



## Sermon on the Mount

**Discuss** – How much do you think you judge people in the church ?

In what ways does this manifest itself?

How do you think judgmental attitudes undermine church witness / unity?

**Read** – Matthew Ch 7 v 1 – 6

Jesus in these verses is dealing with the judgmental attitude that comes from those who are arrogant of heart. What he is doing here is highlighting the importance of making sure you are right with God before you start judging others. He is dealing with the self-righteous attitude and superiority complex of the Pharisee, who condemns everyone else for not living up to God's standards and yet does not live up to them themselves.

Many Christians have used these verses to undermine church discipline and used them out of context. Jesus is not saying that when you see someone in sin you should not try to help them. He is saying that when you help them make sure you are not doing in an arrogant patronising way, and make sure you are not doing the same sin yourself.

**Discuss** – What do you think the difference is between challenging someone who is sinning and judging them?

Why do you think we have a need to look down on others and criticise them?

How do you think we can stand against the pride in our hearts that sees everyone else as a sinner but really I'm a Saint?

Jesus makes it clear if we are arrogantly judging others then we will come under a more harsh judgment ourselves from God. Jesus uses the massive difference between a speck and a log to highlight how absurd it is for a sinner to judge another sinner. The importance of these verses is that we are going through ourselves a regular process of examining our own hearts and confessing our own sins. On the base of understanding God's grace and forgiveness for us we can then go and offer that grace and forgiveness to others.

**Read** – Matthew Ch 7 v 7 – 12

In these verse Jesus promises that God will give his people good things when they ask him. This promise has two parts to it.

Part 1 – God will give you that which is beneficial when you ask him for it.

Part 2 – God will withhold that which is ultimately harmful to you even if you ask him for it.

These verses give us a clear promise that God is a generous giver who loves to bless His children lives, however He is also a protective giver who will not answer prayers that will result in harm to His children.

The words that Jesus uses in petitioning God for things are words that encourage a perseverance in asking, seeking and knocking until God answers you.

**Discuss** – How hard do you think it is to know what God does and does not want to give you?

How do you think we can keep our faith levels high, even when God seems to take His time in answering us?

How do you know when is the right time to stop asking for things from God?

Jesus again uses the terminology that God is/ is like a Father to you – He loves you with a perfect love – Knows what you need and therefore can be trusted to provide everything you need to make you a mature and balanced Christian.