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“THE FOUNDATION OF GOD’S KINGDOM”

¹ “Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. ² For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged. ³ And why worry about a speck in your friend’s eye when you have a log in your own? ⁴ How can you think of saying to your friend, ‘Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can’t see past the log in your own eye? ⁵ Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend’s eye. ⁶ Don’t waste what is holy on people who are unholy. Don’t throw your pearls to pigs! They will trample the pearls, then turn and attack you.” **Matthew 7:1-6 NLT**

Jesus is not forbidding all judgment—He is condemning hypocritical judgment. The Bible’s command that “we not judge others” does not mean we cannot show discernment.

- The man with a plank criticizing someone with a speck is blind to himself.
- Self-examination must come before correction.

Effective Prayer

⁷ “Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹ You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? ¹⁰ Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! ¹¹ So if your sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.”

Matthew 7:7-11 NLT

- “Ask... seek... knock...”
- God is not reluctant—He is good.

The Golden Rule

¹² “Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.” **Matthew 7:12 NLT**

The Narrow Gate

¹³ “You can enter God’s Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. ¹⁴ But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.” **Matthew 7:13-14 NLT**

- Many will think **their works** will make them righteous enough to enter.
- Few will understand that only by faith in Jesus’ righteousness are we made right in God’s sight.

The Tree and Its Fruit

¹⁵ “Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. ¹⁶ You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree can’t produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can’t produce good fruit. ¹⁹ So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.” **Matthew 7:15-20 NLT**

False teachers look harmless but are spiritually dangerous.

- Their words can be appealing, but their fruit reveals the truth.
- **Inspect the Fruit = character, beliefs, lifestyle, influence, and actions.**
- **Test all teaching** by Scripture, does it line up with God’s Word.
- Look for long-term fruit, not short-term appeal.

True Disciples

²¹ “Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. ²² On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ ²³ But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’” **Matthew 7:21-23 NLT**

The Cost of Discipleship

- So you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything you own. **Luke 14:33**
- A true Christian disciple is a believer in Christ and possesses new life through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Because he loves Christ, a Christian will also be an obedient disciple.

Building on a Solid Foundation

²⁴ “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. ²⁵ Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. ²⁶ But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. ²⁷ When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.” ²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹ for he taught with real authority—quite unlike their teachers of religious law. **Matthew 7:24-29 NLT**

- Both the wise and foolish builders heard the teachings of Jesus Christ.
- The difference wasn’t access to truth—it was their response to truth.
- Storms hit both houses equally.
- Following Christ does not exempt us from difficulty.

What is your life built on?