

I. Review

- A. Cultivating Fruit in the Garden of our Heart - Eight aspects of the heart of Jesus that are planted and growing in the garden of our hearts by the power of new birth through the indwelling Holy Spirit. (Mat. 5:1-20)
 - 1. Poor in Spirit (Dependence upon God)
 - 2. Mourning (Longing for the Kingdom)
 - 3. Meekness (Divine Power tempered by Gentleness)
 - 4. Hungering for Righteousness (Longing for Intimacy with God)
 - 5. Merciful (Walking in the degree of mercy that you have been shown)
 - 6. Pure in Heart (Transformational Obedience and Love)
 - 7. Peacemaker (Priestly calling as an Intercessor)
 - 8. Persecuted (A life laid down for Jesus in boldness and confidence)

- B. Weeding our Garden - Six Aspects of the Fallen Heart or Old Man that are being transformed/put to death in the garden of our heart. (Matt. 5:21-48)
 - 1. Murder (Unrighteous Hatred)
 - 2. Immorality (Lust)
 - 3. Divorce (Treachery)
 - 4. Lying (Manipulation)
 - 5. Revenge (Pride)
 - 6. Animosity (Unforgiveness)

- C. Watering our Garden - Four activities that position us to encounter Jesus and be transformed (Matt. 6:1-34)
 - 1. Charitable Deeds (Giving of yourself for the gain of others)
 - 2. Prayer (Worship, Contemplation, Intercession and Dialogue)
 - 3. Fasting (Prioritizing Spiritual Comfort over Physical Comfort)
 - 4. Giving (Prioritizing our Eternal Security over Temporal Security)

II. Wisdom and Exhortation for the Purposeful Gardener

- A. Jesus has called us to a radical lifestyle of self denial and wholehearted love. He knows our human frame better than we know ourselves and in His deep care for us He provides six exhortations that keep us anchored in intimacy and righteousness as we endeavor to live a SOTM lifestyle.
 - 1. Judging in righteousness.
 - 2. Relentless Dependence upon God.
 - 3. Embracing the difficulty of the counter-cultural lifestyle.

4. Intentional community with people in like-minded pursuit.
5. Prioritizing the SOTM above all other forms of discipleship and ministry.
6. Assures our hearts that this lifestyle is the pinnacle of the wisdom of God.

III. Righteous Judgment

- A. The first exhortation that Jesus gives us has to do with our propensity to analyze or judge others in their adherence to the lifestyle put forward in the SOTM. In my experience, relational judgment manifests itself in three main ways.
1. We tend to look negatively at those who seem less intense or intentional than us in their pursuit of God.
 2. We are often offended by those who accuse us of being “radical” or “religious” in our desire to live in accordance with the SOTM.
 3. Lastly, we compare ourselves to those who seem to be doing better than us in their walk with God, which usually results in shame and condemnation.
- B. ***Judge not:*** The word *judge* means to evaluate so as to approve or correct. In our culture today it is incredibly common to misinterpret this passage to say that we must never point out anything that is wrong or any person who is wrong. Many believe that we are to avoid all judgment. In fact, the leading thought in our culture is that any and all judgment stems from negativity and hate. This has led to the juxtaposition of judgment and love and so now it's very common to hear that, “If you love someone you won't judge them, and if you do judge them, then you hate them.”

You see, it doesn't take much effort to love those who look like us, act like us, and believe like us, but what about those who don't? God's love isn't exclusive; it's inclusive. His love doesn't write people off because they aren't meeting our standards. Bottom line, as Christians we aren't called to judge; were called to love. - GUIDEPOSTS July 22nd 2015

1. The scriptures make it clear that what we are to avoid and condemn when it comes to judgment is judging with a wrong spirit. We are clearly exhorted and even commanded to judge with righteous judgment because it is an expression of God's love. We do not sacrifice the truth for love, but we express them together. Truth empowers real love. It is Christ-like to judge and one of the primary ways that He expresses His mercy. It is parallel to a doctor “judging” cancer while there is time to treat it. The famous love passage of the Bible, 1 Corinthians 13, says that love, “...does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.” The only way love

cannot rejoice in evil is to know what the difference is between right and wrong. (Jhn. 7:24)

“Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.” (Jn. 7:24)

2. For with what Judgment you Judge - Jesus called us to avoid judgment without going through the right process, with the right information, and in the right spirit. In this very context, Jesus called us to remove the speck from a brother (v. 5), and recognize “dogs and pigs” (v. 6), and false prophets (v. 15).
3. We are commanded to make loving, righteous judgments in a world that greatly values tolerance. This will dramatically change the social dynamics in a church. Any church that refuses to judge according to biblical standards will come under judgment. The natural by-product of neglecting righteous judgment is a steady increase of compromise in its leaders, members, and families. (Mt. 18:15-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-11; 2 Cor. 11:12-15; Eph. 5:11; 1 Thes. 5:14, 21; 2 Thes. 3:6-14; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; 2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:10-13; 2:15; 3:10-11; 1 Jn. 4:1; Rev. 2:2, 14-15, 20)

IV. Measured Judgment

- A. Jesus tells us that the measure or standard in which we judge will be measured back to us. In my opinion this is commonly misapplied as a statement about how God will judge us. If we judge harshly then God judges us harshly. The problem with this is that God's character does not change based upon our behavior or mindset. He is always merciful, patient, gentle, true, and fully loving in all His judgments to both the righteous and the wicked. It is my conviction that Jesus is talking about how the standard in which we judge affects how we judge ourselves and how others return judgement upon us.
- B. We judge in the right way in line with the character of God, which includes the *right process, right information, and right spirit*. The whole purpose of our Judgment must be rooted in God's heart of love and care for the individual. We seek restoration and wholeness in the process in which Jesus gives us.
 1. *Humbly*: First, we look to ourselves, asking the Holy Spirit to give us clarity in truth and mourning over our personal faults and weaknesses. We consider the plank in our own eye. We often discover much about our heart and weakness in

the process of preparing to appeal to our brother. According to this verse, in order to be ready to bring a judgment, we must see our own weakness to the degree and size of a “plank”, versus their shortcomings, “a speck of dust.” (Matt. 7:5)

2. Accurately: We take time and effort to get all the available information. Those who are content with partial information have already made up their minds against another. (Prov. 18:13-17; Jas. 1:19)
3. Gently: We approach our brothers tenderly, without harshness, hoping for the best in the process. Make appeals to restore with gentleness as we consider our own weaknesses (plank vs dust). The receiving of mercy has more power to transform the heart than corrective action. (Pro. 15:1; Gal. 6:1; Jam. 2:13)
4. Relationally: According to this passage, Jesus wants us to have a degree of relational equity before we approach them in hopes of removing the speck in their eye. Jesus tells us not to throw our pearls--truth--to individuals who will simply trample our words, or turn upon us and tear us to pieces, because they have no love in their hearts for those who seek to bring truth into their lives. (Brothers Eye)
5. Patiently: We give people time to understand the gravity of their sin and time to repent without quickly concluding that they refuse to repent. We must not rush through the process too quickly. (Rev. 2:21)
6. Confidentiality: God has entrusted us with one another's heart and healing, in partnership with Him. There is honor and safety in confidentiality. Many times the only way forward in true honesty is knowing that our secret faults are safe in the hands of trusted friends who love us and whom we love. (Prov. 11:13, 17:9; 1 Pet. 4:8)

Session 31 - SOTM The Internal Beauty of the King and His Kingdom Sunday Oct. 25th 2020
Wisdom and Exhortation To Walk out the SOTM: Part 1- Measured Judgment (Matt.
7:1-12)