

Matthew 7:1-6 (NKJV)

- 1 "Judge not, that you be not judged.**
- 2 For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.**
- 3 And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank 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.**
- 6 Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.**

We have been looking at this passage for a while now. Vs 6 will be our focus this morning. But I wanted to review some things. We have been looking at this as a command by Christ to view each other through the lens of the gospel. And that is so much different than our default setting. **Why is that so?** Well, it is because our **fleshly** mindset is our **default** mindset. You and I have a problem. And the problem is we always want to be **first in line**. We always want to be **significant** and **noticed** for what we do well. We always want to choose the photograph that presents **us** most favorably, no matter how others might look.

Do you know what I mean?

We want our **contributions recognized**. We want our **criticisms** to be **minimized**. We want others to see us in a **favorable light**. I could go on. But if we are not diligent about spiritual things, flesh will be our driving force. I really like how our brother Jones puts this.

What is this danger against which our Lord is warning us? We can say first of all that it is a kind of spirit, a spirit which manifests itself in certain ways. What is this spirit that condemns? It is a self-righteous spirit. Self is always at the back of it, and it is always a manifestation of self-righteousness, a feeling of superiority, and a feeling that we are all right while others are not. That then leads to censoriousness, and a spirit that is always ready to express itself in a derogatory manner. And then, accompanying that, there is the tendency to despise others, to regard

them with contempt. I am not only describing the Pharisees, I am describing all who have the spirit of the Pharisee.¹

Is this not the struggle? Is this not what we wrestle with in every relationship? Do we not always carry with us an unwarranted sense of entitlement. I thought it was extremely insightful when Tiger woods confessed his sin publicly that “**entitlement**” was the word he used.

He said this:

I knew my actions were wrong. But I convinced myself that normal rules didn't apply. I never thought about who I was hurting. Instead, I thought only about myself. I ran straight through the boundaries that a married couple should live by. I thought I could get away with whatever I wanted to. I felt that I had worked hard my entire life and deserved to enjoy all the temptations around me. I felt I was entitled. Thanks to money and fame, I didn't have far -- didn't have to go far to find them.

I was wrong. I was foolish. I don't get to play by different rules. The same boundaries that apply to everyone apply to me. I brought this shame on myself. I hurt my wife, my kids, my mother, my wife's family, my friends, my foundation, and kids all around the world who admired me.

I've had a lot of time to think about what I have done. My failures have made me look at myself in a way I never wanted to before.

Mr. Woods hits the source of **wrong judging** right on the head. Seeing life and making decisions through the eyes of flesh instead of the eyes of the gospel.

I don't know where Mr Woods stands spiritually. But his confession essentially confesses the **heart** of flesh, the **thinking** of flesh, very accurately.

Wrong judging is wrong, partly because it uses 2 standards. It has a standard for **my** behavior. And it has a standard for **other's** behavior. And it always grants **me** the benefit of the doubt. It is hypocritical. The rules apply to others, but those **same** rules don't apply to me because... and here we can fill in the blank. It does not apply because I am **accomplishing so much**, or because I **work so hard**, or because I am **so misunderstood**, or because I am **so weak**, or because I am surrounded by **so much temptation**. Flesh gravitates to these false claims like our cats gravitate to their food bowl.

Wrong judging does not just judge because **life requires it**. Wrong judging has a selfish desire behind it that **craves to find fault**. It finds pleasure in finding fault. Because it makes us feel so much better about ourselves. The

¹ D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, [*Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*](#), Second edition. (England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1976), 482–483.

judging spirit is **happiest** when it is **finding fault** in others. And when those faults are found, then all manner of bad behavior in ourselves can be excused. We can excuse our bad treatment toward those whose faults we have focused on. We can build a world around those statues we have erected of **other's failures**. And it is all of flesh. It is all in service of **King I**.

And ultimately wrong judging has the end goal of pronouncing final judgment on a person. It takes a privilege that God reserves for Himself and seeks to assign it to us.

Look at James and John here.

Luke 9:54-56 (NKJV)

⁵⁴ **And when His disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?"**

⁵⁵ **But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of.**

⁵⁶ **For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save *them*." And they went to another village.**

This was a perfect example of the kind of judging Christ is forbidding. James and John saw the sin in others, the same kind of sin they also had, but in this case someone else was doing it. And their idea was, **let's destroy them for their sin**. You can't get much more hypocritical than that.

But Jesus says- you guys have no idea what you are made of. You have no idea how much flesh is driving everything about you. You do not have any idea of what your **motives indicate** about you **spiritually**. You do not know what **manner of spirit** you are.

How sweet it is when a body of believers becomes more and more aware of the **manner of spirit** we are. That really is the advancement of truth in the inmost places. How sweet it is when we can **see ourselves** accurately and **confess our sins** accurately. How sweet it is when we understand and accept the gospel so thoroughly that we feel no compulsion to make ourselves look better than we are. How sweet when in marriage relationships or child/parent relationships or friendship relationships we can tell the truth about our **motives** and our **defenses** and our **reactions**. When we can look at an interaction clearly and admit **our** wrong in it. When we can quickly say **forgive me** because I did this specific thing for **this wrong motive**. This may be the **most important** quality, and maybe the **rarest** quality, for good relationships on every level. **Honesty**. Honesty that sacrifices advantage. Honesty where **truth** is more important than what one will **gain or lose**. Honesty that **accepts** blame rather than **deflects** it. Honesty that in an

argument only cares about truth being said. What a rarity. No wonder so many relationships never reach the level they could be. Ultimately we are talking about proper judging.

We need to keep in mind that flesh always wants to avoid **taking** blame. It will blame **deny**, it will blame **shift**, it will play games to distract the process. But true confession is the process of accurately assigning the blame to ourselves that is true. If you want to **lead spiritually**, start with telling the truth about your failures. Start with doing the hard work of finding out **why** you did what you did and then **tell the truth** about it, even if you know you have the skills to get yourself out of **having to** confess it. No red herrings, no histrionics, no games, no strategies, no self pity, just truth. I failed. I sinned. Please forgive me. That is leadership that people are refreshed by.

Ok, lets move on to the text for today.

6 Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

Now how does this fit in with what Jesus has just said?

Well, what is the most likely **wrong interpretation** of what Jesus said earlier? He said **Do Not Judge**.

Well if we listen to people who are **ignorant about scripture** quote **Jesus**, we quickly get the gist.

They would have us believe that Jesus never wants us to determine behavior that humans do is **right** or **wrong**. We have already covered that this cannot possibly be what Christ meant.

But now I think Christ concludes by emphasizing that failing to make moral discernments cannot possibly be what He means.

Let's first look for what clues scripture gives us for what Christ is talking about. What is **holy**? And **who are the dogs**? What are **pearls**? And who are the **swine**?

Now remember that the judging that we should do is based upon the gospel. It should be the extension of grace. We are seeing people through the lens of the gospel. And we are judging. But we are judging through a standard that we ourselves want to be judged by.

What we see in our text is that people are not all the same. There are levels of **dogishness** and **swineishness**. We need to evaluate, we need to judge the person we are speaking to.

First I think it is clear that we should never regard a non believer in the same way we regard a believer. We must discern that difference. It is EXTREMELY clear that Jesus did not address all of **his audience** or all of **His inquirers** the same. Just think quickly through a few examples and this is extremely clear.

He addressed the woman at the well **one way**. He addressed **Nathaniel** another. And **Thomas** another. And **Peter** another. His approach with **Nicodemus** was different than with the **rich young ruler**. Why? Is the **gospel** different for each person? We know better than that. But the need of people is different. The obstacles are different. Where they are in their lives is different. Someone who has just committed a sin that even **they** have difficulty admitting is in a different position than a person who thinks they are a morally upstanding citizen and are really not guilty of **much sin at all**. We need to listen to people. We need to gather information from what they are telling to us. Not so we can change the gospel. That is always the same. But so that we can determine **what we should emphasize...** how we can best meet the need... how we can make the Gospel **most clear**.

While we do this, we will determine that there are some people who are not believers and all their questions are directed for evil purposes. They are not trying to believe. They are trying to strengthen their unbelief. We deal with that person different than the person like the woman at the well who had honest questions mixed with questions that might be diversions.

Let's look at Luke 23.

First Jesus talks to Pilate.

Luke 23:3-4 (NKJV)

³ Then Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered him and said, "It is as you say."

⁴ So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no fault in this Man."

Then Jesus talks to Herod.

Luke 23:9-11 (NKJV)

⁹ Then he (Herod) questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing.

¹⁰ And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him.

¹¹ Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate.

See the difference? Jesus was reading His audience. He said different things to different people. And He refused to cast his pearls of truth about himself to just anyone who demanded that He speak.

Jesus did what He tells us to do. Discern who you are speaking to so you know what to say.

Now let's look at how the Apostles applied this.

Acts 13:44-48 (NKJV)

⁴⁴ On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God.

⁴⁵ But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul.

⁴⁶ Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.

⁴⁷ For so the Lord has commanded us: *'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.'* "

⁴⁸ Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

Paul determined that the Jews here were acting like dogs and swine. Notice that Paul says they **JUDGED THEMSELVES** unworthy. The Jews in the audience displayed the characteristics that let Paul know he would be **foolish** and **ineffective** in his continual proclamation of the gospel to them. So he quit trying and moved on to the audience who were **not** dogs and swine. Now notice that the people living the more moral lives externally were the same people determined as being the dogs and swine, the ones disqualifying themselves to hear the gospel.

The Jews were probably not guilty of half of the notorious sins, the top ten sins, that the gentiles were. But the gentiles were **thrilled** to hear the gospel. And the jews were **hateful** to hear the gospel. So pigs and dogs isn't about a person's history. It is about their attitude toward the gospel, their attitude toward the grace of God and the salvation offered to them by grace.

We see the same thing again here.

Acts 18:4-7 (NKJV)

⁴ And Paul reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.

⁵ When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus is* the Christ.

⁶ But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook *his* garments and said to them, "Your blood *be* upon your *own* heads; *I am* clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

⁷ And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain *man* named Justus, *one* who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue.

Here we see it again. What makes these people dogs and swine is their response to the gospel. They opposed Paul and blasphemed Jesus. They had no heart for the gospel.

Paul is not about to cast his **pearls** in their direction any longer. Paul will no longer **give what is holy** to people who have proven themselves to be dogs. We might think that it is virtuous to keep putting out the gospel to those who are in contempt of it. But Jesus says that is not **His way**. Oh yes, we keep looking for opportunity. But as long as they continue to openly disdain the gospel, we do better to look for other audiences while we pray for those people's souls.

Isn't this interesting? Jesus tells us **not to judge**. And then He tells us we **must** judge. We cannot **obey Him** without judging. We must determine who are the swine and dogs in relation to the gospel, and who are the straying sheep that we are called to return to the fold. Jesus put what He means in perspective by adding our text. It may seem out of place. But this is not a **change of topic** as much as it is a **clarification**.

Now as we are processing this we need to factor in **sovereign election**. These dogs and these pigs are not beyond the reach of God's miracle. If we are judging everything through the lens of the gospel, we must factor in that it **ALWAYS** requires a miracle to save a person. It took a miracle in **ours**. It will take a miracle in **others**. No one is **beyond** that miracle. While Paul at one point would have been a dog or a pig as defined in Jesus's statement, a horse riding accident turned him around. God knocked him off his horse and blinded him and spoke to him. So while we must know when **not to speak**. We also need to know when **to** speak.

The wisely lived Christian life requires a lot of discernment, a lot of proper judging. It is not simple.

I think it is clear that what is holy in our text is the **truth from scripture**. The **pearls** are those things of great value from scripture. The entrance to the Kingdom of God is described as a **pearl** worth selling everything for in Jesus parable. So what we are talking about are the truths of God.

The dogs and the swine are clearly those who are standing **against** the gospel. Truthfully, I have not encountered a lot of people in my life who were so blatantly opposed to the gospel. Most I have encountered simply dismiss it. It is nice for me but they are not interested. Your experience might be different. But suppose I were to start telling them **how they should** live based on what scripture says? I think I would get a **different response**. We see this very clearly in our society of enforced tolerance. Many may hear the gospel and say that is nice for you. But if I were to say, "God condemns the practice of

homosexuality, no matter what desires people might feel.” Now suddenly I might see the desire to tear me to pieces. Jesus appears to be telling us here to approach this carefully. A **person’s soul** is surely worth **being fired** for at a job. But when should a person cross that line? My team at my work need to make these kinds of decisions. I am pretty sure I could get fired at any time if someone were to listen to my sermons. At the same time I need to use discernment as to **what truth do I tell in what venues**. Jesus seems to **encourage** that discernment.

6 Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

At the end of the day, we as believers must be willing to stand for the Word of God at any time. And the loss of our life in that endeavor is somewhat usual over the course of history. But at the same time we do not need to **give in** to the manipulation of society. When we think the truth could accomplish something good for someone appearing to be concerned with their soul, we lay it all out there. We take the chance. It is worth our job, or our life, for the gospel. That is all good. But if someone is trying to tempt us into a situation where they can exploit us because we have been transparent with what we believe, we may want to apply Christ’s words here.

The one thing that is clear is that we must **think deeply**. A superficial understanding of ministry and the Christian life is likely to get us into trouble we do not need to accept. There is plenty of persecution that we must gladly accept. But not all persecution falls into that category.

I think along with all that I have said, we must also apply this passage in this way. We should not treat **believers** like **non believers**. We do not need to enter the process of confrontation of sin with non believers. We do not need to do church discipline with non believers. We really must discern who we are dealing with.

One of the great dangers of our day is that there is no clear distinction of what a Christian is in churches. Many churches invite all as members with no consideration of what the person clearly believes and is committed to. Then when the person chooses to live in sin, confrontation becomes a “tear you into pieces” process with lawyers doing the tearing. Our leadership is wise to make it clear what being part of our church really means. And we do well to know our people. We do well to know that our members truly understand what the gospel is and that they are willing to pay any price that their Lord calls upon them to pay.

I would like to close with what is a combination of **paraphrase** and **application** of our text. I read our text like this:

“Do not evaluate anyone else’s life wrongly or with any standard that makes **you superior** and **them inferior**, you **more important** and them **less important**. Only use the **standard of the gospel** for which to regard **another person’s** life. They have equal value at the foot of the cross.

If you set up a **false standard** to evaluate someone by, you will be disciplined for it. God will respond to you by withholding the **same kind of grace** you refuse to extend and to the **same degree** that you refuse to extend it. And you will not fare favorably.

Why would you ever look at a **brother’s failure** and regard it differently than **your own** failure. Why would you ever see yourself as **morally** superior to or **more important** than your brother? You have to be hypocritical to believe that. You know better. You know that you are a failure needing help, just like your brother does.

So first change **how you are looking** at yourself and others. That is by far a **greater flaw** than your brother’s **sin**. Then you will be ready for ministry. But keep in mind that even when you get it right, not everyone is open to this ministry you have to offer. Some will violently reject it. And you do not need to unnecessarily put yourself in that environment. Making judgement there is needed too.”

I hope that we have taken our text seriously, and if we need to business with our judging, that we are doing it. I trust that the Lord has shown us just how central the cross is in all of our thinking about each other.