

Matthew 7:1-5: Don't Judge Hypocritically

Introduction:

- Easily the most quoted verse of all the Bible by unbelievers.
- The gospel according to the unbelieving world is don't judge me.
- Don't tell me I'm wrong / in sin / going to hell / there are standards / judgement / I have to change.
- Let me be me.
- "Jesus said don't judge, you call yourself a Christian, why are you judging me?!"
- Fun tidbit: Ask people where in the Bible Jesus said this. They usually don't know.
- What is this passage about?
- There's a lot going on here but I think once we work our way thru it will be very easy to see what Jesus is getting at.
- Be clear: Jesus **not** saying don't ever judge; saying don't be a hypocrite when you judge.
- Pure judgment is crucial to the Kingdom.
- Hypocritical judgment is cancer in the Kingdom.

1) Certainty of Judgment. Read 1

- Before getting to meat of the teaching → Jesus assumes there is a future judgment!
- "that you not be judged" - judged by who? God!
- The warning Jesus gives is based on the reality that one day we will stand before God in judgement.
- Judge not, lest you be judged - by who? By God!
- Jesus's followers are to always live in light of future coming judgement.
- **Rom. 14:10b**: 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 confess to God." So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.
- **Heb 4:13**: And no creature is hidden from [God's] sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him whom we must give an account.
- Imagine standing before the all-knowing God completely naked and exposed giving an account for every single word, thought and deed.
- **Heb. 9:27**: And just as it is appointed for a man to die once and then comes what? Judgment.
- That's all men, all women - every single person.
- Disciples of Jesus are covered in the righteousness of Christ, so we don't need to fear **hell** in any sense.
- But even believers are warned that we will stand before the holy Judge of all the earth.
- That's why John says: Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. (**2 John 8**).
- In Christ you'll be in heaven, but don't lose any reward by wasting your life or going after false teaching.
- James: Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. (**James 3:1**)
- Teachers: our judgment will be more severe - whatever else that is, that is a threat.
- So we will all be judged; if we are in Christ ultimately we will be found righteous even if the judgment is tough.
- Q: How do I lessen the judgment? If it's **more** severe for some, how can I make it **less** severe for me?
- Jesus says: I'll tell you how.
- That's what this whole section is about.
- Ill: When I was in high school I got a ticket for going 15 over. Stater pulled me over, guilty as charged, \$272 fine. I was guilty, I was judged - but I actually had the cash to cover it. The fine wasn't going to crush me. On the back of the ticket it said I could appeal to a judge to get the fine lessened. I'd still have a judgment to go through but it wouldn't be as severe.
- That's the idea here: how we judge is how we'll be judged.
- Remember we pray: forgive us like we forgive others.
- We remember from **5:7**: We are blessed with mercy when we show others mercy - that happens at the judgment.
- Here: our judgement by God is based on how we judge others.
- There's actually a lot of 'treat others the way you want God to treat you' ethic in the Kingdom.

- But the big picture is that there is a judgment!
- No way to skip judgment; he's saying there's a way to make it easier.
- BTW: if standing before almighty, holy God in judgment makes you a little nervous - that's a good thing.
- There is a healthy fear of the God that we should all have.
- The fear of the Lord is the beginning of what? Knowledge. (**Prov. 1:7**)
- God's not your buddy who just lets by-gones be by-gones.
- Your redemption was paid with the precious blood of Jesus - that wasn't cheap.
- The salvation we have in Christ is a really, big, hairy deal and the life we live in the Spirit to please God is a really, big, hairy deal.
- When people throw this verse out "Judge not" and "Only God can judge me" - that should be a frightening thing b/c God will judge every thought, every action, every sin, every act of hypocrisy.
- God requires an account from all people even his servants - judgement is certain - our only hope is surrender to Jesus.

2) Don't be a hypocritical judge. Read 1-2

- First glance: could feel like "don't ever judge" - know that's not true because later Jesus says to take the speck out of our brother's eye.
- Take the sin out.
- We'll see that in a minute, but the illustration means we have to judge.
- Opening line serves as a warning: every time we judge just know we'll be giving an account for it on the final day.
- "I can't believe that mom doesn't discipline her kid at the grocery store" → "let's talk about your parenting skills...again"
- "I can't believe she's wearing those jeans" → "let's talk about your wardrobe..."
- "I can't believe that fool just cut me off!" → "Let's talk about your driving habits...again"
- This is the warning: every time you judge you are willfully entering into a mirror judgement where God can call up every instance of every failure, past, present and future you have committed in this exact same area.
- He's not saying don't judge ever, his point is simply know that that is coming.
- This mirror judgment is not fine print, either: it's up front in big bold letters: do not judge, because it's coming back at you!
- I wrestle around with my boys at home but the very first thing I tell them - almost every time - is "Don't start wrestling unless you're okay getting hurt."
- It feels really good to be clobbering people when you're dishing it out, but it doesn't feel so good when you get put in the submission hold; or you're flying through the air knowing you're about to meet a wood floor.
- And just like I give my kids the upfront warning: pain is coming; so, too, Jesus says judgement is coming.
- And if you're like, "Yep I think I'm good" - game on.
- But don't enter in unless you're willing to take some lumps.
- But when I look back on this sermon there's almost no place I haven't failed spectacularly.
- I've been proud, lazy, I've stirred up strife rather than be a peacemaker, been angry, lusted, failed to keep my word, retaliated, been stingy, greedy, unloving, filled with anxiety and worry.
- We all have.
- That reality should temper the manner in which we judge people.
- And that doesn't mean that if you've lied/lusted/greedy in the past you can't call someone out on lying now.
- But it does mean 2 things. First, if you've done those things in the past, you should probably be gracious to those who are caught up in them now.
- The second thing Jesus is getting at is the real issue: Not that we don't ever judge, but that we shouldn't judge hypocritically.
- Are **we** sinning in this exact way right now??
- This has been Jesus' main issue: hypocrisy. Are we living a wholehearted life devoted to God inside and out?
- "Don't commit adultery" → watch movies we shouldn't? / "Don't covet" → constantly concerned about stock market, IRA, getting the cool TV or smart phone someone else has? / "Drugs are bad" → hooked on opioids? /

- “Walk in humility” → refuse help and care from others b/c you can do it? / “Don’t murder” → do you have a low grade contempt or hatred for others?
- Remember: For Jesus hypocrisy is usually in the heart, not just the act.
 - Issue is not whether or not we judge someone, but what’s going on with us when we do. **Read 2**
 - 2 ways to say the same thing.
 - Jesus uses measurement illustration b/c in ancient everything was in bulk.
 - Illus. Winco: bulk section - you pay for the weight. What if the scale upfront was off? It registered 2lbs. heavier all the time? We’d pay more - that’s unfair.
 - What if you bag up 3lbs of candy and eat 1lb of it while you’re shopping - that’s unfair.
 - **Turn to Deut. 25:13-16** → has to do with buying in the marketplace, but Jesus’ amplifies the idea. **Read**
 - Have a scale: use one rock so they pay more to you; but use another rock when you buy so you pay less.
 - It’s stealing, cheating, lying.
 - **Prov. 20:23**: Unequal weights are an abomination to the Lord, and false scales are not good.
 - Jesus says we do that when we judge people hypocritically.
 - Often times we proverbially weigh out peoples’ lives 20 lbs heavier than our lives and bill them for it.
 - Or we conveniently forget that we have 10 lbs of that sin in our cart.
 - “I can’t believe they are a smoker” as we pound down 2,000 calorie burgers / “Can’t believe they’d pay that for a car” as we put \$300/mo on credit cards eating out / “I can’t believe they’d watch those violent movies” as you blow away zombies by the hundreds in video games.
 - And we’ll clarify in a bit that they may be in sin - but Jesus more concerned about the state of **our** hearts.
 - This is the issue: Jesus is not saying “don’t ever judge” - that’s what the world thinks he’s saying.
 - Jesus is saying don’t judge hypocritically b/c if you do you will be judged severely.

3) Proclivity of Judgment. **Read 3-4**

- Reality: we love to judge other people.
- We can find a speck in someone’s eye like a mile away while at the same time forgetting our own pressure treated 2x4 coming out of our face.
- Ill: Ever see American Idol / America’s Got Talent / others?
- Why do we love them? It’s not b/c we want to hear great music → it’s b/c we are addicted to judging.
- Am. Idol has run for 16 seasons, 8 consecutive years was #1 show in America (Wikipedia).
- What’s the point of the whole show? judgement.
- We are entertained by judgment.
- And we are the most hypocritical judges ever → I used watch Idol & vote - I can’t hold a tune in a bucket.
- At least the judges were in the industry, most people are totally tone deaf → but we love to judge.
- Jesus: our lives are one big Am. Idol show & the people we see all day are the contestants we judge:
- “Can you believe they said that on Facebook?” “Why did they buy that thing?” “That’s not what I would have done.”
- Why do we do that? We love it!
- Maybe it makes us feel better about ourselves.
- Jesus says it’s like walking around with a log in our eye trying to do eye surgery.
- The word “log” or some have “beam” is δοκός - it’s the center beam that supports the roof of a building / also a beam used when a city is under attack to bar the city gates shut - it’s a massive piece of lumber.
- Jesus says we walk around with a 40’ glulam beam coming out of our face all the while we just can’t take our eyes off the tiny piece of dust in our neighbor’s eye - “let me help you with that.”
- BTW this is true of everyone - we all do this.
- But Jesus says that following him is not Kingdom Idol where we get to stand around judging other people all the while we’re doing the same thing.
- Am. Idol is so popular b/c we love to judge.
- Can you imagine what it’d be like if before you could vote on Am. Idol you had to pass vocal screening and be judged yourself?
- That might change how you judge.

- The way we combat rampant judgment is to consider our own lives and our own constant need for God's grace.
- Now, Jesus has said all of that, to get to this:

4) Jesus actually does want us to judge. Read 5

- Now, the world only memorizes **Vs. 1** - but we actually care about all of what Jesus said so we keep reading.
- Jesus wants us to judge, does want us to take out the speck in our brother's eye.
- But wants us to take the glue-lam beam out of our face first.
- Before we go around judging others, we need to repent in our own lives.
- This doesn't mean we never judge. **Turn to Matt. 18:15-17. Read**
- This assumes we will need to evaluate the lives of those who say they follow Jesus. **Turn to 1 Cor. 5:9-13.**
- Diff. b/n judging Christians & outsiders to determine if we should separate from them. **Read**
- We don't judge unbelievers - in the sense of not hang out.
- We do judge believers who claim to follow Jesus & those who persist in sin we go thru the Matt. 18 process to expel them - but even then that they would repent and turn to Christ.
- **Turn to Gal. 6:1-2. Read**
- Same thing: we restore brothers who have sinned. "Spiritual" is just one who doesn't struggle right now in the same way - but have to be careful b/c we could sin too.
- All of these point to the **expectation** that we will evaluate - judge - the lives of other people.
- For unbelievers we hang out with them all the while calling them to repent & believe.
- For believers we call them to repent and live their lives in line with what Jesus taught.
- Jesus never simply says "Don't judge" - you have to keep reading.

- Stay here for a minute, because there's one more point we need to make.

5) We judge with extreme gentleness. Read Gal. 6:1

- In what manner do we restore our brother? With extreme gentleness.
- Gentleness in correction is the constant theme of Bible.
- **Turn to 1 Tim. 5:1. Read**
- Christians are like a family & how we rebuke should mirror that.
- The word rebuke here carries the idea of slapping someone or striking them.
- It's not that we never rebuke, it's that we don't do so harshly.
- We don't "slap them around" when we're rebuking them.
- We treat them like our parents, or our brothers and sisters.
- Illustration: **Turn back to Matt. 7:5. Read**
- This is Jesus' own illustration.
- Can you imagine asking someone to take splinter out of your eye?
- What kind of person would you want to do that? Gentle, careful, precise, patient, good bedside manner.
- I don't mind taking out splinters - not my favorite job - but don't mind.
- Kids are squirming, scared, sometimes blood, pain - but gotta get it out.
- Your goal isn't to get them to stop screaming, your goal is to heal them.
- When we see the speck in our brother's eye, the goal is not to lift ourselves up, our goal is to heal them.
- And a lot of times they are screaming like we would if we had eye surgery.
- Jesus says it is necessary that we do this.
- But it is also necessary that we do it without hypocrisy, and with the gentleness and graciousness of an eye surgeon.
- May we do so to his glory.

Pray