

WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP, NOT JUDGE!
MATTHEW CH7:1-6

ILLUSTRATION

One of the ways to look at crafting a sermon, is to take people on a journey unwrapping Scripture, and getting your people to think of a sermon , like a plane journey! A plane takes off, has mid flight entertainment and then you land (take in a plane!). The sermon in a similar way has an illustration (take off), usually 3 points (mid flight entertainment) and a landing (application).

There is an airport in Nepal, Lukla Airport, that is considered to be the most dangerous airport in which to try and land! Why? Well, if you are able to land the plane when approaching a cliff edge, rather than misjudging it and hitting the cliff, you can land, but the runway is incredibly short in distance, because at the other end of the runway is a mountain!

Today's "sermon landing" is that dangerous! Hugely dangerous, if you misjudge it!

RE-CAP

We have called the series on Matthew "THE KING AND HIS KINGDOM" and one of the ways to look at the Book of Matthew and how it breaks down is as follows:

CH1-4	-	The Kingdom Coming!
CH5-9	-	The Kingdom Lifestyle!
CH10-12	-	The Kingdom Mission!
CH13-17	-	The Kingdom Message!
CH18-22	-	The Kingdom Community!
CH23-27	-	The Kingdom Judgement!
CH28	-	The Proclamation of The Kingdom!

So, not only is there a significant emphasis on the King and His Kingdom, but also on the citizens of that Kingdom. In light of this emphasis on the citizens, we can look at what we have covered so far on the "Sermon on the Mount" in the following ways;

Ch5:1-12	-	Our Character as Citizens!
Ch5:13-16	-	Our Impact as Citizens!
Ch5:17-48	-	Our Righteousness as Citizens!
Ch6:1-18	-	Our Disciplines as Citizens!
Ch6:19-34	-	Our Trust as Citizens!

JUDGE VI-2!

What happens when as a Christian you see your Christian brother or sister sinning? Do we just turn away, using some verse from the Bible, to justify your non-involvement? Do we just leave it to the leaders? Do we dive in?

Jesus has some instructions for us. Jesus forbids two alternatives and commends a third.

- Don't be judgemental!
- Don't be hypocritical!
- Take out the plank first!

What does Jesus mean when He says “Do not judge”? According to Carson “to judge” can mean to discern, to judge judicially, to be judgemental (criticise), to condemn judicially or otherwise! It has a real range of meanings!

Therefore the context should help to work out what type of “judge” is required.

In this context, the context being “our Gospel Community” and the significant, valuable, precious relationships within it, Jesus realises that we (with a plank in our eye) are prone to becoming “**CENSORIOUS**” (harshly critical in our judging) of others (with only a speck of sawdust in their eye) who are sinning (Not sinning against us - Matt Ch18:15-18).

The critic will always look for someone or something to criticise! So Jesus simply says “Don't judge” or else!

JUDICIOUS V3-5! (The plank and speck)

Having or showing good judgement! The Christian Citizen has to be judicious, in order to (v5) help his brother or sister in Christ! But the plank has to be first removed. How can someone perform intricate eye surgery on a person who has a speck in his/her eye, if the surgeon has a plank in his/her eye?

There is a foreign body in the eye, and it is not meant to be there and needs removal, but have your plank removed first! In other words let Jesus conduct eye surgery on you first, to remove your plank. The plank being “censorious” - harshly critical! Once Jesus has dealt with your judging harshly and critically, then, and only then, can you help your Christian brother or sister.

JUDGMENT V6!

A decision formed after careful consideration! There is a need for Jesus' disciples to make good judgements!

Here Jesus relates certain human beings to wild animals that have awful animal habits! Jesus teaches His disciples that there will be occasions, that as His disciples share the Gospel, which is sacred, holy, set apart and valuable, precious, and rich in truth, people will trample on it, turn on His disciples looking to tear them to pieces. Picture a scene of wild dogs and wild pigs tearing a person to pieces.

Where this is the case, Jesus permits His disciples to walk away, causing those people to be punished by the departure of those who bring “good tidings”.

Remember landing the plane at Lukla? It's dangerous if the approach is misunderstood! Who are these people who Jesus classifies as “dogs and pigs”? Carson says “Over the years I have gradually come to the place where I refuse to attempt to explain Christianity and introduce Christ to the person who just wants to mock and argue and ridicule.” This should give us a basis from which to start from. We need real wisdom from Jesus when acting on this instruction!

Jesus is commanding his disciples not to share the richest parts of spiritual truths with those people who are animal in nature!

APPLICATION

“Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you” Proverbs 9:8

Carson also says ““There are many situations in which Christians need to persist in their witness and be patient with their sowing of God's truth.”

How do we work out what needs to be worked out?

“The more I read these three chapters (Ch5-Ch7) the more I am both drawn to them and shamed by them. Their brilliant light draws me like a moth to a spotlight; but the light is so bright that it sears and burns. No room is left for forms of piety which are nothing more than veneer and sham. Perfection is demanded.” Carson

Look at John Ch20:24-29, John Ch21:15-25 and Luke Ch23:9 – What do you make of them?