

DEEP IN SCRIPTURE

Verses & Notes October 25, 2006

Matthew 7:1-6

Matthew 7

- 1: "Judge not, that you be not judged.
- 2: For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged,
and the measure you give will be the measure you get.

- 3: Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye,
but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?
- 4: Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,'
when there is the log in your own eye?
- 5: You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye,
and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

- 6: "Do not give dogs what is holy;
and do not throw your pearls before swine,
lest they trample them under foot and turn to attack you.

Discussion Notes:

Introduction:

- "Jesus said some great & challenging things! If only my friends & family would listen!" But was Jesus teaching his disciples primarily so that they could straighten out others, or themselves?

Context:

- Scriptural context:
 - Called disciples
 - Sermon on the Mount: Central instructions on discipleship
- Familiar verses on judging... but can be abused if taken out of context;
- Should be seen as a consecutive part of his sermon. But if so, why would he turn the focus of his sermon all of a sudden to judging?
 - What are key verses from the immediate context of the sermon?

5:48: You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

6:1: "Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

6:31-34: "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,

*and all these things shall be yours as well.
Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow,
for tomorrow will be anxious for itself.
Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day.*

- Human nature is to start deflecting away by pointing fingers:
 - Especially at their religious leaders
 - At their neighbors, friends, & family
- But the purpose of Jesus' sermon is for personal conversion & commitment;
 - We miss what he is trying to say when we deflect our attention off to someone else.
- And it is important to see that the context of these verses on "judging" were about spiritual conversion, growth in holiness; not on one's eternal destiny.

Jesus makes three comments in reference to our relationship to the spiritual condition of others:

Before you decide to change that other person,

- 1) Remember that you're not God;
- 2) Clean up your own act first; and
- 3) Discern to what extent your audience is even ready for your advice.

(1) Before you decide to change that other person, remember that you are not God:

1: *"Judge not, that you be not judged.*

2: *For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged,
and the measure you give will be the measure you get.*

- Actually an extended twist / application of the Golden Rule: (7:12)
"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."
 - When we judge, we are usurping God, showing Him how we want to be treated.
 - Parable of the ungrateful servant (My 18:21-35)
- Rather, all our judgments of others must be tempered with mercy;
 - 1 Cor 13:4-8 (context of brothers bickering over spiritual gifts)
- There are some exceptions:
 - He gave authority to Peter & his apostles as the Church to judge brothers:
 - "bind & loose" (16:19; 18:18)
 - And this is within the brotherhood of the church: "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (18:15-18)
 - Gave authority to forgive or retain sins (John 20:23)
 - Fathers especially have God-given authority to judge their family? (Eph 6:22-27)
Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

- Authority within the Church & family is hierarchical, up & down.

(2) Before you decide to change that other person, clean up your own act first:

- 3: *Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye,
but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?*
- 4: *Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,'
when there is the log in your own eye?*
- 5: *You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye,
and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.*

- Speck = term meant “splinter” = a dry particle of sawn wood.
 - A memory from Jesus’ childhood with Joseph?
- It’s always easier to see the faults of others more than our own,
even if and maybe especially if ours are obviously worse.
- So even if we have the authority to judge, we need to begin with ourselves!

**(3) Before you decide to change that other person,
discern to what extent your audience is ready:**

- 6: *“Do not give dogs what is holy;
and do not throw your pearls before swine,
lest they trample them under foot and turn to attack you.*

- Though “dogs” & “swine” had negative connotation to Jesus’ audience, the emphasis was not a judgment of the quality of people, but rather their spiritual receptivity / understanding.
- What Jesus means here is that his disciples must use discretion when they pass along what he has told them;
- Example of my farm ...
- Jesus often cautions them to be discrete! (Mt 13:10-17)
*Then the disciples came and said to him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?"
And he answered them, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven,
but to them it has not been given. For to him who has will more be given, and he will have abundance;
but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables,
because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand..."*

But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

- Does this mean we are, therefore, to pass judgment on our audience’s receptivity?
- Does this also mean if we discern that our audience isn’t ready, than don’t tell?
 - 1st: remember / recall our own ignorance / unreceptivity!
 - 2nd: pray for “light,” both within ourselves & our hearers;
 - 3rd: prepare the soil (parable of the soils) through love, mercy, etc.;
 - 4th: model our message with our lives;
 - 5th: tell the message with love.
- I.E., Jesuit missionaries to the Huron Indians.