

The Critical Heart

- great at the armchair judgment
 - sports, news stories, judicial system, church
- see some of the facts, make a call, feel really smart
- culture great at pointing out the problems
 - not looking after
 - not providing for my expectations.....
 - should do

Jesus speaks about Judging Others – Matthew 7:1-6

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"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces."

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1. Dangerous Habit to Develop

- Jesus clear – do not judge.....
- consequences spelled out – hold you to same standard

a) misuse of the text

- life verse for those who:
 - despise authority – can't tell me what.....
 - avoid correction – who do you think you are.....
 - proud and foolish – I know more, better than.....
- Scripture has loads to say about evaluating and discerning

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b) Scripture Clearly Teaches Discernment & Protection

- discerning sin –

1 Cor. 5:3,12 *“Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside?”

*** John 7:24 *“Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment”***

*** Galatians 6:1 *“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently.”***

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- there is clear instruction that we are to discern sin within the body of Christ, and lovingly address it.

- To Protect God's People & Truth

1 John 4:1 *“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world

*** 1 Tim. 6:3-5 *“If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.”***

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***2 Tim 3:16 “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”**

- clearly the counsel of God is for us to discern sin and protect truth – must evaluate what is taught and embraced in light of scripture.

c) dangerous to allow critical spirit to remain

- held to the standard applied to others is terrifying

- compels us to deal with the heart issue

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2 Testing For the Critical Heart

- Oswald Chambers “cultivate the uncritical temper. It is not done once and for all. Beware of anything that puts you in the superior person’s place..... Stop having a measuring rod for other people. There is always one fact more in every man’s case about which we know nothing.”

-gk word for look - “to gaze at, to keep looking at something.”

a) Stop Focusing on Others

- meddling, busybodies, in others business
- easy to look critically at others and not self

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*** Rom. 14:1-4 “Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. One man's faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge someone else's servant? “**

*** James 4:11-12 “Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?”**

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b) Check Your Own Life & Heart

- there is often a log in our own eye – we become blind
- self evaluation is where to begin

***2 Cor. 13:5 “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? “**

***1 Cor. 11:31 “But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment.”**

- examine, confess, turn from, accept
- upon receiving forgiveness – hard to be critical

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c) Lend a Loving Hand

- notice the progression – after dealing with self you are in a position to help your brother remove the speck
- remember Gal. 6:1 – restore gently – lovingly
- keys to doing this:
 - develop relationship – earn the right to speak truth
 - determine to encourage – holy living, right with God
 - deliver relief – removing the speck brings relief

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3. Treat the Truth With Care

- Jesus was specific about ears and hearing
- Important to discern readiness of heart for truth

a) dog's and pig's

- wild, unclean – avoided and generally despised
- not the lost, hurting, in need of help, open to truth
- closed to truth, hard against repentance
- often spiritually superior, arrogant, proud, boastful...

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b) Discernment & Timing Key

- many wanted to debate with Jesus, he often shut them down
- discerning the motive and heart important before truth was exposed and offered
- careful or they will:
 - * destroy what is valuable
 - * tear up the messenger

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So What

1. Root Out The Critical Heart

- Jesus clear – judgmental spirit is sin
- the consequences are quite serious

2. Test for a Critical Spirit Often

- easy to grow in our lives and culture
- am I focused on others? Have I become quick to pass judgment on their families, lives, reactions, activities? Do I easily fire from the armchair not knowing many of the facts or the condition of hearts?

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- Am I practicing repentance – discovering sin, confessing, turning from, accepting?

- Am I gentle in relationships – known for providing relief not bringing pain?

3) How Am I Handling the Truth with Others

- discerning the hearts – building relationships, drawing close?

- careful not to see truth wasted and people destroyed?