

The Gift of Correction Matthew 7:1-6

I. There is only one Judge.

- A. The qualifications are quite rigorous.
 - 1. You must be one whose perspective is untainted by sin.
 - (a) Your understanding of justice must be flawless.
 - (b) No bias allowed.
 - 2. You must be omniscient, and all wise.
 - 3. You must be the one who determines right from wrong.
 - (a) More specifically, you must be God.
 - (b) Even more specifically, you must be the Son of God.
 - 4. Jesus alone is qualified to be the Judge (John 5:22).
- B. When we judge one another, we are taking his role.
 - 1. We don't realize that we are claiming to be qualified.
 - 2. The Judge sets the standard for right and wrong, for justice.
 - (a) The Judge must himself be able to meet the standard.
 - (b) He can't judge someone else for what he is guilty of.
 - (c) Jesus is able to judge because he is without sin.
 - (d) How about you? (Romans 2:1).
 - 3. So, when we judge people, we are setting a standard we must meet (Matthew 7:2).
- C. The problem is that our sin blinds us (Matthew 7:3-5).
 - 1. Sawdust and a plank of wood are of the same substance.
 - (a) Both the judged person and the one judging are sinners.
 - (b) To one degree or another, they commit the same sins.
 - 2. Sawdust or plank, it's a matter of perspective.
 - (a) The sin of both parties is similar.
 - (b) What your brother sees as a speck, blocks your whole vision.
 - (c) If you are looking out of that eye, a speck is like a plank.
 - 3. Jesus is saying, you are no better than your brother.
 - (a) You are a sinner, saved only by grace.
 - (b) Apart from grace you deserve judgment.
 - (c) Yet, the Judge has been merciful to you.
 - (d) Therefore, be merciful toward your brother.

II. Correction, spoken in love, is a gift from God (pearl).

- A. Jesus does not tell us to never correct one another.
 - 1. He says, "deal with your own sin first."
 - (a) He speaks of correcting someone while not "paying attention" to your own sin.
 - (b) Your sin is there, but you are not attentive to it.
 - (c) You're not even examining your own life/heart.
 - (d) Jesus calls that out as hypocrisy (Matthew 7:5).
 - 2. First, be humbled by looking at your own heart.
 - (a) Then, with humility, you'll be able to see clearly.
 - (b) Then, you can help your brother.

- B. Why is correction, done well, a gift from God?
 - 1. Because if it is based on truth, it is discernment from God.
 - 2. If it is truly done in love, the goal is to help each other grow.
- C. Developing a "hesed" based community.
 - 1. Hesed is Hebrew for steadfast love.
 - (a) Hesed is an enduring covenant love ("everlasting love").
 - (b) The New Testament equivalent is agape love (unconditional).
 - 2. God develops attachment with his hesed love.
 - (a) For a child, 100,000 face to face encounters with love the first year.
 - (b) For the children of God: "May his face shine upon you."
 - (c) For the Church: "we are to love one another as we've been loved."
 - 3. Hesed is what attaches us to God and to one another.
 - (a) Discipleship is designed to flow from loving attachment.
 - (b) The Other Half of Church; Wilder and Hendricks; pages 79, 86-87.
- D. Correction leads to transformation when hesed is strong.
 - 1. Our attachments form our identity.
 - (a) Identity: Who are we? (Wilder, p 112, Sermon on the Mount).
 - 2. Healthy correction reminds us of who we are in Christ.
 - (a) It says, "we are in this together. We are family."
 - 3. Two types of shame: toxic shame and healthy shame.
 - (a) Toxic shame says, "you are bad" and leaves us alone in it
 - (b) Judging people is shaming people with toxic shame.
 - (c) Healthy shame says the behavior is wrong, but I am with you. I love you and this does not stop me from loving you.
 - 4. Jesus used healthy shame to bring transformation.
 - (a) Wilder, pp 132-133.

III. "Don't cast your pearls before swine."

- A. Pigs are an unclean animal in Jewish Law.
 - 1. They also represent those who don't know God (unclean).
 - 2. Your pearls are truths that God has shown you.
 - (a) Why are they sacred? Because they're from God.
 - (b) Bring them in love to correct a brother/sister and a wise brother/sister will recognize them as treasure.
 - (c) Bring them to a non-believer who is blind and hostile to the truth and you might get trampled.
 - 3. It is not your job to be cleaning up the behavior of non-believers.
 - (a) They need the Gospel first.
 - (b) Love them toward Jesus and extend grace for the blindness.