

"Do not judge so that you will not be judged. "For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces. (Matthew 7:1-6, NAS95).

After teaching us the futility of anxiety and worry, both of which are problems of the heart and show a lack of faith in Christ, Jesus directs His sermon to address another matter of the heart - judging others.

We will see three things in this text concerning judgement.

1. We are not to have a heart attitude that is harshly critical. We will be judged by God accordingly.
2. We are not to retreat from judging what needs to be judged but we are to do it with a right heart.
3. We are to have a discerning judgement when it comes to proclaiming the great and glorious Gospel of Christ. We are not to let it be trampled under foot and we are not to trivialize it in any way.

First we have to establish the overall idea of what Jesus is conveying here.

It is obvious, that for Jesus to even mention the idea of judging others there must have been people who were doing so in a wrong manner. And this form of judging was not to be displayed by His disciples. Does that mean that there is a correct way to judge others? Yes, the Scripture says there is and we will refer to some passages of Scripture that reveal this to be true. But, what kind of judging of others was being done here that would cause Jesus to specifically address it?

Do we have an indication from anything that Jesus has already taught us in the Sermon that could define what kind of judgment this is and why it is wrong? Is there a contextual reference point or is this just a general statement, something about another heart matter that needs to be addressed, another layer of what it means to be demonstrating a righteousness that exceeds that of the Pharisees?

When we remember the big picture of this sermon, the foundational theme is that as a disciple of Christ, “your righteousness is to exceed that of the Pharisees.”

Do we have any illustrations of the Pharisees judging others in this sermon?

No. So we must understand the language that is being applied.

The greek word *krino* is used here meaning to judge. It has a very wide range as to how it can be used. It can mean to judge as in a court of law or it can mean to have discernment.

It cannot refer here to the law courts. Nor does this forbid judging of any kind for even the moral teachings, that reflect a new heart, that Jesus has already taught about requires the ability to judge that which is acceptable for Jesus’ disciples.

Jesus will call some people dogs and pigs in our text and later He warns against false prophets. So there is judging judiciously, there is judging discerningly and there is judging censoriously or with prejudice.

To judge judiciously is illustrated in Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians.

For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present. (1 Corinthians 5:3, NAS95).

I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Corinthians 5:5, NAS95).

1Co 5:12\* For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within *the church*? 1Co 5:13\* But those who are outside, God judges. REMOVE THE WICKED MAN FROM AMONG YOURSELVES.

In Paul’s apostolic authority this man is being judged for sexual immorality as a member of the Corinthian church. It is a religious court of law and it is enforcing church discipline. And the final judgement is excommunication from the church with the prayerful intent that he will come to true repentance and be able to be restored into the fellowship.

Paul writes to the Galatians,

But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed! (Galatians 1:8, 9, NAS95).

This is a statement that requires us to judge, with discernment, the Gospel that we hear preached and be able to judge and pass judgement on what is a false Gospel.

In our text this morning, Jesus is saying that we are not to be judgmental and censorious as a heart habit in that we are not to be inclined or eager as a heart habit to harshly criticize people.

Now, because we have all of Scripture to help go beyond the foundation Jesus was building in this sermon, we can see what is meant by looking at Romans 14:10-13.

But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD." So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this--not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.

What kind of judging is going on here. Obviously it is not judicial or discerning, they are both allowed as we have already seen. How are brothers judging one another in this context?

Paul is warning against criticizing weak brethren who are struggling over dietary issues and what days should be given importance as far as religious observances are concerned.

These are not particular doctrinal issues that could lead to heresy, these are not issues that contradict clear statements of Scripture like how a woman should dress modestly or how the elders have certain responsibilities or that we are to flee fornication.

Paul's point is that when people are new converts a lot of baggage for misunderstanding the Scriptures is brought along with them. They are to be disciplined and not judged in matters of conscience as they are learning. The same goes for anyone who has been a believer for any period of time. None of us has a right to impose legalistic structures upon another believer. *If there is evidence of sin and unbiblical behavior that is another matter. It must be judged and dealt with.*

If you want to read the newspaper on Sunday afternoon that is nobody's business, it does not make you less of a Christian. We need to be informed about the world around us and we need learn how to apply a Christian mindset in interpreting what goes on around us. If you want to be a vegetarian, be one, just don't say it is a biblical mandate and don't say that if I eat snake meat there is something wrong with me. If anything

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you do does not violate Scripture you have the freedom to do it. However, there may be times when you have not read your bible all week and it would be a better *choice* to read it instead of the newspaper.

If you want to be a strict Sabbatarian, when New Testament scripture does not enforce any kind of a Christian Sabbath, do it, but do not judge me for not doing so. Disagree with me, but don't judge me.

But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

To engage in this kind of judging means that you are taking the place of God.

"For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.

How absolute of a statement is this? Let us see.

We move here in the text, from a principle for Christian living, to a theological justification for not having a heart habit of being critical.

Have you ever heard the expression, "who made you, God?"

The idea here is if you want to act like God, then you are not ignorant of anything that God knows and you will be judged by God accordingly. Now this definitely reflects back to the beatitudes., "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."

If we want to pose as judges, as God is a judge, then we cannot plead ignorance to the law, and so we will be judged, by God for any ignorance.

When we are quick to criticize and to tear down, it is a sign that we ourselves have not adequately appreciated how the Lord has spared us from the judgment which we deserve.

In the end, God is going to judge us as we have judged others. It is clear that we are not to be guilty of and should fear developing a heart attitude that is quick to judge others.

John Wesley tells of a man whom year after year he thought of contemptuously as being covetous. One day when this person contributed only a small gift to a worthy charity, Wesley openly criticized him. After the incident, the man went to Wesley privately. Wesley tells us in his diary that the man quietly said: "I know a man who at each week's beginning goes to market and buys a penny's worth of parsnips and takes them home to boil in water, and all that week he has parsnips for his food and water for his drink; and food and drink alike cost him a penny a week." He explained that before his conversion,

he had run up many bills. Now, by skimping on everything and buying nothing for himself he was paying off his creditors one by one. "Christ has made me an honest man," he said, "and so with all these debts to pay, I can give only a few offerings above my tithe. I must settle up with my worldly neighbors and show them what the grace of God can do in the heart of a man who was once dishonest." Wesley then apologized to the man and asked his forgiveness.

Now in our text, Jesus gives us an example:

Vs.3-5 "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

Jesus is returning to the idea of hypocrisy which He has taught about all through the sermon. There is nothing wrong with helping a brother get some small bit of foreign matter out of their eye. This requires getting up close it cannot be done from a distance. But, it is hypocrisy to do so if there is a plank or a beam in your own eye.

Here the word brother in its primary application is meaning the community of disciples as in 5:22:

"But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell.

It does not exclude our attitudes toward others because we are to be salt and light to the world. But if we cannot treat our brothers in Christ as we should how will we act toward the world?

The Old Testament gives us another illustration of this hypocrisy.

2 Sa.12:1-12: Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said, "There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. "The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. "But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb Which he bought and nourished; And it grew up together with him and his children. It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, And was like a daughter to him. "Now a traveler came to the rich man, And he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, To prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; Rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him." Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. "He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion." Nathan then said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul. 'I also gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these! 'Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You

have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. 'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' "Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.'

David was quick to judge the rich man's speck in the eye while David had a beam in his. Now, if a brother has a speck in their eye, we need to help them remove it, but not until we remove the log from our own:

ICor.11:31\* But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. 32But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.

In the final verse of our text the Lord warns that we must be discerning in judgment.

Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

This verse is a bit difficult in this context and what it does not refer to is the individuals whom we have tried to help by "removing the speck from their eye" who then turn against us and refuse to deal with the problem.

We could become so non-judgemental that we lose all sense of reason when dealing with certain kinds of people in certain circumstances.

The pigs here are pictured as vicious and the dogs are not pets but wild savage dogs. Both are pictures of unclean things and illustrate things that are vicious and abominable. It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT," and, "A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire." (2 Peter 2:22, NAS95) Peter is talking about false prophets using the same imagery..

So we need to determine what is holy and what are the pearls in this story.

What is it that we are to be discerning about?

The whole sermon has been teaching us about the kingdom of God, the truths of the kingdom for Christ's disciples and how we come into the kingdom and how we are to live in the kingdom.

It is a holy, or sacred kingdom. It is a kingdom made from the people whom God has made righteous and set apart for Himself for His glory. The teaching of the kingdom, the gospel, is not to be shared with those who have turned on it and violated it and

trampled it under foot. The dogs and the pigs represent those who having heard - hate the gospel.

This is not teaching them to not evangelize the Gentiles, especially knowing that they are often referred to as dogs. Even the Syrophenician woman asks Jesus if even the dogs are not to be allowed crumbs from the table. This is not teaching us to not evangelize. They and us would be in violation of Matthew 28:18-20 if this were so.

What it says is, once the gospel is declared and there is a violent opposition to it with scorn and contempt we are to walk away.

The disciples are taught this again :

Mt.10:14\* "Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet.15\* "Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for *the* land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.  
Mt. 15:12\* Then the disciples \*came and \*said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement?"13\* But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted.14\* "Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

This was also evidenced by the post Pentecost church:

The next Sabbath nearly the whole city assembled to hear the word of the Lord. But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming. Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. "For so the Lord has commanded us, 'I HAVE PLACED YOU AS A LIGHT FOR THE GENTILES, THAT YOU MAY BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH.'" When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region. But the Jews incited the devout women of prominence and the leading men of the city, and instigated a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. But they shook off the dust of their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium. (Acts 13:44-51, NAS95).

Brethren, we are very confused at times about the idea of a loving God and how He is in heaven all emotionally disturbed because people are rejecting the gospel. We are very wrong in our theology when we believe that a person has to hear the gospel over and over and over again so that they will be able to understand it. God may allow some to hear again and again and use it to illustrate the hardness of their hearts and use it in judgement against them. Remember Pharaoh? Also listen to Jesus.

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Mt 11:21\* "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

Do you really believe that God is calling America to repentance as a nation to turn America back to God? God is calling His elect to salvation worldwide. There is no nation made up of God's people other than His church, the kingdom of His holy ones, all through the world. Listen to Peter sound like Jesus:

1Pe 2:9\* But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

We must see what the Scriptures teach. We are to go into all of the world and preach the gospel and make disciples and baptize them and continue to instruct them.

We are not to waste the gospel on those who hate it and say they do and demonstrate it by their actions once they have heard it. We are to move on, unless of course we are called to martyrdom at that moment.

Sinclair Ferguson has said, "One of the lessons that we need to learn is to live with the cost of our message being rejected." While that is heart breaking, we are taught in scripture that it will happen. C.H. Spurgeon said a hundred years ago, "Our job is to feed sheep, not to amuse goats." It is not our purpose to make the gospel more acceptable for men by changing it in anyway as many are doing today to make it sound more pleasing or less confrontational.

In this text we have learned:

1. We are not to have a heart attitude that is harshly critical. We will be judged by God accordingly.
2. We are not to back off from judging what needs to be judged but we are to do it with a right heart
3. We are to have a discerning judgement when it comes to proclaiming the great and glorious Gospel of Christ. We are not to let it be trampled and we are not to trivialize it in any way.

May God grant us grace to strive for these as the attitudes of our hearts