

# Expository Thoughts On Matthew - Matthew 7:1-11

by J.C. Ryle

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## Transcript

The first portion of these verses is one of those passages of Scripture which we must be careful not to strain beyond its proper meaning. It is frequently abused and misapplied by the enemies of true religion. It is possible to press the words of the Bible so far that they yield not medicine, but poison.

When our Lord says, "Judge not," He does not mean that it is wrong, under any circumstances, to pass an unfavourable judgement on the conduct and opinions of others. We ought to have decided opinions: we are to "prove all things;" we are to "try the spirits." (I Thess. 5:21; I John 4:1.) Nor yet does He mean that it is wrong to reprove the sins and faults of others until we are perfect and faultless ourselves. Such an interpretation would contradict other parts of Scripture: it would make it impossible to condemn error and false doctrine; it would debar any one from attempting the office of minister or a judge. The earth would be "given into the hands of the wicked" (Job 9:24): heresy would flourish: wrong-doing would abound.

What our Lord means to condemn is a censorious and fault-finding spirit. A readiness to blame others for trifling offences or matters of indifference, a habit of passing rash and hasty judgments, a disposition to magnify the errors and infirmities of our neighbours, and make the worst of them, this is what our Lord forbids. It was common among the Pharisees: it has always been common from their day down to the present time. We must watch against it. We should "believe all things," and "hope all things" about others, and be very slow to find fault. This is Christian charity. (I Cor. 13:7).

The second portion of these verses teaches us the importance of exercising discretion as to the persons with whom we speak on the subject of religion. Everything is beautiful in it\

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