

Luke Farrugia: Don't Judge, Just Do! (25/8/18)

Introduction:

Jesus' teachings generally focus on relationships.

The sermon on the mount has been about introducing the kingdom of God. This part of the sermon is about responsible Christian relationships.

Freeing Others from Judgment:

Matthew 7:1-5 - Judgment is a two way street!

In this passage, Jesus gives 4 reasons for not judging others. We will break the passage up into those four areas.

1. **We don't want to be judged.**

2. **Our "plank" impairs our vision.**

Matthew 23:23-25 - Jesus described the hypocrisy of the Pharisees as vision impairment.

"We tend to judge others by their actions, and ourselves by our intentions." Dwight Morrow

3. **Our sins are often larger than those we censure.**

The material that is in the eye of each individual is the same material. There is a quantitative difference, but not a qualitative difference. We all have the sin problem! We just vary in the degree and the specific expression.

4. **By judging others we become co-labourers with Satan.**

Revelation 12:10,11 - *"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."*

"Do not think yourself better than other men, and set yourself up as their judge. Since you cannot discern motive, you are incapable of judging another. In criticizing him, you are passing sentence upon yourself; for you show that you are a participant with Satan, the accuser of the brethren." Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, pg 314.

Illustration: When you go on a commercial flight you will always see the flight attendants do their thing. They will show you where all the exits are and go through the emergency procedure. One of the things that they will tell you is that you should "first put on your own oxygen mask before going to help someone else." Without putting our own mask on, we are rendering ourselves incapable of saving others.

"If you see someone else struggling with sin and feel no compassion you have not dealt with your own "plank."" Luke Farrugia

1 Corinthians 11:31,32 - The person that we should be judging is ourselves! We should judge ourselves by the standard of God's word and Jesus' character. Not others!

Judgment can take many forms. One detrimental form of judgment comes in the form of comparing. Let us not compare ourselves to others!

"If we judge ourselves as better than another it is evidence that we don't know ourselves very well. If we judge ourselves as worse than another it is evidence that we don't know our brother very well."

Matthew 7:6 - Don't cast your pearls to swine

The question I was asking myself while preparing this message is "what is this doing here in this passage??"

To understand the answer to that question we need to put on our 1st Century glasses. To a Jew the metaphor would have made immediate sense. In their culture both dogs and pigs are unclean animals, and had no part in Israel.

So what Jesus is saying is that the gospel should not be wasted on those who are not part of Israel. Right? Wrong!

Does this statement give us an excuse to judge others as unworthy? It would seem strange for Jesus to say that immediately after telling them not to judge anyone...

So what does it mean? It occurred to me this week that it simply means this. If someone is actively hostile to the gospel we should not force the gospel on them against their will. Instead, Jesus is saying, we should honour the free-will of others - just as God does.

There are at least 2 reasons for this:

1. It is dangerous
2. It is not in harmony with the character of God

Freeing Yourself from Judgment:

Matthew 7:7-11

- Luke 11:13, 9-12 - Luke gives us a little more information in this parallel passage.
 - Why would God give any less than humans do?
 - This was in direct contrast to the perspective of the religion of the day.
- Illustration: Seth. Luke loves his son, and wants to give him what he asks for (when he knows he needs it). Why would God give any less to us when we want something.

Matthew 7:12 - The Golden Rule

This is a call to echo God. If we have become accepting of others as He is, then, it seems to follow that we will treat others with the preference that God treats us all with.

Conclusion:

Have an accepting attitude towards others, and enforce their free-will. Trust that God loves you more than you do, and as a result, love others more than yourself.