



VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH

SUGAR GROVE CAMPUS



Judgment or Love: Which Boomerang Do You Throw?

Mark Krauss | April 13, 2014 | Matthew 7:1-6; Luke 6:37-42

The Upside-down Kingdom Series, Lessons Learned from the Sermon on the Mount, Part 25

We're going to be looking at the next section in the Sermon on the Mount which is a very famous passage. Sometimes it is a controversial passage and it is difficult in many ways. We're going to be looking at Matthew 7:1-6 and Luke 6 as well. We're going to be going back and forth between the two parallel accounts in Luke and Matthew.

Take your Bible as we read God's word to us in Matthew 7:1-6:

¹ "Judge not, that you be not judged. ² For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. ³ Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. ⁶ "Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you."

Let's pray together.

Lord God, I thank You for this passage. I thank You for working over me all week; I have so far to go in living out the truth that You are presenting to us in this passage. We want to be people of restoration and healing like You were when You approached Jerusalem on that Palm Sunday all those years ago. We want to be about restoration and healing. I pray that You would speak to us, make this clear to us and send us out with a strong desire to be Your obvious followers in this world. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

How many of you would agree that we are often more blind to our own sin than we realize? Maybe it's just part of living. The longer you live and see yourself in more circumstances, the more things come out that make you say, "I thought I dealt with that a long time ago. Where did that come from?"

It reminds me of a massive tree that fell in Aurora. When it fell you could see that the inside of the tree was almost hollow. It was only connected very thinly around its circumference and the rest of it was hollow. But no one would have ever known what was really there until the storm blew it over and revealed the truth.

About 10 years ago a pastor wrote an amazingly honest article about his own process of discovering sin. He says:

I was shocked by a catastrophe on Mt. Everest in May 1996 in which a dozen mountaineers perished. One of the most disturbing sideshows in that circus of tragedies was the story of two climbers who—in their bid to reach the summit—bypassed three injured, starving and freezing climbers. The ascending team had sufficient provisions to render aid to the stranded climbers but they did not want to jeopardize their own ascent by stopping to assist someone else. As a result all three of those climbers died. Later when they were asked why they didn't stop, one of the climbers said, "Above 8,000 meters (26,000 feet) is not a place where people can afford morality. We were too tired." That was his answer.

The pastor is relaying this story for a different purpose. He continues:

I used that illustration over and over again in my preaching as I was just astonished at the calloused, contemptible behavior of these two.

A few years later though I was leading a college study tour to the Middle East. We were hiking up Mt. Sinai in the darkness before the dawn to get to the summit to see the sunrise. We were in a hurry. Of course, the 7,500-foot hike up Mt. Sinai is tame in comparison to Mt. Everest. On Everest the oxygen deprivation could even impair how you think, but not here. As my students and I neared the top of Mt. Sinai we were passed by two Bedouins carrying a man down the mountain. The man was unconscious. His sporadic breathing, rattled and gurgling, indicated that he was in critical condition. I suspected he was suffering from pulmonary edema which is a sickness of mountaineering caused by ascending too fast. It's fatal unless the climber is rapidly taken to a lower elevation.

For a brief moment I considered halting my ascent and helping the Bedouins carry the man down the mountain but my desire to make it to the top by sunrise checked my impulse. Without further thought I gave one of the Bedouins my flashlight and continued upward. "They seemed to be doing okay by themselves," I assured my uneasy conscience. The sunrise from the summit was glorious, but it was overshadowed completely by what transpired on the way down.

Not far below the place where we had passed the Bedouins a figure draped with a blanket was lying on the ground. Two shoes protruded from under the blanket. The man carried by the Bedouins was dead. Every step down that mountain smote my conscience. What I had found so loathsome in the climbers on Mt. Everest had essentially been repeated in my own action on Mt. Sinai.

What an honest telling. We're no different. Our sin is like an onion. It is buried under layers and layers; our own deceitful heart blinds us to what's there.

By this point in the Sermon on the Mount, no one who's taking Jesus' words seriously should feel like they can judge somebody else because God's standards are so high. Remember what Jesus said in [Matthew](#)

5:20, *"For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees [unless it comes from a changed heart and not just an outward show], you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."*

Remember the examples He gave. Matthew 5: 21-22 says, *"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment."* It's beyond murder; it's anger.

Matthew 5:27-28 says, *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart."* God's standards go so much higher. No one should feel like judging another human being when they make an honest assessment of their own heart.

Once again the Pharisees are on the wrong side of this spiritual issue. Jesus said this about them in Matthew 23:3-4, *"For they preach, but do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger."*

Our passage is going to show us that a judgmental, critical spirit produces an unmerciful, unforgiving, unkind, compassionless and graceless religion and God hates it.

Our title is "Judgment or Love: Which Boomerang do you Throw?" Jesus is going to show us four things:

The Command

The Principle

The Illustration

The Exceptions

1. The Command – Don't Live Like This

Jesus begins the command in verse one, "Don't live like this." Verse one says, *"Judge not, that you be not judged."* How many of you have heard these words misquoted? We hear them all the time. The philosophy of today certainly does not like to use these words correctly. It likes these words but uses them in the wrong context.

What do they really mean? The Greek verb judge (*krinō*) means to distinguish, to decide, to separate. In its most basic form it would be to make two piles: here are the green objects and there are the blue. Or to separate things by saying, "Here are the ones I want to keep; there are the ones I want to donate." Or to say, "This is right and true; that is wrong and needs to be avoided." It means to separate.

Therefore what it means depends on how the author is using the word in its context. You have to understand the context to translate the word.

So *krinō* could mean a number of things. It could mean **"to decide a matter of law for citizens."** Some have said this verse means Jesus is telling us to throw out the court system. How do we know that's not

the case? In [Romans 13:1-7](#) God set up the government to judge both civilly and criminally. [Deuteronomy 19](#) tells us the same thing. So that's not the context Jesus is using.

Another use of this word is **"to divide truth from error; to decide what's right and what's wrong."** Society doesn't like that one, does it? They say, "Never say something is wrong. It's isn't up to us to judge what is right and what is wrong." Is that biblically true? Of course not.

Listen to what society says through our prominent philosophers of today—mostly men and women who we see in the movies or on television. I Googled "judgment" and found thousands of these quotations:

- "I don't believe in guilt. I believe in living on impulse as long as you never intentionally hurt another person and don't judge people in your life," says Angelina Jolie.
- "I don't judge others. I say if you feel good with what you're doing, let your freak flag fly," says Sarah Jessica Parker.
- "You have the right to kill me but you don't have the right to judge me," says Charlie Sheen with his messed up theology.
- "What is truth? Truth doesn't really exist. Who's going to judge whether my experience of an incident [or truth] is more valid than yours? No one can be trusted to be the judge of that," says Tracey Emin.

Of course, God can. That's the philosophy of our day though. They latch onto these words and say, "Don't decide truth from error." God says the exact opposite. [First John 4:1](#) says, *"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world."* The world is full of the spirit of error.

[First Thessalonians 5:21](#) says, *"But test everything; hold fast what is good."* God tells us pointblank: be discerning. So this cannot be the context Jesus means. It would contradict everything else that's being said in Scripture.

So what does Jesus mean here? I think it is the third use of separate: **"to personally condemn and sentence someone for their failures."** Jesus is talking about personally condemning someone—a brother or sister—for their failures.

We see this for starters by the fact that "brothers" is mentioned three times in the passage. So this isn't a court of law. This is "mano-a-mano."

We can also see it in the verb tense "to judge." It signifies a once for all judgment. The person has said, "Do you know what? I have summed you up. I disapprove and I am done with you once and for all." That's the idea here: a once and for all judgment.

Luke's account of this same teaching by Jesus makes this even more apparent. Look what Luke adds to the sentence that Jesus said in [Luke 6:37](#), *"Judge not [there's our word krinō] and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned."* Luke brings in another word that's an even more intense form of pronouncing guilt.

The kind of judgment Jesus is talking about is condemnation. It's a personal pronouncement of someone else's guilt and the measuring out of the sentence. You'll find those two words back in our passage in Matthew 7:2—you are *pronouncing* their guilt and *measuring* out their sentence.

Once again in this incredible sermon Jesus focuses our attention on the heart of a genuine follower of Christ instead of a self-righteous Pharisee. Jesus is saying there is a very big difference between those two. The Pharisee is going to pronounce on the sinner a once-and-for-all, "Guilty! Away with you!" and push them away. The genuine follower of Christ is going to pull the sinner toward them with forgiveness and restoration.

There's a very big difference between condemnation and restoration. Restoration is painful. It's not fun. At first people don't know how to take it and push back, but it's an act of love. That's what Galatians 6:1 tells us, "*Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual [who are ready to respond rightly] should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.*" This is spiritual restoration. It's gentle. It's humble. It's an act of love. This is not an act of condemnation and separation.

Condemnation is more than just something Jesus says not to do. Really, it's taking the place of God in somebody else's life. Romans 14:10 says, "*Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.*" In this passage, Paul is talking about, "Your brother likes to eat or drink this and you don't. He counts this day as important and you don't." Your brother has his own Master that will correct him and his own Father to train him. So why are you putting yourself in the place of God in his life? Why are you usurping God's role? When we condemn our brothers and sisters, we begin to take on ourselves what only God should be doing for His servants.

John Stott said it this way, "To despise or stand in judgment on a fellow Christian isn't just a breach of fellowship, it's a denial of the Lordship of Jesus. I need to say to myself, 'Who am I that I should cast myself in the role of another Christian's Lord and Judge?' I must be willing for Jesus Christ to be not only my Lord and Judge but also my fellow Christian's Lord and Judge."

So Jesus is speaking about somebody usurping God's role to become that judge. To the self-righteous Pharisee God says, "Judge not. Don't set yourself up in God's place because something bad will happen if you do."

2. The Principle – Because Life Is a Boomerang

That takes us to the principle in verse two—judge not because life is a boomerang. The way you live your life is a boomerang because what you give out comes back to you.

I want to show you something. This is a boomerang that I got in Sydney, Australia about ten years ago. Some of you might have a bigger one. You wouldn't be a man if you didn't want to throw this thing the moment you had it in your hand. Should I throw it over there?

So what does a boomerang do? If I threw it the right way—which I don't pretend to know how—it's supposed to go around and come zipping back. I would need to duck. It's not razor sharp but it has a line on it that can do some damage. What I throw out with this device could come right back and smack me in the head, couldn't it?

What goes around comes around. Look at verse two, *"For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you."* What a principle! What a truth!

This continues a theme that we've seen throughout this sermon. Are you going to receive mercy from God if you're not merciful (Matthew 5:7)? Are you going to be called a child of God if you're not a peacemaker (Matthew 5:9)? Is your Father in heaven going to forgive your trespasses if you do not forgive others their trespasses but instead pronounce their guilt, their sentence and separate from them (Matthew 6:14-15, 7:1-2)? We've been told no to all of those questions.

The Judging and Condemning Boomerang

Here's the principle: do you want to be judged and condemned by other people? Then be judgmental and condemning yourself.

Remember the parable Jesus tells about the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:21-35. The servant's master forgave his incalculable debt. It says that he owed 10,000 talents. That's the largest number available in the Greek language. His debt was countless. It would take many lifetimes to pay back such debt.

Have you ever noticed the fate of the servant after he was unforgiving? He went out—after being forgiven that great debt—and grabbed the man who owed him 100 days wages. He choked the man then threw him over to the jailers and said, "Don't let him out until he pays back every penny."

Did you ever notice what sentence the servant got for doing that? I don't know if I ever noticed this part before. He got the exact same thing. His master heard of it, called him back and sent him away to jail until he could repay it all.

The unforgiving servant got the same thing that he threw out. It came right back and hit him. What a principle! What a truth! Condemnation is a boomerang: it will surely return in the same manner that you sent it.

The Forgiving and Giving Boomerang

Luke gives us a second boomerang. I didn't even remember it was there. Look at Luke 6:37-38 again. Here's the alternative boomerang, *"Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; [here's the other way to live] forgive, and you will be forgiven; give and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap."* Jesus piles on the blessing that's coming to you. He couldn't pack anymore blessing in that bag He's trying to put on your lap. Love is also a boomerang and it returns in even greater measure than condemnation, at least it appears so in this passage. Which one do you want to have coming back in your direction? The answer should be obvious.

3. The Illustration – Surgery Fail

That brings us to the illustration in this passage. I call this illustration “eye surgery fail.” In it we see the futility of condemnation and how ridiculous it is when we set ourselves up as the judge to pronounce guilt and declare a sentence.

Luke 6:39 begins the illustration like this, “*He also told them a parable: ‘Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?’*” This is an interesting issue. We’re about to get into the log and the speck, but Jesus first explains that the man with the log hanging out of his eye is blind. That’s interesting.

How would you like eye surgery from a blind surgeon? The surgeon comes in to operate on your eye and you find out that he is blind. That’s the scary thing about this sin: it can be raging within us all while our deceitful heart hides it from us. Anybody can see it apparently but we can’t.

As I thought about this particular passage and thought back on my own life, I realized that I’m a black and white kind of person. I absolutely have gone too far in drawing that line of separation. It takes a lot of living life with God humbling you over and over again to help you be more cautious, loving and gracious. Again, that’s what’s scary about this sin: it could be raging inside you and you don’t even know it. Maybe other people see it in your life but you don’t. You’re a blind man trying to help another person and you’re not even aware that you’re in no position to help. In fact if you try to help, you’ll both fall into the pit.

In the IVP commentary on Matthew, the author Craig Keener tells a story about a friend of his. This friend attended a Bible study along with a former Nazi soldier. This man was probably not at the S.S. level, but he was a participant in the Holocaust to some degree. At one point during the Bible study, the man complained that he had missed a promotion in the Nazi army because he objected to social dancing. How spiritual and sacrificial he was! Do you see what he gave up because he took a stand for Christ?

The friend—with tongue in cheek—remarked, “Christians were the same everywhere—they were not afraid to speak out, even against Hitler, when it came to social dancing!”

That man missed some bigger issues, didn’t he? It is scary that something the size of a redwood tree could be hiding in our lives this very moment but we can’t see it.

Deal with Your Own Sin First

Jesus now gives an illustration that will resonate with carpenters. How many of you are carpenters? Have any of you ever been out in the shop? I’ve done some woodworking projects. They look terrible. My pinewood derby cars looked pathetic but I tried. This illustration really is very humorous.

Matthew 7:3 says, “*Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?*” The word speck (*karphos*) is not just dust or some fine thing. It’s a bigger issue like a splinter. Jesus is saying, “Why do you see a real issue—the speck that’s in your brother’s eye—but not notice the log that is in your own eye?” You have a colossal issue in comparison. It is obscuring your entire field of vision and yet you can’t see it. All you can see is the little splinter in the other person’s eye.

If you've ever worked in a woodshop—chiseling, sawing or sanding—then you know that stuff flies all over. I don't think they had safety glasses back then. I'm not sure how they would have protected their eyes. But even with safety glasses you still get things in your eyes.

So imagine this illustration that Jesus is painting. Imagine one carpenter who stops his work because something flies in his eye. Another carpenter sees this and comes to his aid ready to help, but there's something grossly wrong with him and he doesn't even notice it.

Imagine the second carpenter coming over with this giant piece of wood sticking out of his eye and saying, "Excuse me brother, I noticed you rubbing your eye. Can I be of some help? Let me see here." The man would be knocking his brother in the head with his log as he tries to look into the affected eye. That would be ridiculous.

If I came up to you with this glaring issue and said, "I want to help you. I can see more clearly into a sin issue in your life than you can right now," what would you think?

This illustration is a hyperbole but it makes a great point. What's wrong with the second man? He is blind to his own sin. He is so absorbed in criticizing other people that he can't even see the redwood tree hanging out of his eye. The first man has a speck of unbiblical living or thinking in his life but the second man has a log. The first man has a particle of immaturity and the second man has a plank of religious superiority hanging out of his eye. And he doesn't even see it.

How dangerous is this? If sin can deceive us this easily then how would I even know it's there? It's important to go to Luke's account and see that Jesus begins by saying, "*Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?*" I don't know if this person even knows what his life looks like right now.

So how would I know that there's something like that happening in my life? Begin by going to someone you are accountable to and ask them for the nitty-gritty truth. Ask them to be honest with you and point out any sin issues in your life. That would be a start.

How do you know this is an issue for you? Here are some symptoms. One symptom is that **you're quick to pronounce or measure out judgments**. I'm way too quick. All you have to do is come into my living room and you'll hear me pronouncing judgments on the stories I hear on the news.

Some years ago in Chicago, there was a traffic accident. A policeman awakened some parents to tell them about the death of their only daughter. He indicated that an empty bottle of liquor was found in the wrecked car. When the father heard this, he went into a rage and said, "When I find the man who sold liquor to these kids, I'll kill him!"

Later, he found a note in his daughter's handwriting in his own liquor cabinet that read, "Dad, we are taking along some of your good liquor. I know you won't mind." He was too quick to judge. He couldn't see that the root cause of the whole issue was in his own life.

The Bible gives a similar picture of the blind hastiness of King David when Nathan came to David and told the story about the rich man. Nathan explained that the rich man took his poor neighbor's only lamb and killed it to feed his dinner guests because he was too selfish to use any of his own riches. Do you remember what David did? He flew into a rage. Look at what 2 Samuel 12:5-7 says, *"Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die, and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity." Nathan said to David, "You are the man!"*

Do you think David knew he was the man in this parable before the end? I don't think so. I think he was absolutely blind to what was going on in his life because of the giant log hanging out of his eye. Nathan told him, "You're the man, David." If you are quick and frequent in your criticism of others, you should be alarmed. A log is probably protruding from your eye.

Here's a second symptom of a judging, condemning spirit: **you are premature and downright wrong in your judgments**. The faster and more often we pronounce judgment on others the more often it's going to come back to us that we're just dead wrong. Sometimes we judge a person before it's even all worked its way out; we're judging too early.

Proverbs 19:11 says, *"Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense."* Wisdom gives you patience.

Proverbs 18:17 says, *"The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him."*

Proverbs 18:13 says, *"If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame."*

Sometimes we're so quick to judge that we don't even let all the facts come. We don't give the Holy Spirit time to work it out and reveal what's really happening.

Oswald Chambers said, "There is always one fact more in every life of which we know nothing. Therefore Jesus says, 'Judge not.'" You and I lack the knowledge of God. There is always something we don't know about any given situation.

Do you remember the "Ask Ann Landers" advice column? I used to read it when I was in college. One time, a grocery store checkout clerk wrote in to complain that she had seen people buy luxury food items like birthday cakes and bags of shrimp with food stamps. The writer went on to say that she thought all people on Welfare who treated themselves to such non-necessities were lazy and wasteful. That letter of complaint was printed in the paper.

A few weeks later, the "Ask Ann Landers" column was devoted entirely to people who responded to the first lady. Here's the first response:

I didn't buy a cake but I did buy a big bag of shrimp with food stamps. So what? My husband had been working at a plant for 15 years and it shut down. The shrimp casserole I made was for our wedding anniversary dinner and it lasted three days. Perhaps the grocery clerk who criticized that woman would have a different view of life after walking a mile in my shoes.

There's always one fact or another that we're missing—always.

Another woman wrote:

I'm the woman who bought the \$17 cake and paid for it with food stamps. I thought the checkout woman in the store would burn a whole through me with her eyes. What she didn't know is that the cake was for my little girl's birthday; it will be her last. She has bone cancer and will probably be gone within 6-8 months.

There's always one fact more that we don't know. If you and I are judging too quickly and too hastily, we could be dead wrong.

Here's a third symptom of a judgmental spirit: **you're doing more harm than good.** Are people benefitted and healed by my comments or are they wounded deeper? I want you to understand I'm not just preaching at you; I'm preaching to myself as well. I think most people would agree that it takes a lot of work by God's Holy Spirit in our lives over the years to get to where we need to be on this issue. It's not easy. We are so blind. A judgmental spirit runs so deep. Are others benefitted and healed by my words or are they wounded deeper?

Proverbs 15:4 says, "A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit." Are you healing or are you breaking with your words? If you're breaking with your words and the only purpose of your words is to pronounce how repulsive and guilty someone else is, then Jesus is talking to you. If you are only sentencing and pushing away those in sin, Jesus is telling you, "Judge not lest you be judged. You will be judged by God and others in the same way that you're judging them." You have a log in your eye.

Drop the Hypocrisy

Look back at Matthew 7:5. Jesus has some strong words for this judgmental brother. He wants us to drop the mask of hypocrisy and deal with our own sin—to get to the root of our sin. He says, "*You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye.*" You have two faces: the one you think you have and the one you really have that everybody else sees.

This raises a great question: how do I do that? How does a self-righteous, judgmental, critical person take that log out of his or her eye? Let's assume we're talking about a child of God here. God has given you the Holy Spirit Who convicts you of this sinful attitude and gives you the desire to address it. How do you do so?

1. Ask God to show you how heinous and frequent your own sins are. Maybe you can even remember a situation from this last week when something happened and your selfish spirit came to the surface. Looking back, it is obvious for you—maybe not others—that, "Wow, that is still there deep within me." I know that happens to me. Ask God to show you how heinous your sins are.

I noticed the banners on the walls to your right and left list some of the things God has forgiven us for through Jesus Christ: pride, fear, idolatry, gossip, bitterness, deceit, lust, murder, envy and rebellion. Ask God to show you how heinous your sins are. When we see how heinous they are, we get a dose of humility and reality about our own sin that will surely make us begin to take our eyes off the sins of others.

2. Soak in the grace of God. When you come to God for the tenth time on the same issue in just one week of time, it should make you say, "God, I can't believe I did it again but thank You through Christ that You've forgiven me." When we confess our sins, we know *"he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:9). You can come to God and say, "God, Your grace is renewed every morning. Thank You that it's every day." You can come to church and sing awesome songs focused on the compassion and love of our Savior Who went to the cross in our place. You can see grace everywhere. As you soak in that grace you will be gracious to other people too.

There's nothing like experiencing the forgiveness of God to help you sincerely say, "But for the grace of God, there I would go." Then you will be able to come alongside that other person who really needs some help because they have a real splinter in their eye. It is so bloodshot that they can hardly use it and they need help. They need someone who can come along and say, "There's hope for sinners like you and me." The goal is restoration not condemnation. The goal and motive has changed. Jesus says, "Judge not that you be not judged."

4. The Exceptions – When We Should Judge

Lastly, there are a couple of exceptions mentioned in our passage.

Gently Rebuke a Brother in Sin

Look at the end of Matthew 7:5, *"First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."* There is a time to rebuke a brother in sin—for the purpose of restoration. It's always restoration. That's what the Bible tells us. We're not doing this because we want to push our brother away. We don't want to pronounce him guilty and say, "Away with you!" We want to pull him closer and see him repent.

There is a time to help that poor brother with the speck in his eye. After God humbles you—over the years and decades—and when God brings about situations that require spiritual surgery to save others from great harm, now He's going to use you. By that point you're going to be a lot more humble about all of this knowing that you can't even see all the layers of sin yet in your own life.

Some of these situations are going to involve confronting a brother or sister, which will not be fun in any way. Leviticus 19:17 says, *"You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor."* Did you get that? When you are reproofing for the sake of restoration, it is an act of love.

John MacArthur says, "Not to rebuke sin is a form of hatred, not love. Refusing to warn a person about his sin is just as unloving as refusing to warn him about a serious disease he may have." How many of you have gone to the doctor and been prescribed a course of treatment you didn't like? You knew they were doing it for your good and they knew they were doing it for your good, so it was loving even though it was difficult.

Last week I went to the doctor. They put a shot in my head and cut a precancerous growth off the top of my head. Now what would have happened if the doctor had taken the first look at my head and said, "Do you know what you have on the top of your head? How can you even walk around in public like that? Aren't you self-conscious about it? You should be ashamed of that spot on your head." I would have run to find another doctor.

Instead, the doctor looked at the top of my head and in compassion said, "If we don't get this taken off it's going to turn into a melanoma. We sent it to the lab and it came back positive. This is for your good. We're going to cut this baby out." Sometimes we have to rebuke a brother in sin out of compassion.

I think that's what is implied in the passage. We certainly see it in [Galatians 6:1-10](#) and other places. Sometimes it's going to take tough unbelievably tough love but the goal is still restoration.

Sometimes you will have to literally send the brother or sister away from you in the ultimate separation. Look at what Paul says to the church elders in [1 Corinthians 5:5](#), "*You are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.*" Sometimes you have to do something that's unbelievably painful to the body so that the person will wake up, repent and be healed by God.

Separate from a Scorn of Truth

There's also a time to separate from somebody who scorns the truth and absolutely hates the God Whom we love. As we close, look at [Matthew 7:6](#), "*Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.*" We don't have time to really go into this. In a lot of ways, it is really a mysterious statement.

I believe that Jesus is referring here to an enemy of the gospel. This could be a religious person. I think the Pharisees are probably in this category. Jesus has pronounced incredible judgments, "[You whitewashed tombs!](#) Outside you look great but inside you're full of dead men's bones." Jesus is letting the Pharisees have it. So I think they fall into this category.

Jesus uses dogs and pigs as a metaphor for these people. Back in those days dogs were not domesticated yet. I'm not sure when dogs moved into the family home and became domesticated, but they weren't at this point in time. They were like the pigs. They were out scavenging in the garbage piles. They were dirty, greedy, snarling and sometimes vicious. They were diseased. Don't get between them and their food or you'll be in trouble. You wouldn't think of throwing anything—especially your best possessions—towards the dogs and pigs. You just wouldn't do it.

I think Jesus is saying that there is a time to judge and separate ourselves from those who hate our God and continually scorn. Yes we should give all men the truth of the gospel and send out the net as wide as we can, but there's a time when we withdraw from the stiff-necked and stubborn enemies of the gospel. We say, "No more. We'll separate from you."

Paul even used the same words in [Philippians 3:2](#), "*Look out for the dogs [the Pharisees, the false teachers], look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.*" They were teaching another gospel. He

pronounced a curse (*anathema*) on them in [Galatians 1:8-9](#). There is a time to pronounce guilt and measure out justice. But it's not for our sake; it's for God's glory and the welfare of others.

Which boomerang are you throwing? Is it the one of judgment? Or is it the one of love, forgiveness and giving? Is it pronouncing somebody's guilt and sentencing them, "Be gone with you"? Or is it forgiveness, grace and giving?

Today is Palm Sunday. As we think back to the first Passion week as Jesus approached the city on that first Palm Sunday, even at that moment our Father God shows us the compassion of His Son Jesus Christ in the world. [John 3:17](#) tells us His first coming was not to condemn the world. He'll condemn the world at the second coming. The world is already condemned. His first coming was to seek and to save that which was lost. He's here to pull people to Him and restore.

You can see that in almost every detail of the Passion Week. Jesus was not focusing on the humiliation and agony of the cross that He knows is before Him. Instead He heard the cry of the blind man, "*Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!*" ([Luke 18:38](#)) and He healed the man.

He graciously overlooked the self-promotion of His disciples who were arguing about seats on His right and left and who would be greatest in His kingdom ([Luke 22:24](#)).

He politely received the flattery of the crowds ([Matthew 21:1-11](#)). Do you know what flattery is? It means they want something. It's praise with an agenda behind it. It's not real. He politely overlooked the flattery of the crowds who cried out, "Hosanna!" and dropped palm branches before Him because they thought He was a political Savior. That's what they wanted. He knew the same crowd would turn on Him before the end of the week.

Later, He washed His disciples' feet in humility ([John 13:1-20](#)). He taught them about the future. He forgave them in advance for their desertion. He told Peter, "Peter, you're going to blow it. But you will be restored Peter and when you're restored, serve Me."

Jesus served His children to the end. He did not open His mouth when they falsely accused Him and broke their own laws to try Him at night ([Luke 23](#)). He prayed for forgiveness for those who were just doing their job at His execution by raising the poles and pounding the nails, "*Father, forgive them*" ([Luke 23:34](#)).

Our Savior is compassionate. He came into the world to seek and save that which was lost and already condemned. He offered the boomerang of love. He's here to restore and bring us closer. What about us? What attitude are you hurling at other people? Am I a judge or a forgiver? Am I hypocrite or a healer? Let us become like our Savior, bringing grace and truth, proclaiming liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind!

Let's pray.

Lord God, thank You for the truth of Your Word. I needed to hear this message this week. At 52 years old I wish I had learned faster and sooner to be about restoration—to always look for restoration and not to pronounce others as guilty and sentence them. As You send us out into this community, let us be a

testimony of the grace and glory of God by seeking to be restorers in all our relationships. Help us to be compassionate towards sin knowing that the sin will be judged as all men are under the sentence of death because of sin. In those circumstances, help us seek to restore. Let us be honest with people about the truth that they might know what's wrong and what will hurt them. Help us pull them to Jesus Christ. I pray that You would make us the kind of person You teach us to be here in this incredible sermon on the mountainside.

Lord, thank You for this church. Thank You for the leadership. Thank You for so many people who are this kind of person and show us the way. Thank You for Jesus Christ Who made it all possible. In His name we pray. Amen.

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