

By Judging Carefully

**Matthew
7:1-12**



**Appropriating The Happiness
That Is In You**

Series Overview

The beatitudes is a list of attitudes prescribed by Jesus during the Sermon on the Mount that are designed to build on one another to lead a Christian to true joy in Christ.

The attitudes are:

Being poor in spirit, mourning over sin, meekness, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemaking, and willingness to be persecuted for righteousness' sake.

Only Christians that “climb” this superstructure are in a place spiritually to “appropriate the happiness that is in you,” a process that Jesus describes directly after The Beatitudes.

This process of “appropriating the happiness that is in you” similarly builds on itself with the following steps:

By Being Salt, By Being Light, By Being Law Abiding, By Controlling Anger, By Keeping Sex In Marriage, By Shunning Narcissism, By Choosing Wisely, and By Judging Carefully.

Part Eight: By Judging Carefully

*“Do not judge, or you too will be judged.
For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure
you use, it will be measured to you.*

*“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay
no attention to the plank in your own eye?*

*How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all
the time there is a plank in your own eye?*

*You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see
clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.*

*“Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs.
If you do, they may trample them under their feet,
and then turn and tear you to pieces.*

*“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find;
knock and the door will be opened to you.*

*For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks,
the door will be opened.*

“Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?

*If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how
much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!*

*So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you,
for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.*

Matthew 7:1-12

Jesus is not asking us to suspend our critical faculties, accept falsehood, or accept sin and rebellion. Scripture affirms elsewhere that we are to judge who speaks truth and who speaks falsehood, and we need to judge messages and whether or not they are of sound doctrine or lack thereof. We are always to be discerning and denounce sin.

Jesus is using the Greek word “krinó” which, in context, has two meanings here.

First, Jesus is saying that we are not to judge motives. We can judge actions, words, policies, and activities, but only God can judge motives. The very standards by which you judge another’s motives are the same standards by which your motives will be judged by God.

Second, Jesus is warning us against hasty judgment, or judging before we have facts or evidence. Proverbs 18:13 says:

“He who answers before listening—that is his folly and his shame.”

Only God is omniscient and has all of the facts in hand. Judging motives can distort our view of God, which in turn distorts our view of ourselves.

We often make a fuss over the speck in another’s eye because we are hoping to divert attention from seeing the log in our own eyes, an extension of the sin of self-righteousness. While we are not to turn a blind eye to sins, we are to self-examine and confess our own sins prior to confrontation.

This self-examination is illustrated by David in Psalm 51:10–13:

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.

David is removing the log from his own eye and only then exhorting others. You cannot minister effectively to others if you have not confessed and repented of your own sin.

This is likewise illustrated in Luke 22:31–32, as Jesus warns Peter that he will deny Him, but repent and eventually encourage his brother:

“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”

Any confrontation of sin in others must be done in meekness and brokenness before

God, and not pride.

Jesus's teachings on not judging are related to Christians interacting with one another. In verse 6, Jesus begins talking about interactions with non-believers.

“Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.”

In ancient times, both dogs and pigs were considered to be scavengers, and therefore symbols of undiscerning and unrepentant people. Jesus is saying “if and when they reject your message, just leave them to Me.”

Today, too many Christians are busy criticizing each other, and have no energy left to witness to non-believers. Jesus calls us to focus our energy on prayer: to ask, seek, and knock.

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. “Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”

We have a benevolent, merciful Father who wants to give good gifts to His children who are broken in spirit when they turn to Him.

Because we have a forgiving Heavenly Father, we are to ask Him for forgiveness. Because we have a wise Heavenly Father, we are to seek Him. Because we have a generous-hearted Heavenly Father, we are to knock on His door, and keep on knocking.

Jesus is not referring to material things in these verses. He provides us with all that we need. He is talking about spiritual blessings that are beyond our ability to comprehend.

God's common grace is available to believers and non-believers alike, but God's special grace is promised ONLY to those who fully trust in Him: daily forgiveness, peace, contentment, increases in faith, hope, and joy, victory over Satan, triumph over temptation, and victory over a critical spirit.

Even though God knows our needs, we are to continue to pray because prayer presupposes knowledge, faith, and desire.

Prayer Presupposes Knowledge

God gives us only what is according to His will, therefore it is our responsibility to discern the will of God. We can do this by getting to know Him through His word and intimate prayer.

Prayer Presupposes Faith

It is one thing to know the will of God, and another to trust Him fully, to fulfill His will in our lives.

When we continue to pray according to His will, eventually He will answer.

Prayer Presupposes Desire

Desiring the will of God with all of our hearts reveals that God's will is NEVER punitive. When you desire God's glory, He will bless you.

Before you ask, you must know that what you are asking for is according to God's character. When you know the will of God, you must unfailingly believe that He will grant you His will. Then you must prepare your heart for receiving it.

This can only be done by spending time with God in prayer.