

**Matthew in Biblical Perspective:
A Royal Manifesto of the Kingdom from the King –
The Ninth Commandment: Do Not Be the Judge**

Matthew 7:1-6

By [Dr. Harry Reeder III](#)

September 19, 2010 – Morning Sermon

Today is a big day in the Sermon on the Mount. We turn a chapter. We have covered Matthew 5 and 6 and now we are in 7. Let's look at Matthew 7. It's the Word of God. It's the Truth. Matthew 7:1-6 says

1 "Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. 3 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. 6 "Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

The grass withers and the flower fades. This is the Word of our God. It abides forever and by His grace and mercy may it be preached for you.

I am so thankful for this text because I know it's misused. It's like all the other texts in the Sermon on the Mount where we have to approach carefully with balance. A lot of people use this text and say "Don't judge. You can't say my religion is wrong and this religion is right. You can't tell me what I'm doing is wrong. Who are you to judge me?" So what is this text saying? I think it's a very profound text. We obviously need to say what it is not saying. I want to ask you to really track with me in this study because I think this is life changing. I believe that in this ninth commandment on the Sermon on the Mount we are getting to the nub of Christ's burden in this sermon.

Let me say it this way. Christ's burden is not to preach a sermon that draws the line between unbelievers and believers. Now He will get to that when we move to the next section where it talks about two paths, two cities, two houses, two trees, two destinations and two gates, but that's not where He has been. He has been talking about those in the Kingdom that are teaching, that are least because they

are not teaching it right. He is talking about those who are praying, doing mercy ministry, fasting and He is drawing out for us that we who profess the King as our Savior and live in the Kingdom that there is this constant tendency to not deal with the Gospel and others the way the Gospel is supposed to deal with us and through us to others.

In other words, the burden of Christ will be revealed in this commandment. The burden of Christ is when we see sin in the lives of others what does God want us to do? Does God want us to hate sin? Absolutely. Does God want us to despise sin passionately? Yes He does but when we see sin in others what is the difference between the self righteous religionist and the Christ centered Gospel driven follower of the Savior? When the self righteous hypocrite/religionist sees sin in someone else it becomes the occasion to exalt themselves in self righteousness because they think they have justified and saved themselves. When one is focused upon Christ and saturated with His grace, saved, hates sin and loves Jesus there is something else that happens in our lives. This has been so convicting to me and everything in this Sermon on the Mount has been so convicting to me. Someone asked me the other day how much longer I was going to be in the Sermon on the Mount. I don't know but I want to get out of it as quickly as I can. I get so convicted every week in working my way through this and this one is no different. What does Jesus want to happen in me? A self righteous religionist will condemn them saying "I'll be the judge." But if Christ has laid hold of my heart I will certainly call sin, sin, light, light and darkness, darkness but when I see sin in someone else I will be drawn to them. I will not condemn them, I will condemn sin. I will be drawn to them and I'm supposed to live my life in such a way that they will be drawn to Christ through me.

So what is it in the lives of His people that will draw them to sinners and what is it in the lives of His people that draw sinners through them to Jesus? The first thing is you have to be saved which is called the beatitudes. You have to be blessed with the Gospel. You have to be saved and delivered. The second thing is you have to embrace your ministry of salt and light and when Jesus saves you He now wants to put into your life a perfect righteousness whereby you're accepted. He will cleanse your sin record through His blood but then He wants you to practice righteousness that exceeds the Pharisees – the self righteous religionists. So He gave us five commandments and we walked our way through those.

The first is the five directives on how to have exceeding righteousness in terms of life, marriage, sexuality, truth and relationships. It's not exhaustive but He is showing us how the Gospel allows us to take the Law to its height, depth, breadth and width with sweetness because there is no power in the Law. The power is in the Gospel but the Law does tell us how to love God and others. It takes us to a height and a depth that no religionist can ever get to.

Then He says when you do this exceeding righteousness how do you practice your righteousness. He doesn't want you to practice your righteousness like a hypocrite who wears a mask but it's not from the heart or like an idolater where you try to love God and money or the idols that money will buy. He doesn't want you to love God like a worrier where you are anxious about everything. He says there's a peace that comes in the lives of My people.

Now we come to this ninth commandment, the fourth in this second tablet about how to practice righteousness that attracts people to Christ. Jesus knows people won't come to Him unless they see something different in us but they have to see a difference with a difference. In other words, the difference is not carried in arrogance, self righteousness and pride but the difference is carried with humility. How do you know when there's humility from a Christ centered, Gospel driven practice of righteousness? We'll not only say 'no' to idolatry, anxiety and hypocrisy, but we'll say 'no' to being the judge over people. We are not to take the position of condemnation upon others. That is worked out in our culture, how? There are two words that start with God and you put another four letter word with it that you're not supposed to say that comes from this concept. That's rightly so but there are a lot of us that would never use those two words but yet sit as if we are God and make determinations about the souls of men and women. Jesus says 'no' and when you see sin you will certainly condemn sin but you will not condemn sinners. With all your heart you will go after sinners and when you live differently from that sin, you will live differently with a difference so people are drawn to it, because it's not a difference of arrogance but a difference of humility. That's why these two tablets are here.

Now we get to the crux of it. When you see sin, how do you deal with it, self righteously or do you examine yourself? Let's look quickly at this passage. I want to do three things in this text. I want to show you what Jesus is giving as an admonition in Matthew 7:1 and 2. Then secondly I want to show you this illustration that Jesus has in Matthew 7:3 through 5 and then thirdly this almost enigmatic exhortation in Matthew 7:6. So let's first look at the admonition in Matthew 7: 1, 2 which says **1** *"Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.* Let me first say what He is not saying here. He's not saying that believers don't make judgments. We're going to see that's not the case in the text. The very text itself calls for judgment – what's a dog, what's a pig and what's a pearl. That's the judgment call. So the text itself is going to call us to judgments but He is saying when you see sin, the speck, in someone's life, what do you do? You don't make a judgment of them because that's not your call. You don't have a right to it, you don't have the equipment to do it, you don't have the position to do it, and you're not worthy to do it. If you could, you could have opened the seals in the book of Revelation. That's not what you're called to do. You are called not to set yourself up to sensor them. You are not called to be judgmental of them but you are called to make judgments.

Some people preach this by saying can I tell you how to get to heaven? Don't make judgments of people and then God won't judge you. This is not a back door to heaven. Don't make judgments and God won't judge you. No, that is not what the text is saying. The context gives us what the text is saying. The context is telling us that when we are dealing with people and we see sin in their life there is a response that Jesus calls for but first of all if you're saved by grace and Christ is your Redeemer then you restrain yourself from becoming The Judge. Did you notice how I titled this sermon? It is Do Not Be THE Judge, not 'a' judge. I can't say do not be a judge. Goodness, I know seven guys in this church that would lose their jobs tomorrow. They are judges. Our elders are supposed to make judgments. They are shepherds. We have discipline cases we have to deal with. God calls us to deal with that. So He isn't saying there isn't a place for you to be a judge at an appointment with your responsibility.

He is saying that you are not The Judge. God is The Judge of the world not us. That is not our position. We don't know someone's heart or soul. We don't know everything about a situation. We don't know any of those things. We can certainly identify what is sin and what is not but we don't know the soul or heart. So God commands us not to judge and then He gives us a warning saying "If you insist on making this a part of your lifestyle in my name then it will affect our relationship." By the way, don't you do that as parent every once in a while? "Okay son, if that's the way you want to do it then we'll do it that way for a while." So instead of me being the God who receives you back when you have become a prodigal, then I'll deal with you the way you are dealing with other people. Is that what you want? Do you want Me to deal with you as a Father who knows you and loves you and has given His Son to redeem you? He is not saying you will lose your salvation but He is saying that if you insist on dealing with other people that way then He will deal with you that way and He in loving discipline will put you through what you're putting them through in order to teach you how ought to be dealing with them. He'll give you the measure that you're giving out to others.

So how is it that we're supposed to deal with people? Then He gives us an illustration. If I could draw I'd love to be able to draw this but I can't draw it but that doesn't mean you stop listening to the sermon and try to draw this. Jesus draws this tremendous word picture that's like a cartoon to teach us a lesson. In the picture is a guy with a log sticking out of his eye and this guy goes over to the guy with a little particle in his eye and says to him, "Look, I'm going to take that speck out of your eye." I don't know how he could get to him with the log sticking out of his. He is giving us this ridiculous picture. We who are sinners saved by grace have established that we're going to be the judge over somebody else, when in reality if we see the sin in somebody else our first move isn't to them but our first move is to ourselves. We take the log out of our own eye.

I don't want to overdo the cartoon here but it's interesting to note the log and the speck and think is there a projection thing going on here. We have a tendency to

see the specks in other people that are the projections of the log that's in us. Do we have a tendency to see the sins in other people that are actually ours that are bigger but it's a whole lot more fun to deal with it in their life than in our life? Is that what He is telling us? So He says let me tell you of this self righteous hypocrisy of the religionist, it's when they see the speck in someone else's eye they go after it and avoid the log that's in their own eye.

Then He gives this enigmatic exhortation at the end after saying you have this log in your eye so how will you take the speck out of your brother's eye. So what should you do? He wants us to take the log out of our own eye so then we can help somebody. Matthew 7:6 says **6** *Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.* In the Old Testament pigs were considered unclean. They ran in packs and they were scavengers. They would turn on anything and anyone even if that someone or something had given them something. They would become ravenous. Then there's the pearl. You can't get more valuable than a pearl. In fact it can be said that Christ is our Great Pearl because Christ is the King and the Kingdom is the pearl of great price that you want the Kingdom and the King more than anything else. It's valuable.

What is He saying here? He is saying that when you see sin in your brother's eye you don't take the position of The Judge. You have to make a judgment because that's sin but you don't set yourself up as The Judge. You set yourself up to be God's instrument to reach the sinner. You do this first by dealing with your own sin and then by going into their life so that you are there to win them. If they are an unbeliever you want to win them to Christ. If they are a believer you want to win them away from the sin that besets them to Christ to walking faithfully with Christ. God is the Judge of the world and what do we do? We gather His children to Him. Psalm 50:4-6 says **4** *He calls to the heavens above and to the earth, that he may judge his people: 5 "Gather to me my faithful ones, who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!" 6 The heavens declare his righteousness, for God himself is judge!* According to this we are to rain down fire upon them. No, we are to bring them to The Judge so that The Judge can be their Father who gave His Son to save them.

Now He is giving us some discernment. He is calling us to make a judgment that as you turn to those caught in sin and as you minister to them there are those who will revile the Gospel. They will revile Christ and they'll be glad to eat you alive too. When John Calvin comments on this now I know why they call him the theologian of the Holy Spirit because he makes the point that it's only by the Holy Spirit that you know when this comes. You are talking with someone who is dead in their sins and you're bringing to them the answer but Calvin says, "Sometimes there comes a time when they become like pigs and dogs" and while you're not making the final judgment of them you do have to make another judgment that God is sending you for them from someone else. God might have somebody else

that's going to better at them but He is sending you away from them. So you have to make that discernment.

How do I make that discernment? You have to be surrendered and walking with the Holy Spirit to know when that time comes. I can't give you a formula. It's just the Holy Spirit that gives you the knowledge when that time comes. There are examples all over the Scripture. Go to the Old Testament. God's people would trample the Holy covenants of God and what would God do? He would remove the prophets. Remember the book of Amos? God said, "You have declared unholy what I have declared holy, therefore there will be a famine of My Word. I will be silent. I will not speak to you any longer." So God removes His Word from them because they had trampled Him. That is the premise Jesus is saying. In the leading of the Holy Spirit you are not the judge but you do sometimes have to make a judgment after you go after sinners and they are not responding then God sometimes will call you.

Jesus will do the same thing with the twelve and He'll do it to the seventy. What will He tell them to do? He will tell them to go house to house and if your greeting is not returned or they revile you then shake the dust off your feet and move on. You find it five times in the book of Acts – Acts 13, 15, 18, 28 and one other place that I forgot. Five times where the Apostle Paul or Barnabas is preaching and teaching and they begin to revile those things and Paul stood up and said, "I am now innocent of your blood. I will go to the Gentiles." Or Paul says "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of your fathers that you are just like your fathers in that you have become dull of hearing therefore I will go to those whom He has called me to go that desire to listen." That really requires a lot of discernment in our lives. The first thing He gets us to is changing our perspective on sinners. We don't make judgments as self righteous hypocrites upon them but we go after them. Then if you go after them sometimes the Lord says "I don't want you to go anymore with them but I want you to go over here because they will not listen to you so you move on to someone else. Shake the dust off your feet and move on."

Here are some takeaways from this text. There are three of them for life. I want to talk about this matter of judging so that we are sure we understand it. Just like everything else in these commandments they can be misused or abused or misunderstood. He is not telling us the way to be saved is to not make judgments. Is He telling us we don't make judgments in life? No, obviously He doesn't. The Bible calls elders to make judgments. He calls civil magistrates to make judgments. The Bible says you will know them by their fruits. The Bible tells you to make judgments about teachers. Are they teaching the Word of God faithfully? It says they examine the Scriptures to see if the things they were teaching were so. They were making a judgment. God calls us to make judgments but He doesn't allow us to take the position of The Judge. The very tax calls for judgments.

Dogs, pigs, pearl – I have to make judgment calls. Do I continue after this person or is God telling me through their response that I am to move on because they are taking what is holy and trampling it under their feet? It's not that they're processing, listening or that they're merely rejecting it, reviling it and trampling it under their feet and they would even turn to trample me. So those are judgments that have to be made. There are judgments in the Scripture and besides if you make no judgments about what is right or wrong then God's people would walk through life as moral relativists, meaning there is no right or there is no wrong. Clearly He is not calling us to moral relativism. We do not know the souls and hearts of men therefore when we see sin in people's lives we are not called to be The Judge over them. We are called to go after them, the way someone for Christ's sake came after us.

The second takeaway is the desire of Christ and the profile of the self righteous hypocrite is given to us in this text. What does the self righteous hypocrite look like and how does that creep into my life and your life? Here's how it shows up. When we see sin in someone else's life we magnify their sin to minimize our sin. Their speck becomes a log and our log at best becomes a speck. With a self righteous hypocrite, it's not merely that they just hate sin, they begin to go after sinners with censorious judgments and they do it by magnifying the sins of others and minimizing theirs, at best. What the self righteous hypocrite really likes to do when they fall into that snare is not just maximize other's sin and minimize theirs and go after others because it makes them feel better about themselves but they actually don't minimize their sin but they go after other's sin to ignore their sin. So that sin in someone else's life becomes a way to exalt myself as a hypocrite by exposing them instead of winning them.

Jesus isn't calling you not to hate sin or to not make judgments of what's light, darkness, sin or not sin. He is calling you away from being The Judge of sinners and for you to be an instrument to win sinners. He is also calling you away from your sin. Take the log out of your own eye. Now go win the other sinner that has the speck in their eye. In other words, Jesus desires that when you see sin in someone else's life your first movement should be self examination saying, "What about my life? I've seen a speck, now what's in my life?" The Bible doesn't tell me to examine others. Do you remember what He said at the Lord's Supper? You are to examine yourself. So where am I in my walk with Jesus?

The second movement is to go after the sinner. With love and truth, don't hold back but in the name of love you have to speak the truth. When you don't hold back you have to hold people up. Love them, reach them, care for them, lay your life down for them, go thoughtfully, go graciously, go with conviction and go with compassion but go. If they are lost go to evangelize them. If they are saved or profess to be Christians then go to encourage, win and exhort them but go after them. Don't sit back and be The Judge. Step up to be the Lord's instrument to win them having first examined ourselves. Paul said to the Galatians, "If anyone is caught in a trespass, you who are spiritual restore them looking first to yourself

lest you be caught in the trespass (Galatians 6:1).” For those of us who traffic in this matter vocationally this has profound implications for us, people like me. I can’t become a self righteous religionist. It doesn’t mean I’m silent about sin or that I don’t speak about the issues concerning light, darkness and sin. I have to be salt and light. The difference in me has to be a Gospel difference in me. Here is what it will show. You won’t set yourself up as a judge. You will first examine yourself and then you will go after them with all of your heart.

The third takeaway is your Father is The Judge. I want you to do some reasoning with me so don’t close down yet. In every one of the commandments leading up to this, what has been the antidote to hypocrisy, worry and idolatry? The antidote has been your view of God and your relationship with Him as Father in every single one of them because Jesus Christ has been given by God the Father for you and Christ has saved you. That’s your Father so when it comes to living my life and practicing righteousness I don’t want to be like a hypocrite that wears a mask to be seen in public to exalt myself. I don’t want to take my mercy ministry and use people in need of mercy to prop myself up or to prop my church up or to talk about what great mercy ministry we are. I know you have to talk about it, equip and identify it but we don’t use mercy ministry to exalt ourselves. We don’t use our prayer life or our fasting to exalt ourselves.

The Father sees you in secret. The roofs of over your life are in secret with your Father, who knows you, listens to you, and hears you. As for mercy ministry your right hand should not know what your left hand is doing. As for prayer, yes there is a place for public prayer but the dynamic of our life is a private prayer life, a secret closet where we go to talk with our Father. Your Father knows you and hears you in secret. The antidote is your view of God, His knowledge, His power and your relationship with Him. This God who is holy, holy, holy is my Father, Abba Father.

Idolatry? How can I serve God and money and why does He pick money. It is because money either buys the idol or it is the idol. Money is amoral but it can be used to buy idols or it can be the idol. The love of money is the root of all sorts of evil when it becomes our idol or our means to purchase our idols. In Isaiah 44 God gives us through the prophet Isaiah the ridiculousness of idolatry. Here’s a log, here’s a piece of wood. You cut part of it and you heat yourself with it. You cut another part and you cook your food with it. You cut another part and build yourself a house with it and then what is left over you carve an image to bow down and worship it like it can deliver you. Now, how ridiculous is that?! Wood is amoral. It can’t talk, love or do anything. The reason we do that is if I make the idol I’ve exalted myself and I’m the god-maker so that makes me god. That is why we do that.

Money is the same way. That is so foolish. If money was the key why do you think the celebrities keep the psychologists in business. Do you know why they can buy that treatment? It’s because they live for money. Money didn’t make it so

now money has brought them into enslavement. Now they have to go over here and pay the money to get free and that can't free them. There's only One who can free them and that's Jesus Christ. You can't serve God and mammon. You will either hate the one and the serve the other or love the one and despise the other but the answer is that you have a Father who loves you and given His Son for you. His Son is enough for you.

What about worry? God says you have to banish all anxiety and I preached on this in the last study. I had some come up to me after that sermon and say "Harry, is the sermon 'don't worry be happy'?" No, that was not the sermon. There are concerns and there are cares. I have to be careful. I'm not called to be careless but I'm also called to cast all my cares upon Him for He cares for me. I'm not self reliant. I don't want to exalt myself in hypocrisy. I don't want to worship myself with idolatry and I don't want to rely upon myself in anxiety as if I can add a single span to my life with my anxiety or as if I can clothe myself better than God who clothes the lilies of the field. He just points out the ridiculousness of all of this. Yes you are called to live life responsibly and then cast all your cares upon Him. If your Father does this for flowers and birds what will He do for you whom He gave His Son to save? Are you not worth much more than them or more valuable than them?

We think through our anxiety that we can add value to our life. God says that we are actually destroying our life. You don't need to add value to your life. God made you His treasure. He gave His Son for you. After doing this Father thing for three commandments, He doesn't talk about God the Father, your Father as Father but He talks about the Father as Judge. How many of you are glad that the Judge is your Father? He gave His Son for you so that when you come before the Judgment there is no condemnation. You are free. The Judge is your Father.

Number one, I'm not going to usurp my Father's position as Judge. He's the Judge, not me. Secondly, I don't have the equipment my Father has to be the Judge so I'm not going to be the Judge. Thirdly, I don't want to be the Judge. I want to be the instrument to bring the people the message that the Father who is the Judge sent for me when He gave His Son by His Spirit to come for me and to save me from my sins. That's what I want to do and what I need to do. So God, please don't let me be this self righteous hypocrite who usurps Your position to be the Judge. Yes I won't use those two bad words but more than that I don't want to take the position of God in the condemnation of the souls of others. I want to go after sinners even as You went after me. I want to go to them who need You because You came for me when I needed You. I want to walk in a way that is pleasing to You.

I was sharing with everyone this last week how I want to die. I want all my children in a Christ centered Gospel driven church that love Jesus. Secondly, I want to go meet Jesus from the pulpit. I want to die preaching, writing my last

check for the last dollar to some Christian ministry or to my church so that there is zero in the bank account when I leave here. Death tax – you don't have a chance government because I've already given it all away. That's the way I want to go. I have a Father who is going to bring me the right way so I will trust Him.

This Father is the Judge. Out here are all these people whom the Judge of the Universe is going to be their Judge and He's not their Father. What a terrifying thing to come before Him! Shall not the Judge of the world do what's right? You might think, "Am I not supposed to make judgments on other people?" The judgment you make on people is to give the judgment of charity. A man said to me recently "Harry, what do you think about the man wanting to burn the Koran?" First of all we are not going to burn Korans at Briarwood. We're going to go win Muslims at Briarwood and that's not the way you win Muslims. I'll debate the Koran and I'll tell you about Jesus. I'll show you the terribleness of a works religion but I'm not going to burn the Koran. What do you think about the man who wants to do that? I'll give the judgment of charity and see it as mistaken zeal. It maybe something else but that's between him and the Lord. My judgment on that is mistaken zeal. I'll make a judgment about whether it's right or wrong but him its mistaken zeal. I'll give the judgment to charity. He has a great heart for something but somebody gave him some bad advice.

What do I want to do with people who are caught in sin? I want to bring them the Good News of salvation by grace. The Father who is The Judge can be your Father and you can have salvation in Him forever and ever and I want to bring you to Him. The Judge of all the world will do right. He has already done something gloriously right. He sent His Son to save you. I want to take you to Him. He'll free you from that sin. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the privilege to be together and in Your Word today. If you are reading this I want you to know that sin will kill you so we're going to talk about sin. We are also going to give you the glorious Message. We are not The Judge and The Judge has sent His Son to set you free that you might hear from Him. Accept Him. You're forgiven and pardoned in Him. So if you haven't come to Him, come to Him. If you have walked away from Him and been the prodigal, the Father is ready to receive you. Come to Him. Jesus, for the rest, when we see sin we'll certainly make judgments about sin but would You first send us into our own heart and soul to examine ourselves. Then would You send us full of grace and truth to sinners to win them for the Savior? I pray this in Jesus' Name, Amen.

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