

The Sermons of Jesus

Lesson 4

The Conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount

The entire thrust of the Sermon on the Mount is to show the distinction between true religion and man made false religion. In first century Israel, the contrast is between the truth being taught by Jesus and the hypocrisy of the religious establishment represented by the Pharisees. Therefore, Jesus in teaching on the conduct of those in the kingdom of heaven, said “unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees you shall not enter the kingdom”.

Read Matthew 7

1. The Pharisees had a self righteous, legalistic religious system that was oppressive and judgmental. In their pride they looked down on everyone who was not a part of their elite system. The corollary of self justification is condemning others. What was their evaluation of the people Jesus was ministering to (Matt 9:9-13)? What was Jesus’ response (Matt 9:12-13)?
2. Who do you think these Pharisees would have chosen back in 1 Samuel 16:6-13? Who did the Lord choose and why (1 Sam 16:7; Acts 13:22-23)?
3. What practice of the Pharisees did Jesus condemn in Matt 7:1-5? What kind of judgment is Jesus addressing in Matt 7? What did James say about this type of judgment (James 4:11-12)? Who alone can judge who is “saved or destroyed”?
4. Is it safe to say that when we judge people this way, we have an erroneous view of God, an erroneous view of others, and an erroneous view of ourselves (Matt 7:3-5, James 4:12, 2 Cor 10:18)?
5. In Matt 18:15-17; 1 Cor 5:1-2, 9-13; 2 Thes 3:14-15; Titus 3:10-11; and Galations 6:1, the church is actually commanded to “judge” fellow believers in Christ. What is the difference in this judgment and the forbidden judgment in Matt 7:1-5?

6. The image Jesus used in Matt 7:5 is about our spiritual vision being obscured because of our own sin of hypocrisy. What lesson did Jesus give the Pharisees about “spiritual vision” in John 9:39-41?

7. Jesus teaching was holy and His wisdom was “pearls”. What did Jesus caution his disciples against doing in Matt 7:6? Who do you think the “dogs” and “swine” are (Matt 5:20, 6:2,5; 10:14; 23:13; 25-28)?

8. What is the condition for answered prayer given in John 15:7? Therefore, it is a given that Matt 7:7-11 applies to Jesus’ disciples who abide in Him just like Matt 6:9-13. What prerequisite did John give in 1Jn 3:22? What did James say impedes our prayers in James 4:3?

9. Where does the “Golden Rule” come from (Matt 7:12)? This is easier said than done, but where must the internal power come from to carry this out (Romans 5:5)?

10. Read Matt 7:13-29. Notice the contrasts, focus on the crossroads. What are the 2 gates, the 2 ways, 2 destinations, 2 kinds of people, 2 professions of faith, the 2 foundations, and the 2 houses? In the parable about acting on God’s word (Matt 7:24-27), what is the test of the two foundations? What are the destinies of the 2 builders?