**BCM Bible Study: April 29/30, 2020**

**Matthew 7: Judgment and True Discipleship**

Check In: Here are last week’s challenge options. Ask how they went!

1. Give beyond your comfort to someone/an organization in need.
2. Give up your time this summer.
3. Give thanks.

**Note**: This covers material for the entire chapter. If you don’t cover everything, that’s fine!

Judgement: **Read Matthew 7:1-6**

* Look back at Matthew 5:7 and 6:14-15. How do you see a similar principle at work in these verses?
* Why are we called to not judge others?
* What does it look like to judge others in the way that this passage warns against? Who/what sin are we tempted to be judgmental about?
* **Read Galatians 6:1** and **James 5:19-20**.
  + In light of these verses what does it mean to not judge?
  + Notice that in v.5, the end goal is to help the brother. What are ways that we can help others who are stuck in sin while not being judgmental?
* Regarding v.6, a dog would have been thought of as a wild, dangerous animal. Pigs were unclean and scavengers. The basic principle is we should be discriminate about offering spiritual things to those who will not receive them well. This does not mean that we shouldn’t share the gospel with unbelievers, but we should be careful and patient in some situations for our good and theirs. (See my email for more thoughts)
  + What is the balance between sharing the gospel boldly and using discernment?

The Golden Rule: **Read Matthew 7:7-12**

* What is Jesus’ encouragement to us in vv.7-11?
* Jesus cannot mean that we will receive *whatever* we ask for. **Read Matthew 26:36-39, James 4:1-3** and **Proverbs 28:9**.
  + What do these verses teach us about how God responds to our prayers?
* The grammatical tense of asking, seeking, and knocking indicates a continual, persistent asking. If God knows what we need and gives according to his will, why does he ask us to pray in this way?
* In what ways do you feel discouraged about praying in the way Jesus suggests here? Why?
  + How have you seen God at work in the midst of prayers not being answered in the way that you hoped?
  + What do you need to start praying about persistently?
* Verse 12 is known as the Golden Rule. This is not the only time that Jesus says something like the Golden Rule. **Read Matthew 23:34-40, Romans 13:8-10,** and **Galatians 5:13-15.**
  + Is there someone toward whom you are reluctant to demonstrate this principle? Why do you think it’s so difficult to do so?
  + What can you do this week in an aim towards mending this relationship?

**Discipleship in Action**: Jesus has been clear that faith is not merely a set of principles to believe. True faith is lived out in day-to-day life. To end the Sermon, Jesus gives 4 sketches of what faithful discipleship involves

Sketch 1: Wide and Narrow Gates: **Read Matthew 7:13-14**

* What is the difference between the gates?
* In what ways are Christianity narrow and the worldly gate wide?
* To go through the broad gate takes little effort or thought. It can be found be simply drifting with the crowd. How does this apply to our culture? What does it look like to break away from popular thought?

Sketch 2: True and False Prophets: **Read Matthew 7:15-20**

* What characterizes a false prophet? What is the danger of such a person?
* What type of “sheep’s clothing” would a false prophet wear today?
* **2 Timothy 4:3-4**. What does Paul warn about false prophets? When have you heard preachers telling people what they want to hear?

Sketch 3: The Importance of Relationship: **Read Matthew 7:21-23**

* Why does Jesus condemn the false disciples in these verses?
* What is the indicator of true discipleship?
  + “Spiritual activities can apparently be carried out by those who still lack the relationship with Jesus which is the essential basis for belonging to the kingdom. Doing the will of God is not a merely ethical category; that will also includes knowing and being known by Jesus.” (France, 292)
* In what ways are you tempted to prioritize spiritual activities over spending time with God?

Sketch 4: Wise and Foolish Builders: **Read Matthew 7:24-29**

* What is the difference between the two foundations in this parable?
* What are some real-life examples of “storms”? How do they reveal what was previously unseen?
* As we are called to live by faith and build our house on the rock of Jesus’ teaching, the Sermon on the Mount is a great place to start. Flip back through the Sermon and identify one area that you would like to more fully implement in your life. Share and explain!

Conclusion: Here are some challenge options for this week:

* Follow through on what you identified in the last question.
* Identify someone about whom you have a judgmental attitude. Draw close to this person and show them that you care for them. This can be as simple as making a phone call.