



In today's passage, Jesus delves into judgment, self-awareness, and discernment. These verses begin with Jesus teaching about judgment, emphasizing the reciprocal nature of judgment and the importance of self-examination before critiquing others. He uses some vivid examples (speck and plank) to illustrate our tendency towards hypocrisy and highlights the need for humility. Additionally, Jesus gives us a nuanced perspective on discernment. Today's study explores the theological and practical implications of Jesus' teachings from Matthew 7:1-6, offering insights into how they can be applied to our lives as we follow Christ.

Key Passage: Matthew 7:1-6

Discussion Questions:

1. What does Jesus mean by "Do not judge, or you too will be judged" in Matthew 7:1? How does this verse align with His teaching in Matthew 18:15-17 or Paul's instruction in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 12-13?

When Jesus said, "Judge not lest you be judged," He wasn't issuing a blanket rule that people are never to judge others. Christ's teaching was primarily directed to believers, but the principle can be applied to anyone. He wants us to discern sin in others so we can help them get rid of it. The purpose of judging someone else's weakness is to help him or her walk in freedom (1 Corinthians 5:12). Jesus's statement to "judge not lest you be judged" zeroed in on the problems of spiritual hypocrisy and self-centered pride. (<https://www.gotquestions.org/judge-not-lest-you-be-judged.html>)

2. In Matthew 7:2, Jesus says, "For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged." How can we ensure our judgments are fair and compassionate?

A faithful servant of God will see himself as accurately as he sees others. He will recognize his own sinfulness and need for God's mercy—a need he shares with his brothers and sisters in Christ. He will have no reason to consider himself better than others but will follow Paul's teaching to the Philippians: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves" (Philippians 2:3). (<https://www.gotquestions.org/judge-not-lest-you-be-judged.html>)

3. Why do you think Jesus uses the metaphor of the "speck" and the "plank" in verses 3-5? What is the significance of this imagery? How can we identify and address the "planks" in our eyes before pointing out the "specks" in others?

Jesus does expect us to "deal with the speck" in our friend's eye, particularly our brothers and sisters in Christ. He wants us to discern sin in others so we can help them get rid of it. The purpose of judging someone else's weakness is to help him or her walk in freedom (1 Corinthians 5:12). But how can we help someone else if we are not free? We must first be willing to look honestly at our own lives and

exercise the same judgment toward ourselves. Jesus does expect us to "deal with the speck" in our friend's eye, particularly our brothers and sisters in Christ. But how can we help someone else if we are not free? We must first be willing to look honestly at our own lives and exercise the same judgment toward ourselves. When we do this, we judge from a position of humility. Jesus requires true followers to apply His teachings first to themselves and then to others. When God reveals His truth to us, whether in Scripture or in some other way, our immediate response must be to say, "How does this apply to me? How do I appropriate this truth in my own life?" (<https://www.gotquestions.org/judge-not-lest-you-be-judged.html>)

4. In verse 6, Jesus advises not to give what is sacred to dogs or throw pearls to pigs. What does He mean by this, and how should it influence our actions?

Jesus uses dogs and pigs as representative of those who would ridicule, reject, and blaspheme the gospel once it is presented to them. We are not to expose the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who have no other purpose than to trample it and return to their own evil ways. Repeatedly sharing the gospel with someone who continually scoffs and ridicules Christ is like casting pearls before swine. We can identify such people through discernment, which is given in some measure to all Christians (1 Corinthians 2:15–16). The command not to cast your pearls before swine does not mean we refrain from preaching the gospel. Jesus Himself ate with and taught sinners and tax collectors (Matthew 9:10). In essence, the instruction in Matthew 7:6 is the same that Jesus gave to His apostles when He said, "If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town" (Matthew 10:14). (<https://www.gotquestions.org/pearls-before-swine.html>)

5. How can we discern when and how to share the gospel with others, based on the guidance in verse 6?

We are to share the gospel, but when it becomes apparent that the gospel is not welcome, we are to move on. We are responsible to share the good news; we are not responsible for people's response to the good news. Pigs don't appreciate pearls, and some people don't appreciate what Christ has done for them. Our job is not to force conversions or cram the gospel down people's throats; there's no sense in preaching the value of pearls to swine. Jesus' instruction to His apostles on how to handle rejection was to simply go elsewhere. There are other people who need to hear the gospel, and they are ready to hear it. (<https://www.gotquestions.org/pearls-before-swine.html>)

6. What role does humility play in the teachings of Matthew 7:1-6, and how can we cultivate it in our relationships?

Humility plays a crucial role in today's passage. In these verses, Jesus highlights the need for self-examination, urging us to address our own faults (the "plank" in one's own eye) before we make any judgment of others (the "speck" in their eye). Furthermore, our job is not to force conversions or cram the gospel down people's throats. We are to humbly share the gospel, but when it becomes apparent that the gospel is not welcome, we are to move on. Humility fosters a compassionate attitude.

7. How can we balance the call to avoid judgment with making wise and discerning decisions about people's actions and behaviors?