

A note from Kathy

I think we would all agree that we do not like the idea of someone judging us. But in the same breath, we can list a multitude of things someone else needs to work on.

*The word “judge” is the Greek word *krinō*; it means to be of an opinion concerning right and wrong, to preside over. This word is used nearly 100 times in the New Testament and nearly every time that it is used in the context of our ruling another person; believers are instructed not to judge. So why are we so prone to this action? Those who desire a life without regrets will do all they can to rid themselves of this terrible habit.*

Observation

1. Do you recall who Jesus was teaching in Matthew 7? If not, you will need to go back to Matthew 5:1-2. The truths taught in Matthew 5-7 are beneficial for all but they are specifically given to those who belong to Him.
2. What is the difference between being discerning and judging? Look the definitions up in a good dictionary.

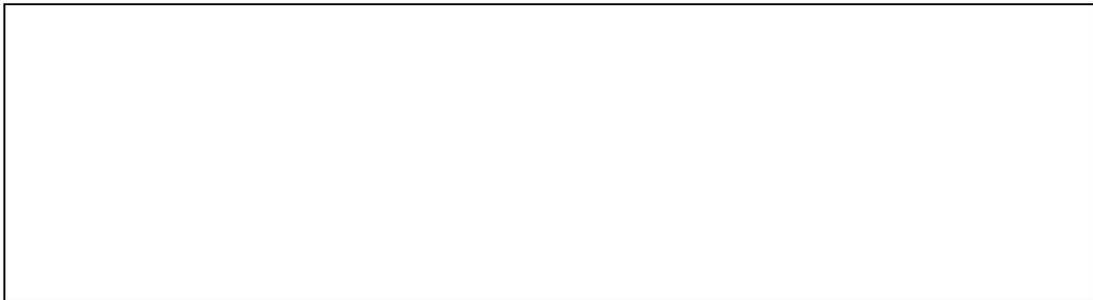


Why is this sketch to the left so ridiculous?
What is she unable to see?
How in the world she could miss seeing it?
How could she be of any help to her friend?

- 3.
4. In verse 5 Jesus refers to someone like this as a hypocrite. Look up the word “hypocrite” and write out the definition; then personalize your definition.
5. Verse 6 may take us a few more minutes to unpack. Jesus mentioned dogs and pigs, but they were nothing like the domesticated pets we have today. The dogs of Jesus’ day were scavengers and mongrels. Pigs were considered one of the filthiest of animals to a Jew of Jesus’ day. Jesus was teaching his disciples, those closest to him, those who followed him with a strong desire to hear from God and be changed by him. What is the

warning that Jesus shared with them? If you share what is precious and sacred with them how will they treat it? Do you believe Jesus wants them to be discerning?

6. Verses 7-11 is one of those sections where a believer is about to get energized. I do not usually go into this much detail on a word, but if we come away with a greater understanding of these verses it could revolutionize our prayers. If you look up the tense, the voice, and the mood of the three verbs in verse 7, you will see that this is a command to the hearer by one in authority. We are commanded to “ask,” and we are assured that it shall be given. This promise is a simple statement of fact. We are next commanded to “seek,” and we are promised that we will find. And last we are commanded to “knock,” and we are promised that it shall be opened to us. That is the wonderful thing about the Greek language; it is very specific. The petitioner asks because of his need, and the assurance that he is welcome. Like a child asking something from his father, there is no reason for fear or hesitation. If this type of study appeals to you and you desire to look into it more, go online to www.blueletterbible.org and search this verse, then click on the small blue tab that says “parse.” Enjoy!!! Write a short prayer to God using these verses.
7. Now let’s look at a very familiar part of scripture. Even people who are not Christians will use this expression when making a statement about choices. They will reference the broad and the narrow roads. We have not done a drawing in awhile, so in the box below illustrate verses 13-14. Stick people are fine. If you have young children, you might ask them to do one of their own. Then bring them to the supper table to open a discussion.



8. Jesus warned his disciples to watch out for false prophets. What might a wolf be doing that would give him away, even though he is disguised? False teachers may sound religious, but what are they really interested in?



One sure way to discern their teaching is to see what they do with Christ. Do they magnify and glorify Him, or minimize and seldom mention his finished work on the cross and his glorious resurrection?

What do they do in private? I know this can be difficult to know but when we do find out we should not be deceived any longer. If you would like to read another passage on false teachers, go to 2 Peter 2:12-22. It is a delicate balance to be discerning and not judging, but it is crucial that we do not blindly follow everyone who claims to be a teacher from God.

9. Jesus also gave an illustration that any of the men or women listening that day would have clearly understood. What is the illustration given in verses 16-20?

10. The truth will all come out one day. It is not for us to worry and fret about. Who will make the determination as to who are true followers and who are false? When will he make this known?

11. The last illustration in this chapter is another very familiar one. Make a list of all you learn from verses 24-27.

The wise builder

The foolish builder

12. The crowds were amazed by Jesus' teaching. In what way was he different from what they had previously experienced with the teachers of the law? (Vs. 29)

Application

1. What is it about verses 1 and 2 that cause such fear in our hearts? Could it possibly be that we realize how often we judge others by one standard, but make exceptions for ourselves. Jot down a couple of personal examples.
 - a.
 - b.
2. List a few reasons why you don't get more impatient with yourself?

When we hear that we will be judged with the same measure we have judged, then all of a sudden we want to be gracious and extend more compassion. Is there someone who pops into your mind when you think of needing to be more compassionate?

3. A living example is truly the best advertisement. When our walk matches our talk, then we will be considered worth hearing out. Are you prepared to share with others the reason for the hope you have? According to 1 Peter 3:15 how are we to do this?
1 Peter 3:15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.
4. In this chapter Jesus referred to some of the people of his day as dogs and pigs. Do you believe there are people who respond to what is precious and priceless like this today? Are there those out there who trample under their feet the precious pearl of the gospel; the good news of salvation? Are there times that we should simply remain quiet and find someone with a heart ready to hear the good news?
5. Was there a part of Matthew 7 that challenged you to take that next step of faith and obedience? Please do not rush past this question.
6. We have spent the last couple of weeks studying Matthew 5-7, which is often referred to as the Sermon on the Mount. While Jesus spoke the crowds listened, but when he finished they had to pause and consider what they had just heard. They were amazed, he taught with such authority. Now it is our turn to stop and consider our response. This teaching demands a decision of all who hear it. Submit and be a light for others or deny the authority of his words and continue ruling our own lives. There is no middle ground.