is unfair, captious criticism.¹
 - (d) Stuart Weber- A good summary of his meaning is, "Do not judge others until you are prepared to be judged by the same standard. And then, when you exercise judgment toward others, do it with humility."²
 - (e) F.F. Bruce states: The exhortation against judgment (7:1-2) forbids not a judicious discernment but a censorious spirit which delights in finding fault with others.³
- (4) When a person is judgmental or critical toward others, he or she fails to see God, themselves, or others clearly (Example- Judah, Gen 38:24-26; David, 2 Sam 12:1-7, Pharisee, Luke 7:36-50; Pharisee, Luke 18:9-14)
 - (a) Practice self-examination and repentance with humility before God before seeking to examine and call others to repentance.
 - (b) Do not play God over others lives and pretend to be better than others (1 Tim 1:15).

¹ A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Mt 7:1.

² Stuart K. Weber, *Matthew*, vol. 1, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 96.

³ F. F. Bruce, *Matthew*, Open Your Bible Commentary (Bath, UK; Nashville, TN: Creative 4 International, 2014), Mt 7:1-12.

- (c) In humility, help others be restored to clear vision of God and others
- B. Give not what is holy to the dogs. Why? God is All-Wise and Discerning (Matt 7:6)**
 - (1) Do not give what is holy to the dogs.
 - (2) Do not cast your pearls before swine.
 - (a) This is how we should treat people who have given clear evidence of viciously rejecting and trampling the gospel message and messenger.
 - (b) Move on and share the gospel with others.
- C. Ask, Seek, and Knock- Why? God is Good and Generous (Matt 7:7-11)**
 - (1) Jesus encourages believers to pray to God for help (7).
 - (2) Jesus assures believers of answers (8).
 - (3) Jesus provides an illustration (9-11).
 - (a) Parents, corrupted by sin, provide good gifts to their children.
 - (b) The Heavenly Father delights to provide good gifts to those who ask Him.
- D. Treat Others How You Want to be Treated. Why? God is Love (Matt 7:12)**
 - (1) Think about all the things we do for ourselves every day.
 - (2) Jesus sums up Christian responsibility toward others in one sentence—the Golden Rule.

Application

1. Remember: God alone can judge with absolute perfection. He sees the heart of man.
2. A judgmental or critical person, a hypocrite, seeks to take the place of God in other people's lives. Self-centered pride is the root of a critical or judgmental spirit.
3. A judgmental person does not see God or others correctly, because he or she focuses on the problems of others more than his own. He fails to live a gospel-centered and grace-filled life.
4. We need to practice self-examination and maintain an honest assessment of ourselves before God and others (Paul considered himself the chief of sinners and displayed a great love for God and others.)
5. Jesus expects believers to help restore others graciously and humbly. If not for the grace of God, we could be in a worse place than anyone.
6. We need to practice discernment when sharing the gospel with antagonistic unbelievers who do not appreciate the precious truths of Christ.
7. The believer is encouraged to pray to God for help with expectant faith.
8. The best gifts are available to everyone (all believers) who ask, seek, and knock.
9. Earthly fathers, being evil, tend to provide and give good gifts to their children.
10. God the Father, who is the Good and Generous Father, desires to give good things to them that ask him (11)
11. The Golden Rule sums up how we should treat every person on the planet.
12. The Golden Rule can only be fulfilled if we keep the Great Commandment. When we love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, God's love flows to us and through us to others.

Be humble before God and helpful to others.

Be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove (Matt 10:16).

Pursue God's heart in prayer and trust his hand.

Provide for those under your care.

Show others how well loved you are by God by how you treat them.