

## Counter Culture

### "On Making (and Blowing) Judgment Calls" Matthew 7:1-6

The fact is, we humans don't make very good judges. Our judgment is just easily clouded by too many things that often make our calls wrong or unfair. And yet, we are called to be a judge often in our lives.

- 1) As parents for our children
- 2) As a boss at work
- 3) As we choose our friends
- 4) As we vote for politicians
- 5) As we examine the lives of others around us

As fallen people, sinful and often selfish, God knew we did not make perfect judges, and so Jesus warned us about being too quick to play the judge.

Matthew 7:1-6 - "Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged. And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own? How can you think of saying to your friend, 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye. Don't waste what is holy on people who are unholy. Don't throw your pearls to pigs! They will trample the pearls, then turn and attack you."

#### I. Do not judge (vs. 1-3)

Are we, because we are fallen humans, just to overlook, ignore and forget about the wrongs of others, considering it none of our business?

A close look at just this passage alone tells us this is not the case. God did not intend for us to abandon our critical faculties and to ignore and overlook the sins of others, for this would make obeying much of the Sermon on The Mount impossible. How could we discern who are the dogs and pigs of verse 6 without making a judgment call? How could we watch out for false prophets as Jesus commanded in verse 15 without making a judgment call? No, Jesus is not calling us to abandon the idea of making judgments altogether.

So what is Jesus forbidding here? Judgmentalism - being a self righteous judge.

1. Imposing standards on others you do not follow yourself (Romans 2:1-3)
2. To judge in a harsh and unforgiving way - without a tone of humility or gentleness (Galatians 6:1)
3. Imposing standards on others that God does not impose on them (Romans 14:16)
4. Prejudging others based on a sin in the past (Unforgiving, and keeping a record Matthew 6:12)
5. Judging based on what we think is in their heart (1 Corinthians 4:4-5)

#### II. Examine yourself before examining or judging another. (vs. 3-5)

Jesus is not saying we should not help others to overcome their sin. He did not say, "don't remove the speck in your brother's eye." What He said was, "Don't remove it until you have removed what is in your own - especially that big fat log you keep ignoring!"

Galatians 6:1 - "Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself."

James 2:13 - "For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment."

#### III. Don't waste your time on the unresponsive. (vs. 6)

At first glance, this verse seems to contradict the previous two. It seems so out of character for Jesus - who came to heal the sick - who spent time with sinners. To say that some were dogs and pigs who we should not waste our time with - wow - isn't that a rather harsh judgment for us to make?

Jesus was often outspoken about those who would not listen to His teaching.

Luke 13:32; Matthew 23:37 - "whitewashed tombs, brood of vipers"

Not everyone is grateful for even gentle and humble correction or criticism.

Proverbs 9:8 - "So don't bother correcting mockers; they will only hate you. But correct the wise, and they will love you."

The dogs he had in mind are not the loved pets many have in their homes but the wild scavenger dogs who scoured the city dumps in Jerusalem. The pig was the most unclean animal to a Jew.

2 Peter 2:22 - "A dog returns to its vomit. A washed pig returns to the mud."

Jesus' words refer to at least two groups of people. **First** to those who have known the truth but have turned away from it. **Secondly**, to those who have been presented the truth but who continually refuse to accept it. **The "holy thing" and the "pearls" are the extension of the good news** - the offering of coming to Christ for salvation. We are to recognize (judge) when someone has become infertile ground for God's truth and move on to more fertile ground.

Matthew 10:14 - "If any household or town refuses to welcome you or listen to your message, shake its dust from your feet as you leave."

Conclusion: Thank God we are not the ultimate judge. Thank God that he is. Because of his grace and mercy in Jesus, we can be found blameless before him on judgment day.