



# I Can Relate: The Pig & The Pearl

## March 10 & 11, 2018– John Ortberg

*Note to Leaders: Every group is different, so we are providing a summary study with additional discussion questions in the Going Deeper section. Please choose the questions that relate best to your group.*

**Follow up from last week:** How did the message (on not judging the speck in others' eyes when you have a plank in your own eye) affect you this week?

## Connect

-  1. We are “pearl pushers” when we try to correct or instruct others who are not receptive to our input. What was memorable about the weekend message to not be a “pearl pusher”?
2. Why is it hard to refrain from judging, criticizing and/or giving advice to others?

## Engage

1. Read Matthew 7:6
  - What are examples of the “sacred” and the “pearls” to which Jesus is referring?
  - Why would those who are offered something sacred or valuable respond negatively?
2. Read Romans 14:13
  - What does Paul say is the consequence of our judging or criticizing others?
  - Why would judging or criticizing have this impact?

## Apply

1. How quick are you to speak, criticize, or give advice, and why is this so?
2. What are ways to gauge someone’s openness to receiving our input? What about their openness to hearing about Jesus?
-  3. How will you respond this week to become less of a “pearl pusher”?

## Pray

Make this a time of reflection for everyone in the group. Have people pray silently and ask God to help them be less critical, less judgmental, and more compassionate and encouraging. Have one person close with a prayer asking God to forgive us for our tendency to look at others with eyes of judgement, and to help us to be people who offer hope and love instead.



# Going Deeper

## Connect

1. What tends to be your first response when someone starts to give you advice? Why?
2. When you were a teenager, who was an adult in your life from whom you were open to receiving advice?
3. What are motivations that might influence a parent to be a “pearl pusher” toward his/her child?

## Engage

Read Proverbs 27:14. What is the importance of timing when sharing our words with others (whether what we are sharing is blessing or something else)?

## Apply

1. Why is it often easier to criticize or jump directly to giving advice rather than finding out why someone is behaving the way they are?
2. How can we be quicker to listen and slower to speak?
3. If you are a parent, who are the other adults in your child’s life that can help speak wisdom when your child is not able (or not wanting) to listen to you?

## Serving Opportunity

Find opportunities to serve others at [menlo.church/serve](https://menlo.church/serve).

## Personal Spiritual Practice Idea/experiment

Who is someone for whom you are often a “pearl pusher”? Pray the prayer below, letting go of this person and entrusting God to guide and lead them. Visualize and think of this person as you pray, and open your hands as an act of letting go and surrendering control.

Lord,

I let go of my desire to control  
and remember that you hold the world in your hands.

I let go of my expectations for this person  
and trust that you have a plan for them.

Keep me from being a “pearl-pusher”  
and show me how to be patient and present.

Keep me from forcing my wisdom or my agenda  
and remind me that I cannot control another human being.

Even though I want the best for this person.  
Help me to see that you love them more than I ever could.

Remind me that it is not my job to correct or fix anyone  
but to come alongside and offer hope and love.

I release this person to you  
And I trust in your goodness and provision

I trust that you are watching and aware  
I trust that you are moving, even when I cannot see it.

Amen

*This resource and additional sermon study guides  
are available at [menlo.church](https://menlo.church).*



**MENLO.CHURCH**

*Send questions to [info@menlo.church](mailto:info@menlo.church)*