

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

FAMILY DEVOS



What's That In Your Eye?

Scripture: Matthew 7:1-6 (see also Luke 6:37-42)

Memory Verse: Luke 6:37

“Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”

For My Family:

Have you ever noticed that your sin always looks worse on someone else? For example, when you tell a lie or when you tease your sibling, it doesn't seem that bad, but when someone lies to you or teases you, it's really hurtful and seems way worse! The Pharisees once brought a woman to Jesus who had been caught sinning. These Pharisees told Jesus that the law of Moses stated the woman should be stoned. Wanting to trap Jesus, they asked Him, “What do You think should be done?” As the Pharisees asked Him again and again, Jesus stooped over and wrote in the dirt with His finger as if He didn't even hear them. Knowing their sinful hearts, He stopped writing for a moment and told them, “Whoever is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone.” He then went back to writing in the dirt. As He did, one by one, the Pharisees began to walk away until there was no one left but Jesus and the sinful woman. Jesus looked at the woman and told that He did not condemn her, but told her to, “Go and sin no more” (John 8:1-12).

These Pharisees looked at this woman in her sin and judged her harshly. Jesus is teaching us in today's passage and warning us that we can do the same thing. It's easy for us to look at people and make judgements about who they are or what they must be like. We can often make these judgments without even thinking. But Jesus wants us to think before we judge. He teaches us to do this with a funny illustration.

Imagine you see a man walking around with a big wooden plank in his eye. He's walking through the supermarket knocking things off of shelves everywhere he goes. Every time he turns his head, everyone around him has to duck! Now imagine that this man came up to you and started telling you that you had a tiny speck of dirt in your eye. “You should really take care of that dirt in your eye,” he says, “That could really cause a problem!” It would be hard for us to take what he said seriously. After all, he has a much bigger problem in his eye that needs to be taken care of before he can talk about what's in your eye.

The same applies to our hearts. If we have sin in our own hearts that needs to be repented of, how can we go up to someone and judge them for their wrongdoings? Let's be clear that Jesus is not saying that we should not make judgements about people (we will talk about that later in this chapter). He wants us to be discerning, but first He wants to make sure when we do make judgements, we do so with a pure heart. Remember, a hypocrite is someone who acts one way, but is really another way inside. Let's take Jesus' warning to heart. When we are tempted to judge others, let's look at what is in our own hearts first.

Questions for Young Children:

What does it mean to judge someone?

What did the man in Jesus' story have in his eye?

Is Jesus really talking about cleaning our eyes? What is He talking about?

Questions for Teens and Pre-teens:

What does it mean and what might it look like to be a hypocrite?

What are some consequences you might face for judging someone?

How can we tell if there is a plank in our eye, and how do we remove it?