

Matthew 7:1-12 Righteousness

Righteousness

1“JUDGE not, that you be not judged.

- Jesus was teaching His disciples not to be judgmental or condemning towards one another.
- But He did not mean that they or we were not to look at brethren critically or accept whatever behavior comes from them. He simply did not want them to judge by appearance but with righteous judgment as seen. **John 7:24.**
- Neither did He mean, obviously, that parents, church leaders, and civil authorities are wrong if they pass judgment on those under their care. He meant that His disciples should not do God's job of passing judgment—for Him—when He has not authorized them to do so.
- Disciples who take God's place in judgment will have to answer to Him.
- **2 “For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.**
- Whatever standards we use to judge others will be used against us by God if we are too critical and too condemning of others. (**Read James 4:11**)
- **3“And why do you look at the speck (tiny spot of dirt or wood) in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank (long, broad, thick piece of timber) in your own eye? 4“Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? 5“Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.**
- Jesus is again exaggerating or overstating the make believe scenario here to stress the foolishness of criticizing someone else. This act only exposes a condemning spirit in the critic.
- Such a person is a hypocrite who is consumed by His actions. He deceives himself more than he tries to deceive others.
- A proper attitude is important in judging ones 'self and others.
- **(1 Corinthians 11:31; Galatians 6:1).**
- We as Christ's disciples should be critical of self but not of others.

- We should be noticed for our unity and love for one another as brethren rather than our criticism for one another.
- **6 “Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine**
- **6 “Do not give what is holy to the dogs;**
- Most of the dogs back then were not domestic but despised wild animals.
- The pigs were also despised, vicious wild animals back then.
- What is holy and the pearls represent the good news of the coming kingdom.
- Jesus was comparing the pigs and the dogs to some gentiles and people of different races and tribes that receive the word but rejected it and even turn against those who bring it.
- **, Lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.**
- This was more of poetic writing used back in the day by the Jews.
- A good example of this was Herod Antipas.
- Jesus' disciples had a responsibility to pass their knowledge of the kingdom on to others so they, too, could prepare for it. Jesus gave them directions about this responsibility in this verse.
- Jesus wanted His disciples to be discerning but not clueless with a lack of understanding of godly things and principles.

Mark 6:16: But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.: For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.: For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.: Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

- Jesus wasn't commanding His disciples not to preach to such people at all, He was merely saying that His disciples were not obligated to preach to such people who are hard hearted.

- **7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8“For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.**
- Because of such opposition, Jesus’s disciples need to pray for God’s help.
- He will always respond positively to their words though others may reject them.
- But all those prayers are meant for God’s glory but not for man’s selfish desires. **(James 4:2-3).**
- All that the disciple needs to serve Jesus Christ successfully is available for the asking.
- Like a human father teaching his child courtesy, persistence and diligence, God our father wants us to pray or ask earnestly and sincerely, seek and actively pursue God’s way, and knock diligently. This is what Jesus was trying to teach His disciples.
- **9“Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?**
- **10“Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!**
- Jesus here continues to emphasize His point about the Father’s response to His children’s prayers.
- A responsible parent, though self-centered and sinful (evil) will not listen to their child ask for something good and nutritious and then give them something bad instead.
- How about a pure, holy, loving Father in heaven. Will He not give more than we ask for? Will He not give better than we ask for?
- God will grant us these good things if they are in accordance with His will and purpose and connected to His kingdom. Such as the ability to follow God through opposition. **Acts 4:29: And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word...**
- God has ordained that we ask for the good gifts we need, because

this is the way He trains us, not because He is unaware or unconcerned about our needs.

- We cannot think of Him as a reluctant stranger who has to be bullied into doing what we ask of Him.
- Or an indulgent grandfather who is always there to give us whatever we ask for.
- Or a tyrant, full of trickery, who always wants us to sweat and beg and toil. He is the heavenly Father, the one who graciously and willingly bestows good gifts on those who ask of Him.
- **12“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. (Luke 6:31)**
- This verse is referred to as the golden rule. It sums up the teaching from the Old Testament in Exodus 23:4; Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 15:7-8; Proverbs 24:17; 25:21; Luke 6:31). The title "golden rule" traditionally comes from "the Roman Emperor Alexander Severus (A.D. 222-35), who, though not a Christian, was so impressed by the comprehensiveness of this statement from Jesus . . . that he had it inscribed in gold on the wall of his chamber.
- This behavior is the will of God, and that is why Jesus' disciples should do it. It is common sense.
- But is a principle, which even a non-believer can discipline his life and follow to the dot. But the only person who can truly fulfill this golden rule is one who has the love of Christ in His heart. There is a difference between I must do no harm and I must do my best to help people.
- **The Law and the Prophets.** Jesus was basically taking us back to the body of His sermon in 5:17. From 5:17 to 7:12 Jesus was giving a deeper and accurate explanation of the Old Testament teachings.

Conclusion.

Righteousness is not something ambiguous or mysterious. Living righteously is simply reading, embracing and observing the teachings of Christ, doing them to the best of our ability. This is the will of God for our lives.