

MATTHEW 7 SERIES

# Sermon on the Mount

Discussion Questions for Small Groups or Personal Reflection

# WEEK 1

## Immigrants, Inmates, and Inner Logs Discussion Questions

Thoughts from DJ Hawke on Matthew 7:1–5:

Many think this passage is about not judging others at all. But the Jewish maxim behind this is of a standard a measure that could be changed or altered in a marketplace if a person wasn't honest. While we are to self reflect, praying that God will open our eyes to the plank in our own eye.

The Greek word for judge is, “κρίνω,” which means to distinguish, decide, try, condemn, punish, avenge, conclude, condemn,, decree, determined, is team, judge, go to the law, ordain, or call into question, sentence to, or think.

I think the better question here is what are we judging and why? Are we holding others to a higher standard that we hold ourselves? Are we giving ourselves and others grace or judged and being condemning by and by what standard? God standards are different from human standards.

Even if we hold ourselves to a high standard, can we really hold those others, whether they know, Christ Jesus, or not to those same standards? We are called to help the poor, the downtrodden, the oppressed, and help them with the love of Christ. Very few times in Scripture does Jesus make a caveat before blessing or talking with people. Even the Samaritan woman at the well, whom He knew had had multiple husbands and was living with a new man that was not her husband was not condemned. Even the woman caught in adultery in the gospels was put before Christ. I also know that the man was not. However, Jesus did not condemn her. He literally said go and said no more. He did not throw the first stone, although he was the only one in the crowd worthy to do it as He was the only One without sin.

So I encourage you each day to consider and self reflect whom do you need to give Grace to? It may even be yourself. Do you need to give your family member, your friend or even a coworker or the person who cut you off in traffic, Grace?

Do some self reflection and see if the person that you need to give the most grace to may be yourself.

# WEEK 1

## Immigrants, Inmates, and Inner Logs Discussion Questions

**Scripture: Matthew 7:1–5 (CEB)**

“Don’t judge others, so that you won’t be judged. You judge others by the standard you use for them, and God will use the same standard for you. Why do you notice the speck in your neighbor’s eye, but don’t see the log in your own eye? How can you say to your neighbor, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ while there’s a log in your own eye? Hypocrite! Take the log out of your own eye first; then you’ll see clearly enough to remove the speck from your neighbor’s eye.”

1. What does the phrase “do not judge” mean to you at first glance?
2. How does understanding the Greek word κρίνω (to distinguish, decide, condemn) change your perspective?
3. Who do you tend to judge most, and why?
4. How might God’s standards differ from human standards in how we view others?
5. Whom do you need to give Grace to?
6. How can you practice giving grace—to yourself, family, friends, coworkers, or even strangers?

# WEEK 2

## The Poor Are Asking, Are We Listening? Discussion Questions

Thoughts from DJ Hawke on Matthew 7:7–12:

“Ask, and it will be given to you; Seek and you will find; knock and the door will be open to you. For everyone who asks receives; one who seeks finds; to the one who knocks the door will be opened.”

I used to think this first meant that the second you ask, it will be given to you. The second you sought God, that he would open everything and reveal himself and everything to you. For everyone who asks receives, sometimes it takes time or sometimes the answer is no.

As a child and teen, I thought this verse meant whatever we asked for, God would give! So I did what any teen nerd would do! I asked for super powers! I even pled with God that IF He would choose to give them to me, (as I asked for multiple powers, as I wasn't picky and trusted God to choose well). Sadly, I never got super powers. (If I had, I wouldn't have shared this part).

I have heard there are three answers to prayer: Yes, no and not yet. The overall point is though to keep asking, to keep seeking and to keep looking for Him. Keep asking the questions and keep seeking him in worship in scripture and with people whom you trust to know him. There are those that say that doubt is sin, but I challenge you to find where in scripture Jesus ever said to stop asking questions. I am on my 30th time reading the Bible cover to cover and I have never found one, yet. Meanwhile, Jesus can continually and constantly ask questions of people. He was not afraid of asking questions of people to get people thinking and to delve deeper into Scripture. I find deeper I get in the Scripture, the better understanding and more questions I have to ask. It doesn't mean I am questioning God, but wanting a deeper relationship and growing in faith.

I believe I could do an entire message or series of messages on verse 12, “So in everything, due to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the prophets.”

I try to treat others as I want to be treated, even the point of annoying others in order to do it. If I don't want other people to do it to me, I try not to do it to them. I try to love, encourage and build up others because I believe Christ wants us to do that. It is a very good general rule of life to treat others as you wanna be treated and hope that is returned.

# WEEK 2

## The Poor Are Asking, Are We Listening? Discussion Questions

Scripture: Matthew 7:7–12 (CEB)

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Everyone who asks will receive. Everyone who seeks will find. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. What father among you would give a stone to his child if the child asked for bread? Or give a snake if the child asked for a fish? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him! Do for others whatever you would want them to do for you. This is the essence of the Law and the Prophets.”

1. What is your first reaction to “Ask, seek, knock”?
2. How have you seen God answer prayers in ways you didn’t expect?
3. How does remembering “yes, no, or not yet” change how we pray?
4. Who in your life might need you to seek God for them or listen more closely?
5. How can practicing the Golden Rule (v.12) shape the way you interact with others daily?

# WEEK 3

## Beware the Wolves Discussion Questions

Thoughts from DJ Hawke on Matthew 7:15–20:

Beware of false prophets. The Greek word for prophet is “�ευδοπροφήτες”, which means a serious profit, protected for teller or religious imposter, false prophet.”

One of the pastors at the church I was first a youth pastor for in college once told me that if you view all of Scripture as a mosaic, and don't pull a specific verse or small passage out of context, it should match up to the whole scripture. I love this idea. You can pull one or two verses out of context and make them appear to mean different things. But if you back up and take a 30,000 foot view of it, with the mosaic type of view all of it should resemble the whole of the love of God. Many Scriptures could be taken out of context to make them appear to mean different things, but when looked at the deeper meanings from the original Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic within the context of the societal and cultural meanings, they still should fit in to the whole of scripture.

So beware of people who focus on one or two verse passages and try to twist the meaning of scripture to fit their agenda or views or perspectives. If the idea is to not fit the overall view or perspective of the mosaic, they are most likely false prophets, and not teaching the overall love of God.

Another good way to tell the false prophets from the real prophets are from verse 17, “Likewise, every good tree bears, good fruit, but a bad tree cannot bear, good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.”

If you want to know what kind of fruit a prophet bears, look at the people they are shepherding. Are they doing good; loving on people and helping the poor?

If they are preaching well, their fruit and the people they shepherd will show Christ's love. If they are not, it will be evident as well.

# WEEK 3

## Beware the Wolves Discussion Questions

**Scripture: Matthew 7:15–20 (CEB)**

“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but underneath they are savage wolves. You will recognize them by their actions. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? The good tree produces good fruit, and the bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So by their actions you will recognize them.”

1. What comes to mind when you hear “false prophets”?
2. How can taking a “mosaic view” of Scripture help you avoid being misled?
3. What are some ways to discern whether a spiritual leader is bearing good fruit?
4. How have you personally experienced teaching or guidance that reflected God’s love?
5. How can you ensure your own words and actions reflect Christ’s love to others?

# WEEK 4

## Built on the Rock Discussion Questions

Thoughts from DJ Hawke on Matthew 7:24–29:

Verse 24, “ Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and put them in a practice is like a wise man who built his house in the rock.”

Hearing these words and learning these words and even memorizing these words mean nothing, if you do not put them in a practice. We can all learn Greek Hebrew and Aramaic, and yet not have the love of Christ in our hearts. If we truly love Christ and follow Him, it will be evident in our words and our actions. Do we go and love other people? Do we actively utilize our resources to help others? Do we preach, teach and go live out the Gospel? Do others know we love Christ? If we love by our words, only, is it truly love? Or do we go and actually love people and love God?

That is the main point of the gospel is to bless others with our actions while we are also preaching and teaching and loving others to Him.

# WEEK 4

## Built on the Rock Discussion Questions

Scripture: Matthew 7:24–29 (CEB)

“Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the rivers flooded, and the winds blew and beat against the house. Yet it didn’t collapse because its foundation was on rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and doesn’t put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, the rivers flooded, and the winds blew and beat against the house. And it collapsed. It was completely destroyed.”

1. What does it mean to you to “hear and put into practice” Jesus’ words?
2. How does your faith show up in your daily actions and decisions?
3. How do you distinguish between knowing about Christ and truly following Him?
4. In what ways can you actively use your resources, time, or skills to love others like Jesus?
5. How can you build a life on Christ’s teachings so it withstands life’s challenges?