



# MATTHEW

The Upside umog Kingdom

Matthew 7

Believers will be known for their fruit



## Matthew 7:1-6

**Don't judge others; judge yourself.**

**MATTHEW**  
The Upside down Kingdom



## **Don't judge others; judge yourself.**

- What does the phrase “judge not” really mean?
- It certainly doesn't mean that we should never make moral judgments.
- A few paragraphs later, Jesus tells them they should recognize false prophets by their fruits (verse 15–16).



## **Don't judge others; judge yourself.**

- Believers should always exercise discernment, especially when it comes to listening to what people say about God or the Bible.
- We should “consider the source,” especially in today’s world when anyone posts material on social media.
- That’s not the kind of judging Jesus is talking about here.



## **Don't judge others; judge yourself.**

- When we look at the section as a whole rather than just those first three words, we see that the emphasis is on the hypocrisy.
- We shouldn't be judging the speck in another's eye when you have a plank in your own.
- This is an intentional hyperbole, a literary device Jesus often uses.



## **Don't judge others; judge yourself.**

- This is a continuation of the hypocrisy warnings of chapter 6.
- Just as Jesus commands us not to perform righteousness to be seen by other people, He warns us not to judge others' external actions (verses 1–6) .
- He also warns us not to trust others' religious claims (verses 15–23).



## **Don't judge others; judge yourself.**

- The Sermon on the Mount gives us some truths about the standard of righteousness in God's kingdom.
- Jesus starts this chapter by telling us that the purpose of hearing His teaching isn't so that we can judge other people.
- It's so that we can look at our own hearts and judge ourselves.



## **Don't judge others; judge yourself.**

- Hebrews says the Word of God is “sharper than any two-edged sword.”
- The Bible is to be used to pierce deeply into our own hearts, judging our own thoughts and intentions (Hebrews 4:12).
- That doesn't mean we can't hold our friends accountable. There is a place for that (Matthew 18:15–20; 2 Timothy 3:16).



## Matthew 7:7-11

**God wants to bless His children with good things.**

**MATTHEW**  
The Upside down Kingdom



## **God wants to bless His children with good things.**

- What kind of “good gifts” does God want to give us?
- “Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart” (Psalm 37:4).
- The key to that verse is that by delighting in the Lord, His desires become your desires.



## **God wants to bless His children with good things.**

- God wants us to share every emotion and every desire with Him.
- The objective is found in the process of prayer, the relationship-building that happens in it.
- It's not about getting God to give us what we want. It's about God changing our hearts. The more we seek His kingdom, the more our requests will align with what He wants for us.



## **Matthew 7:12-23**

**God judges the heart.**

**MATTHEW**  
The Upside down Kingdom



## God judges the heart.

- Jesus now quotes from an ancient proverb that we today call “The Golden Rule.” It was a widespread principle of ancient ethics.
- This can be an important point of connection when we talk about Jesus with other people.
- It is something everyone can agree on, which provides a platform to introducing people to Jesus.



## God judges the heart.

- The way of salvation: Both Greeks and Romans used the image of two paths or two ways after death.
- Most first-century Jews would have believed they were saved because they were descendants of Abraham, which was a “narrow path.” However, Jesus doesn’t define the narrow path by connection to Abraham, but by connection to Him.



## God judges the heart.

- What matters is who really knows Jesus in their heart.
- The Greek word used here means not just knowing about something, but knowing through personal experience, implying an intimacy.
- “I never knew you” was a serious phrase of formal repudiation in Jewish culture at the time.



## God judges the heart.

- Bearing fruit: Jesus says you will know them by their fruit (verse 20).
- The indicator of true disciples is not their preaching or speaking in tongues or miracles, but their love, joy, peace, patience, etc.
- This connects to His overall point at the end of the Sermon – don't just hear My words, do them (verse 24–27).



## God judges the heart.

- False prophets may look like sheep, but they are really wolves.
- They want to attack and devour as many of the sheep as they can.
- Though Jesus tells us not to judge the speck in our brother's eye,
- He does expect us to judge false prophets, because if we don't remove them from our midst, they will destroy the flock.



## **Matthew 7:24-29**

**The purpose of God's Word is to DO IT.**

**MATTHEW**  
The Upside down Kingdom



## The purpose of God's Word is to DO IT.

- At the very end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells them His teachings only matter if you live them out.
- They could listen to Him teach all day long, but it meant nothing if they didn't do it.
- James 1:22 - "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."



## **The purpose of God's Word is to DO IT.**

- Jewish wisdom literature often used this type of illustration.
- Following God's law was compared to building a house.
- Old Testament often used the rock image for the security Israel had in God if they obeyed His law (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 18:2).
- God's law is a firm foundation on which to build your life.



## The purpose of God's Word is to DO IT.

- The covenant promised that following God's law brought blessing, and not following it brought curses.
- Moses ends the giving of the law in Deuteronomy 30:19 with:
- "I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live."



## **The purpose of God's Word is to DO IT.**

- But Jesus' aim is higher even than blessing in this life.
- The context is the final day of judgment. It is true that storms could represent any test in life and following Jesus' words will help your house stand.
- But in this context, it most likely refers to the final test, the Day of Judgment. It's about our eternal destiny, not earth's blessing.



## The purpose of God's Word is to DO IT.

- Jesus here equates His words with God's law, again claiming that He is God. We must either accept His divinity and submit to His lordship or reject Him altogether.
- The issue is obedience.
- We have a firm foundation when we obey Jesus' words. We don't just listen to His words; we actually do what He says.

Application:  
Judging vs. Discerning

---

# Judge Not

---

- Most secular people who use this phrase probably don't know where it comes from. Many Christians don't understand what Jesus was teaching.
- When Massachusetts senator Charles Sumner pressed Abraham Lincoln to hang Confederate President Jefferson Davis, Lincoln quoted this verse.
- There is a difference between judging and discerning.
- As we have seen, Jesus is not teaching us to never use moral discernment.
- In fact, verse 6 demonstrates that we should use good judgment.

---

# Judge Not

---

- Why we shouldn't be judgmental:
  - We rarely know all the facts and circumstances of another person.
  - We rarely can be completely impartial.
  - We shouldn't put people in a circumstance we wouldn't like (Matthew 7).
  - None of us have led a perfect life (John 8).

---

# Discernment

---

- Christians are called to exercise discernment:
  - 1 Corinthians 2:14-15 - “The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually **discerned**. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one.”
  - Philippians 1:9-11 - “And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all **discernment**, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.”

---

# Discernment

---

- Christians are called to exercise discernment:
  - Matthew 7:6 - “Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.”
  - This verse actually encourages us to have spiritual discernment.
  - Some atheists and skeptics will be so opposed to God’s truth that they will despise and attack the Gospel and believers who teach God’s truth.

---

# Discernment

---

- Christians are called to exercise discernment:
  - Matthew 15:12-14 - “Then the disciples came and said to him, ‘Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?’ He answered, ‘Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.’”
  - Sometimes even religious leaders will reject clear biblical teaching, as the Pharisees did to Jesus and the disciples.

---

# Resources

---

