



Matthew: Alive to God's Desire

Week 5, Sermon preached 1/29/2012

Matthew 7:1-6

Discussion Guide

Start It

- Pray for your time together. Share anything that burdens you, and ask God's Spirit to work among you.
- "Don't judge, or else you too will be judged." This is written deep into the subconsciousness of Christian communities. Based on the way you understand this idea, what are the implications for personal relationships, your city, and society at large?

Study It

- Read the passage out loud, and make some observations.
- In the previous two paragraphs, Jesus addresses the topic of worry. How is it significant that the first two paragraphs of today's passage seem to call out a more subtle worry—worrying oneself with God's job of judging actions and motives?
- Jesus commands his listeners not to judge. But in the next sentence, he acknowledges that they still will judge. What is his real expectation and why?
- How does it make you feel that Jesus, the speaker of the words "In the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you," is the person attributed elsewhere as the judge of the world?
- What do you think about the speck and the plank as images to communicate judgmentalism? Can you think of another image or parable to communicate this idea?
- How is the discussion of objects in eyes related to the eye being the lamp of the body in Matt. 6:22–23?
- Who are the dogs and the pigs? What are the sacred things and the pearls? Think of other places in the Gospels (especially later in Matthew) where these are mentioned. Do these help you understand what should be protected and from whom?

Live It

- Do you find yourself quick to judge others, especially over minor issues?
- Consider whether there is a bit of sawdust in someone else's eye that is irritating you. Is this a tiny fraction of the larger piece of wood in your own eye? Ask God to help you discern why you react this way and what steps you can take to "measure" the other person in the way you hope to be "measured."
- Is there a situation in your life where you are reluctant to share the treasure of the kingdom of God with someone else? Talk to a trusted friend about how you can live as a citizen of the kingdom no matter how frustrating the relationship or situation is.

Pray It: Pray for one another in light of the conversation you have just had.

