

MATT 7:1-12

AUGUST 21-27



Sermon Overview

Few verses are as often quoted or misquoted as Matthew 7:1, “Judge not, that you be not judged.” From a quick glance, one might come away from this section in Christ’s sermon and conclude there is no place for judgment among Kingdom citizens. But is that what the text really says? On closer examination, one finds the problem is not in judgment itself. In fact, there is a right kind of judgment that is loving and gracious—the kind of care and concern that sees the speck in your brother or sister’s eye and desperately wants to bring them healing and comfort. But how can we tell if our judgment is true or not? How can we keep our hearts in check? Jesus goes on to teach us what the posture of a Kingdom citizen looks like: asking, seeking, and knocking. There is a persistent dependence that characterizes the true follower of Christ. We are unable to judge rightly or even to fulfill the golden rule (Matt 7:12) by our own strength. It is only in rightly understanding our identity in Christ’s Kingdom that we may find the means to live as he has called us.

Discussion Questions

1. *Read Matthew 7:1-6.* How would you define judgment? What are some bad examples? Good examples?
2. What is preventing right judgment in this section? What must be done for true judgment to take place?
3. In what way is biblical judgment as described here loving?
4. Look specifically at verse 6. How do these illustrations connect to judging rightly and loving your brother or sister well? How do we maintain the right tension of pursuing others yet not bringing unnecessary harm to them or ourselves?
5. *Read Matthew 7:7-11.* How would you describe the posture of the Kingdom citizen according to this text?
6. In what ways do you find yourself living out of your own strength and ability, and not in dependence on Christ? Be specific here.
7. In what areas of your life do you believe the lie that God does not want, or cannot, give good gifts to you? How does the gospel speak to this lie?
8. Consider the gospel as you read verse 12. What specific next steps of obedience do you feel the Spirit leading you in?

Prayer Directives

- Praise God for his perfect judgment and righteousness. Meditate on Christ Jesus who is seated now at the right hand of the Father interceding on your behalf.
- Confess the ways in which you have tried to appease God through the power of your own strength. Repent of the ways in which you have judged others wrongly, failing to see the sin in your own life.
- Thank God for the good gifts he gives to his children, most clearly seen in the sending of his Son. Thank him for the assurance that “everyone who asks receives...who seeks finds...who knocks it will be opened” (Matthew 7:8).
- Ask the Spirit to give you clear guidance regarding next steps of obedience in loving others well. Plea with him to give you an ever increasing sense of his nearness and power in your life for all he has called you to.