

Sunday, November 8, 2020 am

TEACHINGS OF JESUS (25)
Sermon On the Mount (24)
Concerning Judging
Matthew 7:1-6

As we continue our examination of the Sermon on the Mount, we now find application concerning true righteousness (Matthew 5:20). We have observed our character, influence and behavior in chapters 5 and 6. In chapter 7 (remember these are men's divisions), we continue to notice some things that will help us develop and demonstrate true righteousness. Today, we address the subject of judging.

We sometimes hear people say John 3:16 is the most famous verse in the Bible. But how often do we hear people quote Matthew 7:1, or should we say misquote it? In this lesson we want to notice what Jesus was talking about as He addressed judging others.

I. A time to judge

- a. What does it mean to judge? A word akin to our English usage. It is a word that means to consider or evaluate something and reach a conclusion. THEN to make a selection based upon that conclusion. It can be based on some or all evidence available.
- b. The Bible is clear there are times when we are called upon to make judgments.
 - i. Discipline – 1 Corinthians 5:1-7, Romans 16:17, etc.
 - ii. Going to a brother in sin – Matthew 18:15-18, Galatians 6:1, James 5:19-20, etc. (This one has direct correlation to what we are talking about).
 - iii. Reaching a proper conclusion – Acts 15 (applying CENI)
 - iv. Discerning between good and evil – Ephesians 5:11, 1 Corinthians 5:9ff – where Paul notes you are not to keep company with a brother who is in sin. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 – calls for judgment in associating with unbelievers, etc.
 - v. Rejecting false teachers – Matthew 7:15-20, Galatians 1:9-10
 - vi. Judgments about when to move on - vs. 6
 - vii. John 7:24 – Jesus taught that we are to judge with righteous judgment.
- c. NOTE: NOR is this dealing with government judicial judging (e.g. sitting on a jury) - Though it is possible to have the condemned attitude on a jury.

II. Our context

- a. Jesus said, ***“judge not, that you be not judged.”*** Clearly He was dealing with a certain type of judgment – hypocritical and HYPERcritical judging.
 - Prejudiced judging – these are judgments where you have already made up your mind about someone based on some characteristic they possess (nationality, ethnicity, social class, etc.)
 - Jumping to conclusions without all the facts – just looking at externals without considering the circumstances behind what is done or said
 - Assuming motives – judging someone's heart, again without evidence.
 - Judging without mercy – hateful, harsh or cruel judgments. These lack compassion, mercy and considering humanity. The “get even” mentality. Do we judge to condemn or correct?
 - Hypocritical judgment – looking down on others for wrongs that you are also guilty of. They may be wrong within themselves, but you have no standing to make the judgment.
- b. It would be the type of judgments the scribes and Pharisees engaged in:
 - i. Luke 18:10-14 – the Pharisee and the tax collector;

- ii. Simon judging the character of Jesus – Luke 7:39 where a sinful woman washed the feet of Jesus with her tears
 - iii. John 8:1-11 – where what is recorded is trying to entrap Jesus.
 - iv. Matthew 12:24 - Calling Jesus a servant of Beelzebub
 - v. John 11:47-50 - He deserves to die, Matthew 26:65-66.
- c. ***With what judgment you judge, you will be judged*** –
 This is an eye-opening warning. God is watching to see how we deal with others. And that will factor into our judgment. Earlier in this sermon, Jesus spoke about forgiveness (Matthew 6:14-15). James 2:13, *For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.*
 Clearly, this warns us that how we consider others is very important. God is watching, and so are others. Heed the warning of 2 Corinthians 5:10-11, Romans 14:10-12, We are living in times, where there is whole lot of this type of judging happening. And brethren are not exempt. We just need to heed this warning. GOD IS WATCHING!
 Jesus further emphasized, ***“With the same measure you use...”*** I cannot help be reminded in this of our need for compassion, mercy, wisdom and investigation before we judge. Will we give “the benefit of the doubt” to someone? Will we avoid judging their motives?
- d. ***Why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye...? (3-4)*** Jesus in this text uses absurdity (and humor) to drive home His point. Consider one going to an eye doctor to have a splinter removed, and the doctor comes into the room with a log protruding from his eye. Would you have confidence in that doctor.
 The point of course is to drive home the fact that we too have flaws (whether the same flaw or others), and likely they are greater than those we are judging and seeking to correct. IF there is ANY hint of inconsistency in our judging, we have to take care of first.
 Consider Matthew 5:23-24 – take care of offenses before offering your gift to God.
Put this in context with the corrupt behavior of the scribes and Pharisees Jesus has addressed throughout this sermon – they were hypocritical judges who were blinded to their own self-righteousness. Their faults were much larger than their petty observations about those they looked down upon (Gentiles, the poorer class, those they defined as “sinners”, tax collectors, etc.). This helps you understand the absurd illustration
- e. ***Make yourself right before you concern yourself with others (5)*** – NOTE in this text, Jesus does NOT say to NOT help a brother with a speck in his eye. But He notes that you must FIRST get your own house in order.
 If we are concerned about our brethren, even the “speck” is worthy of attention. BUT, we have not standing if we are equally or greater guilty.
 This would include not only your actions, but also your attitudes and thoughts – let us make sure we have all the facts before you deal with another (Galatians 6:1)
- f. ***Do not give what is holy to the dogs or cast your pearls before swine (6)*** –
- i. Right after this teaching, Jesus calls for making a judgment.
 - ii. The idea of a dog would be a wild dog that wanders about and will attack to eat (not a pet). Swine, obviously were unclean animals that Jews were to avoid. The Jews used the description of “dogs” and “swine” as derogatory terms – the lowest of society in their minds.
 - iii. Jesus is here noting that there are things that are holy (what belongs to God – like the pure gospel, pure and undefiled religion, true worship, etc.) that we must be careful how and with whom we share them.
 - iv. Sadly, there are some who want nothing to do with truth.
 - v. In the case of this sermon, this was many of these religious leaders who did not care about Jesus at all. They totally rejected Him and in so doing they rejected God. As previously noted, they judged themselves unworthy of eternal life (Acts 13:46).

I find it interesting that Jesus here turns the tables. Who are the dogs and swine? The religious, self-righteous leaders Jesus is warning against.

- vi. **Jesus is saying there is a time to move on to others.**
Consider Matthew 10:11-15 where Jesus told His apostles that if a city would not receive them to “shake the dust off your feet” and move on. God would judge. THEN notice vs 16, Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.
- vii. And as noted, this is a judgment we might need to make. It is not easy, especially if it is someone you care about, but the sad reality is not all (in fact most) are not interested in truth or the Christian’s lifestyle. But there are too many who are genuine prospects to waste too much time on someone that is not interested. Jesus taught in the parable of the Sower that some are hard hearted and will not listen, and later on there are those who received the word that will return to the world (Matthew 13:18-21).
- viii. In time we learn to make better judgments about this.

And thus we can see the teachings of Jesus about how we judge others. Let us resolve that in dealing with others, we will be truthful, fair and consistent. Therefore, when you stand before God, how will you be judged? Think about it!