



The Best Life

A SERIES THROUGH THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

LIFE
GROUPS
WEEK 17 • JUL 12

NORTHSHORE'S COMPELLING STATEMENT

Hope changes everything.

ICE BREAKER

Was there ever a time you almost didn't ask for help with something because you assumed the answer would be no — and what actually happened when you did ask?

BACKGROUND

Matthew 7:1-12 is found in the back half of the Sermon on the Mount and covers three teachings that build toward one another. Verses 1-5 address judging others, using the image of a speck versus a plank in the eye to confront hypocritical criticism. Verse 6, the line about not throwing pearls to pigs, makes a balanced counterpoint: Jesus isn't calling for the suspension of all discernment, just self-righteous condemnation.

William Hendricksen notes that *The Lord has been admonishing his listeners to abstain from judging others (Matt. 7:1-5), yet also to judge (Matt. 7:6); not to be hypercritical, yet to be critical; to be humble and patient, yet not too patient*, Verses 7-11 then pivot to “ask, seek, knock,” and verse 12 closes the unit with the Golden Rule, do to others what you would have them do to you, which Jesus explicitly says sums up the entire Law and the Prophets.

REVIEW

What was meaningful from the above context or the sermon from last Sunday?



KEY VERSES: Matthew 7:12

So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

READ: Matthew 7:1-12



HEAD LEVEL: *What does it say? These help us to examine what the Word tells us.*

1. Jesus uses the image of a speck and plank. What is he teaching us about how we treat other people's faults?
2. Jesus compares an earthly father's generosity to our heavenly Father's generosity in verses 9-11. What does this comparison reveal about God's character? How does that relate to the standard that Jesus set in verses 1-6?
3. Verse 12 says this "sums up the Law and the Prophets." What does it mean for the Golden Rule to summarize all of Scripture's teaching up to that point.



Heart Level: *What does it mean? These questions help us shape our beliefs around the objective truth of God's word.*

1. Verse 6 tells us not to throw pearls to pigs, right after Jesus tells us not to judge. What does this verse teach us about the difference between judging someone's heart and using wise discernment?
2. In verses 7-8, Jesus says everyone who asks receives, everyone who seeks finds, and the door is opened to everyone who knocks. What does this teach us about who God is, and how is that different from how we often picture him?
3. Jesus compares an imperfect human father's generosity to our heavenly Father's generosity in verses 9-11. What does this comparison tell us about God's character toward us?



HANDS LEVEL: *What does it mean to me? These questions help us commit to live out the truth in our everyday lives and commit to potential next steps.*

1. Considering the “speck” and “plank” example from Jesus, is there a relationship in your life right now where you’ve been quick to point out someone’s flaws but slow to examine your own? What would it look like to change that order this week?
2. Verse 6 reminds us that discernment still matters. Where in your life do you need to ask God for wisdom to discern well, instead of judging harshly or staying silent?
3. Is there something you’ve stopped asking God for because you assumed the answer was already no? What would it look like to bring that back to him this week?
4. The Golden Rule asks us to treat others the way we’d want to be treated. Pick one specific relationship or situation where you can apply that, this week?



MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 7:12

So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets..

PRAYER REQUESTS:

(Please remember that these requests are confidential and need to stay within the group.)