

“JESUS’ KINGDOM MANIFESTO”

BIG IDEA . . . Part 15: True Judgment – Start Loving (Matt. 7:7-12)

INTRO: In this SOM Jesus is giving the standards for living in His kingdom. Ch. 5 TR... Ch 6 TW ... Now in Ch 7 TJ (of self and others and by God). Matt. 7:1-12 is best seen as a unit as Jesus presents the principles for right human r’ships. 1st, negatively (vv. 1-6); Stop Judging! Do not judge others the way the hypocritical, self-righteous Pharisees do (vv. 1-6) Why? Reviewing:

1. We don’t know all the facts.
2. We don’t know someone’s motives
3. We must distinguish between biblical truth and personal preferences.
4. We are all sinners.
5. We will be judged by the standard we use.
6. We will all be judged by God.

Next part is the positive aspect (vv. 7-12): Start Loving! Both are essential to have biblical human r’ships: We must not only not judge, but exceed that and start loving. Not wrongly criticizing a person is not enough; We must also start loving them and helping others to become the best version of themselves. The positive side of love is active and productive. Love is not just expressed in what we refrain from doing, but in what we are willing to do. 1 Cor. 13:4-7 all verbs are active. The command in the last verse (v. 12) sums it up: Treat others the way you want to be treated (Golden Rule). Three reasons for obeying His command to LOVE OTHERS:

I. GOD’S *PROMISE* TO HIS CHILDREN DEMANDS IT (vv. 7-12)

A. A Great Promise – One of our Lord’s great promises, but must be understood and applied in context (vv. 1-6). Verses 7-11 are a perfect bridge between the negative teaching (stop Judging others critically) but in v. 12 (start loving). This is a request for wisdom! (Jam. 1:5) We need wisdom to:

1. Discern the LOG in our own eye first and to remove it
2. Humbly help others to remove the SPLINTER in their eye (Gal. 6:1-2)
3. Identify who are the “dogs & hogs” (v.6) – Don’t waste the valuable treasure of the Gospel on the foolish and evil. Also, to identify the false teachers who lead us astray (vv. 15-20)

B. Promise clarified

1. Only valid for believers

2. Not a blank check (context of rightly judging and loving others).
3. Seeking to walk in obedience (1 Jn. 3:22)
4. With the right motive (Jam. 4:3)
5. Submissive to His will (Jam. 1:7-8; 1 Jn. 5:14)
6. Persevere in prayer (verbs are present tense continuing action – keep on . . .). Also, a progression in intensity from simply asking, to aggressive seeking, to persistent knocking.

II. GOD’S *PATTERN* FOR HIS CHILDREN DEMANDS IT (vv. 9-11)

Two illustrations of God’s love as our Father – two rhetorical questions

A. “Stones” (v.9) – Answer? No father

B. “Fish” (v.10) – Answer? No father

Snake is not alive and poisonous, but cooked to eat. Snakes were seen as unclean (Lev. 11:12). Two needs addressed: bread (physical) and fish (spiritual). A loving father meets both needs (look at Luke 11:12-scorpion).

C. We are all “evil” and yet loving to our children – all sinful and fallen. We need God’s help. There are no limits to God’s goodness to us if we ask (Lk. 11:13). Truth: If imperfect and sinful earthly fathers so willingly and freely give their children the basics of life, how much more will our loving and good heavenly Father exceed them in giving us what we need? Jam. 1:17

III. GOD’S *PURPOSE* FOR HIS CHILDREN DEMANDS IT (v.12)

A. What has been implied in vv. 7-11 is now made clear in v.12 – the love of God is most reflected in His children when we treat others as they themselves wish to be treated. This really summarizes “the Law and the Prophets” and also the second great commandment to love our neighbors (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:39).

B. How we treat others is not determined by how we expect them to treat us or by how we think they should treat us but by “how we want them to treat us.”

CONC: God made us to live in relationship with Him and others. Jesus is telling us how to do that, encompassing both the negative and the positive: Stop judging and start loving others. Only Jesus and God’s Spirit can supply the power to do this.