

JUDGING OTHERS

I. The Scripture: Eye Surgery and a Heart Transplant

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. 2For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.

3"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? 4How 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? 5You 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.

6"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."

Matthew 7:1-6

II. Looking at the Scripture

1. Here Comes the Judge

According to the words of Jesus, what happens to a judgmental person?

Read Luke 6:37-38. What additional words of Jesus does Luke include in this teaching? How does Luke sum up the teaching in verse 38?

According to Jesus, who is most responsible for the condemnation we receive?

Why do you think Jesus includes a teaching on judging others in the context of the Sermon on the Mount?

Why do you think Jesus can say something like this after being so critical of the Jewish leaders? (See Matthew 6:2,5,16.)

2. Eye Surgery

What is the problem with the person Jesus spoke of in Matthew 7:3-5?

How does a person do what Jesus commands in verse 5?

How can Proverbs 23:9 help you understand the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:6?

III. The Scripture and You

1. Be Careful What You Say - Matthew 7:1,2

The Miranda Act, a rights protection law, is known by many of us because of the TV shows that use it in police scenes. Does this sound familiar?

You have the absolute right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used as evidence against you in a court of law. You have the right to consult with an attorney, to be represented by an attorney, to have an attorney present before any questions are asked and during anytime that questions are asked. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed by the court, free of charge to represent you before any questioning, if you desire.

Now imagine that you are in a spiritual court

How do you feel knowing that your speech and actions will be reviewed at your spiritual hearing?

- a. I'm in trouble now.
- b. I hope there wasn't a candid camera or a video photographer near me the last few days.
- c. I think it is time to ask for forgiveness.
- d. Yipes!
- e. I think I'm safe.
- f. Thank God for forgiveness.

If you take the words Jesus spoke in Matthew 7:1-6 seriously, what steps will you need to take to put His words into action?

Is there anyone you need to talk to?

How will this new understanding influence your future behavior? List a change you might experience in each of the following areas.

Relationship with Christ

Family

School

Sports/Clubs

Friends

Social Life

Dating Life

Other

2. Time for Eye Surgery - Matthew 7:3-5

"This might hurt a little . . ." Famous last words, but it's true, especially when it comes to adjusting our own words and actions. Are there any boards sticking out of your eyes? If so, don't worry, you are human.

In the space below write out the areas of your life that need "eye surgery." If you need help "removing the plank" write out the name of a person who might be able to help you.

Here's some great advice from the apostle Peter:

"So get rid of your feelings of hatred. Don't just pretend to be good! Be done with dishonesty and jealousy and talking about others behind their backs."

1 Peter 2:1 (The Living Bible)

Here's an interesting thought:

"As Christians, we should live in relationships with people in such a manner that even when we leave a room people will miss us. And when we are gone, and or funeral is held, they will cry. Someone will deeply miss us."¹

What kind of impact do you have on people? Are you a person of affirmation or are you a judgmental, critical person?

When you leave this world, what would you like people to say about you?

1. Told by Joyce Landorf, *Balcony People* (Waco: Word Books, 1984), p. 40.