



Matthew

Lesson 7

The Sermon on the Mount is a compilation of many principles regarding righteous living in the Kingdom of God. But Jesus is not simply identifying Kingdom truths for the people, He is also identifying that these truths are the antithesis of the teaching of the religious leaders. Much of Jesus ministry was countering the incorrect information that these false teachers had brought into the religious life of the Jews. Jesus identified that form of righteousness as hypocrisy, and stated in Matthew 5:20 that, "...unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." The so-called righteousness of the religious leaders was a sham. Jesus called them "hypocrites." The word "hypocrite" actually means "a counterfeit, a man who assumes and speaks or acts under a feigned character."

(Zodhiates Greek Dictionary). They were living for God only through exterior behavior management, not in the interior of their hearts with a transformed life. That was a problem Jesus addressed continually during His ministry. In contrast to the religious leaders conduct, Jesus stressed that the common methods of worship, such as giving, praying, and fasting, should be done in secret not before people to impress them. The acts of worship and obedience should be motivated by faith in what God said to be true, and a passionate desire to bring glory to Him not ourselves. "...pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will repay you." Matthew 6:6

Read Matthew Chapter 7



John 7:24 says, "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment." Jesus made this statement in response to the criticism He received because He healed on the Sabbath. They were making a judgment of Him and His ministry through a standard of their own, not based on the truth of God's Word. Their goal was to discredit Him because the words He said unveiled their wickedness. Throughout Scripture we are told to discriminate between good and evil. The statement Jesus makes in Matthew 7:1 is a continued teaching on the critical, self-righteous, pride that motivated the religious leaders. They had external standards that were self-determined, and they thought they were superior enough to make the call on other's behavior. What God thought wasn't their concern, just whether their own standards were being met. Jesus wasn't making a rule about never identifying good or bad behavior in a brother or sister in Christ. His point is to make sure that the motive in doing so is correct. 1 Corinthians 5 tells us to determine immorality and condemn it. Hasty, unjust, arbitrary, or unwarranted judgments are not to be made, but we are commanded to hold each other accountable for the benefits of righteousness. Jesus isn't telling us to never make an informed determination about good and evil in this passage, but He is referring to the kind of critical judgment that is petty and self-righteous and doesn't have the good of the person or the heart of God in its intent.

1. *According to verse 2, what will determine the measure of judgment you receive? Why should this make you reconsider the way you judge others?*

2. *What is the point of Jesus' analogy in vs. 3-5? How does Luke 18:9-14 restate this?*

3. *Does this mean we should never judge others' behavior? (v. 5)
See also John 7:24, Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 6:1-5. Explain your answer.*

4. *What do you think is the meaning of verse 6, and how does it fit in the context?*

5. *The verbs ask, seek, and knock in v. 7 are in the present imperative tense which infers a continual action that means keep asking, keep seeking, and keep knocking. These verbs all express a pursuit of something. What kind of pursuit do you think Jesus might be speaking of here?*

6. *In Jesus' analogy in vs. 9-11, what is Jesus teaching us about our Father? How does Luke 11:11-13 say it a little differently?*

7. *Look up the following verses and identify some of the “good gifts” our Father has given. Add some of your own to the list.*

Ecclesiastes 3:13 and 5:19

Romans 6:23

John 4:10

I Corinthians 7:7 and 14:1

Acts 8:18-20

Ephesians 2:8

II Timothy 1:6-7

8. *Why do you think the way to destruction is described as a wide gate and the way to life as a narrow gate? See also Luke 13:23-30*

9. *Give your definition of a false prophet, and from vs. 15-23, what are some of the warnings Jesus gives regarding false prophets?*

Prayer requests:

Group time notes:
