

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

August 2013

The Sermon on the Mount

Lesson #9: Judging vs. Discernment

INTRODUCTION

When have you been dampened by someone with a critical spirit?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read Matt 7:1-6; 15-23

Note: 'The measure you use' (vs. 2) refers to the rabbinical teaching that God would judge the world with two measures: justice and mercy. If you expect to deal with a merciful God, then you should deal mercifully with others. 'Dogs' was a term for 'unregenerate' people (heathens). It would have been unthinkable for a Jew to give savage dogs "holy meat" that had been consecrated as a sacrifice in the temple. Jews considered swine the epitome of filthiness that had tusks and sharp hooves.

1. Do you think verses 1-6 are aimed more at the Pharisees or at the humble kingdom seekers?
2. Why does a critical spirit reflect an erroneous view of God? Jn 5:22 *Of others?* Rom 2:1-2 *Of ourselves?* James 1:23-24; Isa 6:9-10
3. What is the problem with an individual or group developing their own standards of religion and morality? Matt 15:2; Jn 8:15; Lk 16:15
4. What type of judgment is Jesus condemning?
5. How can one know if their "advice" to another believer is constructive criticism or overly critical judgment?
6. What is the value of a pearl to an animal only looking for food? Vs 6
7. How does one determine who is "dogs and swine" without being judgmental? Matt 10:14
8. What are some of the ways that you can tell if someone is speaking for God? vs. 20; Rom 16:17-18; Gal 1:8; 2 Jn 10-11; 2 Pet 2:1-3
9. What is the value of inspecting (judging) someone's "fruit"? Vs. 20
10. Why is failure to rebuke sin an act of hate rather than love? Lev 19:17
11. What is the proper way to correct a brother? Matt 18:15-17; Rom 14:13; Pro 18:13
12. How can one obtain the right balance of humility and boldness? Ps 51:10; 12-13; Gal 6:1; 1 Pet 4:17

APPLICATION

- What challenges you the most about living out these verses?

In ancient Persia a certain corrupt judge who accepted a bribe to render a false verdict was ordered executed by king Cambyses. The judge's skin was then used to cover the judgment seat. Subsequent judges were forced to render their judgments while sitting on that chair, as a reminder of the consequences of perverting justice.¹

7:21 — *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."*

Willing and eager obedience is the hallmark of someone who has truly come to faith in Jesus Christ. They obey, not because they want to earn God's favor, but because they feel delighted already to have received it.²

¹ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (435). Chicago: Moody Press.

² Stanley, C. F. (2005). *The Charles F. Stanley life principles Bible: New King James Version* (Mt 7:21). Nashville, TN: Nelson Bibles.