



“HUMBLE DISCERNMENT”

Series: “LIVING FROM THE INSIDE OUT”, Part 16 of 19

Sunday, October 15, 2023, at 9:00 & 11:00 AM

Text: Matthew 7:1-6

Big Idea: When we grow in humble discernment, we can make discriminating evaluations while still seeking the best for everyone involved.

Matthew 7:1-6, “Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye. “Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.”

I. WHAT IS JESUS NOT FORBIDDING?

A. He is not forbidding involvement in the judicial system.

B. He is not forbidding discernment between truth and error, goodness and evil.

Matthew 7:6, “Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.”

C. He is not forbidding constructive criticism.

Matthew 7:3-5, “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”

II. WHAT IS JESUS NOT PROHIBITING?

Jesus is prohibiting the sin of a judgmental spirit.

John Stott says: “A censorious critic is a fault-finder who is negative and destructive towards other people and enjoys actively seeking out their failings. Such a person puts the worst possible construction on the motives of others, pours cold water on their schemes and is ungenerous towards their mistakes.”¹

Martin Lloyd Jones says that the person Jesus describes here: “... delights in criticism for its own sake and enjoys it. I am afraid I must go further and say that he is a man who approaches anything which he is asked to criticize expecting to find faults, indeed, almost hoping to find them.”²

III. WHY DID JESUS WARN AGAINST A JUDGMENTAL SPIRIT?

A. It hurts the people we criticize.

Romans 14:4, “Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.”

Romans 14:10, “You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat.”

Romans 14:13a, “Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another.”

B. When it comes to human relationships, “what goes around comes around.”

Luke 6:31, “Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

C. In some way, God holds us accountable with the same strict standards we use with others.

IV. HOW CAN WE CULTIVATE HUMBLE DISCERNMENT?

Remind yourself regularly that you don’t see the full picture on anything in this life.

¹ John R.W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*. (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press Academic), 1978, page 150.

² D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), 1976, page 432.

1 Corinthians 4:5, "Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God."