

Jesus – King of the Jews #15

Stop Criticizing

Matt 7:1-6 plus vs 15-20

Introduction:

1. The perspective of this passage is given in contrast to that of the scribes and Pharisees, whose hypocritical self-righteousness was in direct opposition to the true righteousness of God (see [5:20](#)).
2. The Pharisees had a self-righteous, judgmental spirit and critical attitude
3. When an individual or a group of people develop their own standards of religion and morality, they inevitably judge everyone by those self-made beliefs and standards.
4. They had gradually modified God's revealed Word to suit their own thinking, inclinations, and abilities.
 - a. By Jesus' time their tradition had taken such a hold on Judaism that it had replaced the authority of Scripture in the minds of many Jews
 - b. Along with the many other sins spawned by their self-righteousness, the scribes and Pharisees had become oppressively judgmental.
 - c. They proudly looked down on everyone who was not a part of their elite system.
 - d. They were unmerciful, unforgiving, unkind, censorious, and totally lacking in compassion and grace.
5. The self-righteous judgment is seen in the parable of the Pharisee and the tax-gatherer who went to the Temple to pray. – Lu 18:11-14
 - a. An inseparable corollary of justifying oneself is condemning others.
 - b. When anyone elevates himself, everyone else is lowered accordingly.
6. Here again Jesus shows the difference between true and false religion
7. Jesus places God's perfect and holy standards beside the unholy and self-righteous standards of the scribes and Pharisees
8. *Krinō* (to **judge**) means basically to separate, choose, select, or determine, and has a dozen or more shades of meaning
9. What Jesus here forbids is self-righteous, officious, hasty, unmerciful, prejudiced, and unwarranted condemnation based on human standards and human understanding.
10. Eddie Murphy judging illustration →

I. The Warning – vs 1

1 Judge not, that ye be not judged.

- Here is another prohibition
- Christ did not hesitate to tell us what to do and what not to do
- The “thou shalt not” part of Scripture is for our good
- Obeying the negative commands will result in positive blessings

A. The Misinterpretation of This Verse

1. Few verses are as misinterpreted and misapplied as this one
2. Comment on another ministry or person and you may hear someone say to you, “judge not”
 - a) *Some use this verse against the preacher who dares preach against sin or a group who practices sin*
 - b) *The preacher is accused of judging and that is supposed to be bad*
 - c) *Anyone who accuses someone else of judging is himself judging*

B. This is Not a Blanket Prohibition

1. Jesus Commended Judging
 - a) *Joh 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.*
 - b) *Lu 7:43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.*
 - c) *Jesus called the Pharisees – vipers, hypocrites, blind guides and whited sepulchers.*

At an Atlantic City casino a woman won a bucket of quarters at a slot machine. It was time for a break from the slots so she and her husband decided to go out to dinner. First the woman would take the bucket of quarters up to their room in the hotel. As she was about to step on the elevator she noticed two black men already in the elevator. One of them was very big and intimidating and the other was a little man. She looked at the two men and her first thought was “they are going to rob me.” She said to herself, “Come on, don’t be a bigot, they look like personally nice gentlemen. Even if one of them is awfully black.” She stepped onto the elevator feeling ashamed for her thoughts. Avoiding eye contact, she stood there for what seemed an eternity as the elevator door closed. “I’m trapped in this elevator,” she thought. “I’m about to be robbed.” Then one of the men said, “Hit the floor.” Instinct told her to do what they said. The bucket of quarters emptied everywhere as she threw out her arms and collapsed to the floor. A shower of coins rained down onto her. “Take my money, just spare my life.” She thought. Finally one of the black men spoke out. “Ma’am if you’ll just tell us what floor you’re going to we’ll push the button.” She could tell that they were holding back laughter. Confused, she struggled to her feet. “When I told the man to “hit the floor” I was just telling him to press the button for the floor where we are staying.” Said the little man. She wanted to blurt out an apology but she was too embarrassed to speak. The three of them scooped up the quarters and refilled the bucket. She was a little unsteady when the elevator arrived at her floor, so the black men insisted on walking her to her room. As she entered the room she heard the men laughing as they went back to the elevator. The woman composed herself and went downstairs for dinner with her husband. The next morning flowers were delivered to her room – a dozen roses. Attached to each rose was a crisp \$100 bill. A card said, “Thanks for the best laugh we’ve had in years.” It was signed Eddie Murphy and bodyguard.

2. Paul Commended Judging

- a) *1Co 2:15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.*
- b) *1Co 10:15 I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.*
- c) *Ro 16:17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*
- d) *18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*
- e) *2Co 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,*
- f) *Eph 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*
- g) *Ro 12:9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.*

3. John the Baptist judged – Matt 3:7

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

C. If We Can't Judge

1. There would be no courts of law
 - a) *The context deals with individuals and not courts*
 - b) *The context deals with individuals and not govts*
 - c) *We need courts to settle disputes, interpret laws*
2. We would have to suspend our critical faculties
 - a) *Jesus is not against spiritual discrimination*
 - b) *We cannot refuse to judge between truth and error*
 - c) *Vs 3 says not to give that which is holy to dogs and that involves some judging*
3. Churches are to exercise church discipline and that involves judging
1Co 5:3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, 12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

D. False Teachers/ Teaching Demand Judging

15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

1. We are told to beware of false prophets
2. How can we know false prophets without making a judgment?
3. We shall know them by their fruits
4. The standard – Isa 8:20
20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.
 - a) *The Word of God is the standard*
 - b) *We judge the teaching or the fruit by the Bible*
 - c) *Something might seem good to human judgment, but we are not the standard*
5. God wants us to be like the Bereans who searched the Scriptures daily to see whether the things preached by Paul were true – Acts 17:11

BYZ **Matthew 7:1** Μὴ κρίνετε, ἵνα μὴ κριθῆτε.

In one ad, a convenience store shopper is standing in line at the counter and talking on his cell phone. He says to the person on the other end of the phone, "You're getting robbed." The two clerks hear those words, don't realize he is on the phone, and assume that the man is going to rob the store. They react by squirting this man with pepper spray, slugging him with a baseball bat, and then zapping him with an electric cattle-prod.

In the second commercial, a man is preparing a very romantic dinner. He chops vegetables with a large knife, while tomato sauce simmers on the stove. His white cat knocks the pan of sauce onto the floor and then falls into the crimson tomato mess. Just as the man picks up his tomato-splattered cat, his wife gets home and opens the door. She sees him holding a cat dripping with red sauce in one hand and a large knife in the other. The scene appears to be unmistakably terrifying as she assumes the worst that her cat has been stabbed.

As these ads show, things aren't always as they first appear. For this reason we better be careful about being hasty and unjustly judging other people. We can make fools out of ourselves because we don't have all the facts or we have the same problem we are condemning, in our own lives. We have a problem with planks in our own pupils or eyes. This is what this section is all about.

II. The Reason – vs 1b-2

1b ... that ye be not judged

A. Don't Judge Hypocritically

1. The Master is saying that if we judge then we ought to be willing to have the same standards applied to us that we apply when we judge others
2. There is a general human tendency to overlook our own faults and see the faults in others
3. Being able to properly judge is a sign of maturity
4. When we judge we are to use fair standards of judgment since we will be judged by the same standards we set for others
5. If we judge without mercy, then we will be judged without mercy

B. Don't Judge Motives

1. We don't know the motives of others
2. We don't know someone else's heart
3. We are not to judge with prejudice
 - a) *Prejudice involves judging, not according to the facts, but according to feelings or personal interest*
 - b) *It is faulty judgment, not judging itself, that Christ forbids*

C. The Warning Repeated

2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

1. Repeating often shows emphasis
2. Repeating indicates that we are slow to learn and need to hear things over and over again
3. The warning is that if someone judges in a faulty manner, then he will be judged in like manner
4. If one is prejudiced in his judgment, then he will be judged prejudicially
5. Faulty judging is a big problem and we need to give heed to this warning

III. The Illustration of Improper Judging – vs 3-4

3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

A. The Terms in the Illustration

- We will better understand this parable if we understand the terms
1. Terms Dealing with Objects
 - a) *Two terms are used in this parable to describe objects*
 - b) *The mote is a splinter, or small chip*
 - c) *The beam is a log, a joist, a rafter*
 - d) *The mote is very small and the beam is very large*
 - e) *The use of these terms is supposed to bring into strong contrast little faults and great faults*
 2. Terms Dealing with Observation
 - a) *The terms dealing with observation are "beholdest", "considerest" and "see clearly"*
 - b) *"Beholdest" is from blepo – to see*
 - c) *"Considerest" - katakoeo – to understand, to consider attentively*
 - d) *"See clearly" – diablepo*
 - e) *The one judging wrongly sees "beholdest" the mote in his brother's eye, but will not give serious attention "considerest" to the beam in his own eye*
 - f) *He certainly cannot "see clearly" to take the splinter out of the other person's eye since he had the beam in his own eye*
 - g) *Correction is more difficult than detection*
 - h) *Seeing the problems with others is a lot easier than correcting our own problems*

2 ἐν ᾧ γὰρ κρίματι κρίνετε, κριθήσεσθε· καὶ ἐν ᾧ μέτρῳ μετρεῖτε, μετρηθήσεται ὑμῖν.

BYZ **Matthew 7:3** Τί δὲ βλέπεις τὸ κάρφος τὸ ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου, τὴν δὲ ἐν τῷ σῷ ὀφθαλμῷ δοκὸν οὐ κατανοεῖς; A karpheos (speck) is not a tiny piece of dust or soot but a small stalk or twig, or possibly a splinter The beam (tēn dokon). A log on which planks in the house rest (so papyri), joist, rafter, plank (Moffatt), pole sticking out grotesquely. Probably a current proverb quoted by Jesus like our people in glass houses throwing stones. Tholuck quotes an Arabic proverb: "How seest thou the splinter in thy brother's eye, and seest not the cross-beam in thine eye?"

4 Ἡ πῶς ἐρεῖς τῷ ἀδελφῷ σου, Ἄφες ἐκβάλω τὸ κάρφος ἀπὸ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ σου· καὶ ἰδοὺ, ἡ δοκὸς ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ σου;

B. The Travesty in the Illustration

- The word “why” in vs 3 introduces the travesty in this parable
1. Why would one notice the splinter in someone else’s eye and not notice the 2x8 that is in his own eye?
 2. If you had a 10ft 2x8 in your eye, how could you see to take a small splinter of wood out of someone else’s eye?
 3. Using this parable, our Lord very accurately points out what often goes on in hypocritical judging.
 4. Christ does not dress up sin here and make it look good – He gives us the proper view of what goes on

C. The Teaching in the Parable

3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

- From this teaching of our Lord, we note four types of judging that we must avoid
1. Don’t Judge Hypocritically
 - a) *This is the most obvious lesson from the parable*
 - b) *No one can reprove others, when he is guilty of the same sin*
 - c) *Do not criticize others when you are guilty in a greater way*
 - d) *It is so easy to see the faults of others while ignoring our own*
 2. Don’t Judge Officially
 - a) *“Let me” in vs 4 shows officiousness*
 - b) *Here is presumptuous intrusion into areas of judging in which we have no business*
 - c) *We are disqualified from judging if we have no authority in that area*
 - d) *Even judges in our legal system sometimes disqualify themselves because there is an area in which they have no business judging*
 - e) *I don’t go down to the court house and judge legal cases since I have no authority in that area*
 3. Don’t Judge Gleeefully
 - a) *“Let me” in vs 4 seems to show a suspicious eagerness to judge*
 - b) *Many delight to find fault especially if it is in some rival or enemy*
 - c) *This critic is not really opposed to sin, but is eager to get back at someone*
 4. Don’t Judge Inaccurately
 - a) *“See clearly” in vs 5 exhorts us not to judge others inaccurately*
 - b) *Prejudice clouds vision and damages judgment*
 - c) *Taking a splinter out of someone’s eye often requires very sharp vision and even special medical instruments and magnifiers which we don’t have.*
 - d) *And it is especially difficult if we have a large piece of wood in our own eyes*
 - e) *The need for accuracy is seen in Scripture*
Joh 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.
Pr 18:13 He that answereth a matter before he heareth [it], it [is] folly and shame unto him.

^{BYZ} **Matthew 7:5** Ὑποκριτά, ἔκβαλε πρῶτον τὴν δοκὸν ἐκ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ σου, καὶ τότε διαβλέψεις ἐκβαλεῖν τὸ κάρφος ἐκ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου.
The preposition δια, through, giving the sense of thoroughness. Compare the simple verb βλέπεις, (beholdest), v. 3. With the beam in thine eye thou starest at thy brother's little failing. Pull out the beam; then thou shalt see clearly, not only the fault itself, but how to help thy brother get rid of it.

Conclusion:

In ancient Persia a certain corrupt judge who accepted a bribe to render a false verdict was ordered executed by king Cambyses. The judge's skin was then used to cover the judgment seat. Subsequent judges were forced to render their judgments while sitting on that chair, as a reminder of the consequences of perverting justice.

IV. The Action – vs 5

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

1. First we need to deal with our own eye trouble then we will be better able to help others
2. Here is the problem of hypocritical judgment
3. We naturally overlook our faults and emphasize the faults of others
4. This would be like Jimmy Swaggart preaching against immorality and then visiting a prostitute