

Building a Life for the Storm

Jesus said that life is like building a house

we all are builders

we all will endure a devastating storm

we have voices seeking to influence how we build the home

A Discerning Spirit

Matthew 7:1-6; 15-20

1. The Dangers of the Discerning Spirit

***You may develop a judgmental spirit**

The context makes it clear that the thing here condemned is that disposition to look unfavorably on the character and actions of others, which leads invariably to the pronouncing of rash, unjust, and unlovely judgments upon them

Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Vol. 2, p. 29). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

To be discriminating and critical is necessary; to be hypercritical is wrong. One should avoid saying what is untrue (Exod. 23:1), unnecessary (Prov. 11:13), and unkind (Prov. 18:8).

Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953–2001). *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew* (Vol. 9, p. 357). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

1) obscures your view of yourself

- you will be judged by the same standard and you can not see how you violate it
- your hypocrisy is a plank of wood in your own eye

2) obscures your view of your brother

- you can't see him - your sin is what causes their sin to look so big

3) you lose the trust of your brother - your words lose their meaning and respect

Prejudging people is a face of this -

- based on others
- based on culture
- based on ignorance

-put others in categories - quick to classify people

liberal/conservative
 democrat/republican
 rich/poor
 educated/uneducated

Ethnicity - widow of Zeraphath, Ruth and Rahab, the Syro phoenician women
 color

Gender - men or women
 women could not testify in a court of law but they were the first eye witnesses

age - older or younger
 -do not let them look down on you because you are young

vocation - police, pastors, politicians
 -Bible - publicans and shepherds

geography - accent - Bible speaks of Galileans, can anything good come from Nazareth

***You may abandon judgment**

John R. W. Stott: “To begin with, we must reject Tolstoy’s belief, based on this verse, that ‘Christ totally forbids the human institution of any law court’, and that he ‘could mean nothing else by those words’. But Jesus’ prohibition cannot possibly mean the one thing Tolstoy says it must mean, for the context does not refer to judges in courts of law but rather to the responsibility of individuals to one another.

Christ’s further sayings and also his actions serve as a commentary on Matt. 7:6. How patient he was with Thomas (John 20:24–29) and with Peter (John 21:15–19), but for Herod Antipas, who often had been warned (Mark 6:20) but had disregarded all of these admonitions, Jesus had not a single word (Luke 23:9). He pronounced a curse upon Capernaum, which had failed to take his messages to heart and to apply to itself the lesson taught by his mighty works (Matt. 11:23). He instructed his disciples not to remain too long in those places that would reject their preaching (Matt. 10:14, 15, 23). In the parable of The Barren Fig Tree (Luke 13:6–9) he showed that God’s patience, though prolonged, is not endless. Cf. Prov. 29:1.

Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953–2001). *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew* (Vol. 9, p. 360). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

2. The Disciplines of the Discerning Spirit

***Pay attention to all the sheep**

swine, dogs, wolves

Beware - they are determined - they come to you
-distinguished - by their fruit

1 John 4:1: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

Robert Hansen was an FBI/CIA agent for 25 years. He worked for the President, CIA, FBI, the National Security Agency, and the Pentagon. He was actually assigned counter intelligence and tried to turn Russian spy's into double agents. He was the leader of a task force that tried to find double agents inside the bureau and the CIA. Hansen worked in the highest levels of our national security program. All the while, he was selling our secrets to the Russians. From 1979 to 2001 he communicated and sold materials for 1.4 million in cash and diamonds.

He was squeaky clean. He was a religious man and a passionate family man. Yet, he was the darkest of citizens. He sold out the agents that he vowed to work with and protect.

-but if you're distracted - you will miss them

their appearance distracts you - they are well packaged - look, talk, even behave like a Christian

***Discern the dangerous**

Jesus used three animals to picture the dangerous

Acts 20:28-31: “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹ For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. ³¹ Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.”

Philippians 3:2: “Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!

Dogs -

Among the Jews the dogs of the street were held in low esteem. The reference here is not to little pet dogs but to pariahs, large, savage, and ugly. One could see them almost everywhere, prowling about the garbage and the rubbish thrown into the streets. They were considered unclean and filthy (Prov. 26:11; cf. 2 Peter 2:22; Rev. 22:15). They threaten (Ps. 22:16, 20), howl and snarl (Ps. 59:6), are greedy and shameless (Isa. 56:11). In brief, they are contemptible

(1 Sam. 17:43; 24:14; 2 Sam. 9:8; 16:9; 2 Kings 8:13). To be eaten by dogs was a sign of God's special curse resting upon a person (1 Kings 14:11; 16:4; 21:24; cf. 1 Kings 21:19; 22:38).

Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953–2001). *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew* (Vol. 9, p. 359). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

-do not be distracted or confused away from the fruit that comes out of the life over time

–separate from them; do not heed their voices

The Greek word for pearl is margaritis - margaret and rita come from it

Pearls, obtained from the Persian Gulf or from the Indian Ocean, were fabulously priced, way beyond the purchasing power of the average person. In order to obtain a pearl of great value a merchant might have to sell all his possessions (Matt. 13:46; cf. 1 Tim. 2:9; Rev. 17:4; 18:12, 16; 21:21).

Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953–2001). *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew* (Vol. 9, p. 359). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

Disciples are not to attempt to disciple the unbelieving - also excessive pursuing of those who reject these valuable pearls could only embolden them to attack you.

Principle for evangelism - people reject and do not hurt the value of the gospel and we should not focus our strategy on those who reject

Principle for ecclesiology - Lords supper for saved and baptized people

A.T. Robertson: The suggestion may be correct that, since pearls resemble peas or acorns, these hogs, having greedily tasted a few and having discovered that they can do nothing with them, in anger trample the pearls underfoot and turn and tear to pieces those who had flung such non-edibles in front of them. "Let this not happen to the pearl of gospel proclamation nor to yourselves," says Jesus as it were.

Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953–2001). *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew* (Vol. 9, p. 360). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

So then the 'dogs' and 'pigs' with whom we are forbidden to share the gospel pearl are not just unbelievers. They must rather be those who have had ample opportunity to hear and receive the good news, but have decisively—even defiantly—rejected it.

Stott, J. R. W., & Stott, J. R. W. (1985). *The message of the Sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-7): Christian counter-culture* (p. 182). Leicester; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Stott, J. R. W., & Stott, J. R. W. (1985). *The message of the Sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-*

7): Christian counter-culture (p. 175). Leicester; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Judge -