

Pearls, Pigs and Prophets Matthew 7:6

Investigative questions with Jesus answer from the text:

1. Q: Does following Jesus require us to drop all judgment?

A: No. He warns of hypocrisy & calls for authentic discernment.

2. Q: Who are the dogs and pigs Jesus refers to?

A: Spiritual imposters. Hypocrites (6:2, 5, 16; 7:5) who are:

- dangerous and defiling – “dogs...pigs”
- dominated by natural appetites – 2 Peter 2; Jude; Phil. 3

3. Q: What sorts of people are judged dangerous?

A: Jesus warns us of those inside religious circles, not outside.

- They perform “acts of righteousness. (6:1ff)
giving (2) praying (5) fasting (16) worshipping & serving (24ff)
- They do not discern & handle Jesus’ instruction truthfully.
 - Regarding ways - to life or destruction (13)
 - Regarding prophets - false or true (*wolves/sheep*). (15)
 - Regarding professions - phony or genuine (21)
 - Regarding foundations – trustworthy or faulty (24)

4. Q: How are we to respond to religious imposters?

A: Don’t entrust them with what’s holy. (6)

5. Q: What should we do to avoid the danger?

A: Seek spiritual insight that discerns what is “good.” (7-9)

6. Q: Are we ever to avoid certain people?

A: Mtt. 10:14-16; 1 Cor. 5:5; Titus 3:10-11; 2 Th. 3:6; 2 Jn 1

Challenge: Will I develop discernment or bring harm?

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(Review & Context)

Judgment must be carefully guided.

Precedents & standards to guide godly discernment:

1. You are not the judge – God is. vs. 1

Am I acting as if this is by my authority?

2. Judgment applies both directions. vs. 2

Can I live by my own standards and judgments?

3. Judgment follows compliance. vs. 3-5

Am I healthy and growing in the area I'm confronting?

4. Judgment requires care. vs. 5

Am I handling this carefully to bring healing?

5. A lack of judgment will destroy you! vs. 6

Am I being discerning?

Application Questions to Discuss

- ***Is tolerance the ultimate Christ-like value?***
- ***Who should we trust as leaders and teachers?***
- ***Should we strive for a working unity of all religions?***
- ***Can we accommodate current thought in our message?***
- ***What's more dangerous: Blatant evil or Natural religion?***
- ***Agree/disagree/discuss the quote Mike read this morning:***

"Different periods in the history of the church need different emphases, and if I were asked what in particular is the need of today, I should say that it is a consideration of this particular statement. This is so because (of) the whole atmosphere of life today, & especially in religious circles... We are living in an age when definitions are at a discount, an age which dislikes thought & hates theology & doctrine & dogma. It is an age which is characterized by a love of ease & compromise - 'anything for a quiet life', as the expression goes. It is an age of appeasement. ...It is an age that dislikes strong men because, it says, they always cause disturbance. It dislikes a man who knows what he believes & really believes it. It dismisses him as a difficult person who is 'impossible to get on with.'"