

Matthew 7:1-12, 24-27

Contemporary English Version

Don't condemn others, and God won't condemn you. God will be as hard on you as you are on others! He will treat you exactly as you treat them. You can see the speck in your friend's eye, but you don't notice the log in your own eye. How can you say, "My friend, let me take the speck out of your eye," when you don't see the log in your own eye? You're nothing but show-offs! First, take the log out of your own eye. Then you can see how to take the speck out of your friend's eye.

Don't give to dogs what belongs to God. They will only turn and attack you. Don't throw pearls down in front of pigs. They will trample all over them.

Ask, and you will receive. Search, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened for you. Everyone who asks will receive. Everyone who searches will find. And the door will be opened for everyone who knocks. Would any of you give your hungry child a stone, if the child asked for some bread? Would you give your child a snake if the child asked for a fish? As bad as you are, you still know how to give good gifts to your children. But your heavenly Father is even more ready to give good things to people who ask.

Treat others as you want them to treat you. This is what the Law and the Prophets are all about.

Anyone who hears and obeys these teachings of mine is like a wise person who built a house on solid rock. Rain poured down, rivers flooded, and winds beat against that house. But it did not fall, because it was built on solid rock. Anyone who hears my teachings and doesn't obey them is like a foolish person who built a house on sand. The rain poured down, the rivers flooded, and the winds blew and beat against that house. Finally, it fell with a crash.

First Nations Version:

An Indigenous Translation of the New Testament

"If you do not want to be judged, then do not judge others. For the way you judge others will come back to you—full circle. Think of it this way. How can you see the speck of wood in the eye of another when you cannot see the log in your own eye? How can you say, 'Here, let me help you,' when you cannot see that you need even more help? Stop pretending to be something you are not! If you will be honest with yourself, you will then see clearly enough to help others.

Take care not to give what is sacred to the ones who will turn on you and treat you with disrespect. For who would toss an eagle feather into the dirt to be trampled on?

Let your prayers rise like smoke to the Great Spirit, for he will see and answer you. Every step is a prayer, and as you dance upon the earth for the things you seek, the way will open before you. In the same way, as you search for the true ancient pathways, you will find them. Answers will come to the ones who ask, good things will be found by the ones who search for them, and the way will open before the ones who keep dancing their prayers.

The ones who listen to me and walk in my ways are like a wise man who built a grand lodge on solid ground. The rain poured down, the streams flowed, and the strong winds came. They all beat against the lodge, but it stood strong against the storm. Nothing could shake it for it was built on solid ground.

The ones who hear my words but do not walk in these ways are like another man, a foolish one, who built his lodge on top of the sand. When the storm came against it, the lodge crashed to the ground and all that was in it was lost.

## The Message

“Don’t pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults—unless, of course, you want the same treatment. That critical spirit has a way of boomeranging. It’s easy to see a smudge on your neighbor’s face and be oblivious to the ugly sneer on your own. Do you have the nerve to say, ‘Let me wash your face for you,’ when your own face is distorted by contempt? It’s this whole traveling road-show mentality all over again, playing a holier-than-thou part instead of just living your part. Wipe that ugly sneer off your own face, and you might be fit to offer a washcloth to your neighbor.

“Don’t be flip with the sacred. Banter and silliness give no honor to God. Don’t reduce holy mysteries to slogans. In trying to be relevant, you’re only being cute and inviting sacrilege.

“Don’t bargain with God. Be direct. Ask for what you need. This isn’t a cat-and-mouse, hide-and-seek game we’re in. If your child asks for bread, do you trick him with sawdust? If he asks for fish, do you scare him with a live snake on his plate? As bad as you are, you wouldn’t think of such a thing. You’re at least decent to your own children. So don’t you think the God who conceived you in love will be even better?

“Here is a simple, rule-of-thumb guide for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you, then grab the initiative and do it for them. Add up God’s Law and Prophets and this is what you get.

“These words I speak to you are not incidental additions to your life, homeowner improvements to your standard of living. They are foundational words, words to build a life on. If you work these words into your life, you are like a smart carpenter who built his house on solid rock. Rain poured down, the river flooded, a tornado hit—but nothing moved that house. It was fixed to the rock. But if you just use my words in Bible studies and don’t work them into your life, you are like a stupid carpenter who built his house on the sandy beach. When a storm rolled in and the waves came up, it collapsed like a house of cards.”