

# Day 7, Matthew 7

by David Servant

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*David Servant's sermon emphasizes the importance of moral judgment, the power of prayer, and the necessity of holiness for eternal life.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:15

**Topics:** "Moral Accountability", "Eternal Life"

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## Description

David Servant preaches on Jesus' true meaning behind the prohibition against judging, emphasizing the importance of moral appraisal to obey Jesus' commandments and identify false prophets. Jesus condemns hypocrisy but endorses helping others after self-reflection. He highlights the significance of prayer, ensuring that God gives what is good and encourages studying His Word. Jesus emphasizes the Golden Rule as a summary of fulfilling the Law and Prophets, simplifying His teachings. He warns against false prophets and emphasizes that eternal life belongs only to the holy who do the will of the Father, stressing the importance of repentance and obedience.

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## Transcript

Jesus' prohibition against judging was not what many think it is. He was not forbidding the moral appraisal of other people. We absolutely must appraise other people morally if we are going to obey Jesus' commandments not to "give what is holy to dogs" and not "throw our pearls before swine" (7:6). And we must appraise people if we are going to identify and avoid false prophets (7:15). Jesus does not want us to waste our time trying to persuade people who are resistant to the truth, and He does not want us to be misled by those who are void of the truth. But both require that we make moral appraisals.

As we consider the context of Jesus' words about judging (7:1-5), it becomes clear that He was condemning the practice of pointing out small faults of others when we are personally guilty of greater faults. That, of course, is hypocrisy. Notice, however, that Jesus did not disapprove of taking the speck out of a brother's eye once we have removed the log from our own eye (7:5). Rather, He endorsed it. And that also requires that we make a spiritual appraisal of another person. I've written a much longer teaching on this subject titled, "Judge Not!", which can be read [here](#).

You'll be hard-pressed to find more encouraging words regarding prayer than Jesus' words in 7:7-11. But are they true? Does "every one who asks receive"? They do when they ask for "what is good," as Jesus said (7:11). Just as most earthly parents will not give something to their children that would harm them, neither will our Father. And we should be able to determine something about what He considers to be

good or bad for us by studying His Word. Every request, for example, found in the "Lord's Prayer" (that we read yesterday) is asking for something that is good. But compare those requests with the carnal and selfish prayer requests so often uttered. In Luke's account of this same promise by Jesus, he indicates that one of the "good gifts" Jesus had in mind for us is the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13). The Holy Spirit helps us be holy. That is good!

"Therefore whatever you want others to do for you, do so for them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (7:12). That is obviously a summarizing statement (it begins with the word therefore). But what does it have to do with the prayer promises that immediately precede it (7:7-11)? Very little. Actually, it is an end-of-sermon statement that summarizes everything Jesus said since 5:17: "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill." Notice His mention of the Law and Prophets in both 5:17 and 7:12. Since 5:17, Jesus had been fulfilling (or "filling to the full") the Law and Prophets, which can be summed up in the Golden Rule. I love it when Jesus makes things simple!

Since the way is narrow that leads to eternal life, Jesus warned His followers of those who might lead them astray. They are false prophets and teachers, and they can be identified by their fruit, that is, their deeds and actions. Unholy teachers are false teachers, even if they perform miracles. If they "practice lawlessness" (7:23), they are wolves in sheep's clothing who will one day be eternally condemned. Unholy leaders cannot lead anyone on the narrow way of holiness. In light of this, why is it that millions of professing Christians follow spiritual leaders who blatantly ignore so much of what Jesus commanded in the Sermon on the Mount?

Jesus underscored the central theme of this sermon---eternal life belongs only to the holy---three times in His closing statements (7:13-14, 21-22, 24-27). Calling Jesus Lord is not enough. Only those who do the will of the Father will enter heaven (7:21). Where's the grace in that, some ask? It is found in understanding that the only people who are doing God's will are those who have repented and been born again. God's grace is not a license to sin, but a temporary opportunity to repent and receive forgiveness.

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