

Sermon on the Mount – Pigs and Pearls

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MAIN VERSES

[Proverbs 26:4](#) • [Proverbs 26:5](#) • [Matthew 7:1](#) • [Matthew 7:6](#) • [1 Kings 3:16-28](#)

Shabbat Shalom, everybody. Welcome to Founding a Truth Fellowship. We are continuing our series, the Sermon on the Mount, slowly but surely. And I'd like for everybody—we referenced these verses a few weeks ago and we're going to reference them again today. Because the one thing about the Sermon on the Mount that Yeshua leans heavily on is that we may not be as mature in the faith as we think we are. That we may have a lot of zeal. We may have a lot of book knowledge of the Bible. We may have gone to Awana's every Wednesday night and memorized all the Bible verses and got the jewels. But we might have neglected leaning into experiences that would give us wisdom on how to actually spread the good news of the kingdom of God.

Wisdom's Nuance

And one of my favorite portions of Scripture is [Proverbs 26](#), starting in verse 4. We're going to read these two verses. And of course, Proverbs are the sayings of old. It's wisdom literature. And how many of you guys know that wisdom is not always black and white? There's always nuance in when to act a certain way, decorum, and so on and so forth. And so Proverbs chapter 26, verse 4 states, If you see someone that's spouting their mouth off, you don't participate because then you'll look exactly like them and you'll have two fools walking around and we don't need to replicate that, right? That's good wisdom. The very next verse, answer a fool according to his folly, lest he become wise in his own eyes. If someone's spouting off their mouth, looking foolish, someone needs to put them in their place. They need to know they can't just say things like that. Which one is it? Which one is it?

And people will get upset. Are you saying the Bible contradicts itself? No, the Bible is not contradicting itself. This is wisdom. Because there's a time and a place to speak. There's a time and a place to encourage a conflict. And there's a time and a place to not become a fool like them. Wisdom.

Default to Grace

And when we started this series two weeks ago, speaking about not judging people, it's a blanket statement that Yeshua swings in. And he says, bam, don't condemn anyone. Don't judge anyone. Or you yourself will be judged in the same measure. The courtroom you build to judge someone else will be the courtroom that God constructs for you. So we should never judge. We should never have any type of discernment. That's not true.

But there's wisdom there. And Yeshua's trying to reset the standard—the standard is you need to be in a position where you're not looking for condemnation for anyone. You're not trying to label people. By default, grace, mercy, love. By default. This is another human being. That's the default mode. Before we start sticking labels on people and stripping humanity away from people so that we can judge them a certain way and set them up a certain way to make ourselves feel better most of the time. Default should be, that's the danger zone. Danger zone.

And so, in the last message, we wrestled with that idea that judging others is often less about righteousness, and it's more about control, our desire to make people see things our way, to correct their mistakes, or to hold them to a standard that we ourselves struggle to meet. We examined how true spiritual transformation comes not from condemning and condemnation, but through love, humility, and of course, self-awareness.

The Root of Judgment

Because that whole thing about wanting to control people, that's the fruit of the tree in the garden. I'm convinced of it. The fruit of determining good and evil for ourselves, autonomous from God's guidance, from God's direction, or you could say God's wisdom. Because why doesn't that work out for humanity when we're so quick to be the receptacles of good and evil for everybody?

Well, when we all posit ourselves to determine good and evil for ourselves, we assume a position that only ends up being appropriate for God. And when we go out into the world and I start labeling people good and bad and they're good and they're bad and they agree with me so they're good and they disagree with my opinion on something that's irrelevant, they're bad. Well, that's all great until everyone starts doing it. And then we have a world of people assuming the responsibility of God on an individual level, ordering people into a type of hierarchy of who is good and who is bad.

And if we're honest, when we do this, especially under the guise of being a responsible soldier of Christ, we're simply satisfying our flesh in the need to want to control other people. To control other people so we feel better about ourselves. And what's the natural evolution of that type of behavior? Violence, of course. Of course.

From Control to Violence

That's what happened after Adam and Eve departed from the garden. Remember, people started walking home from work singing songs about how many people they had murdered with joy. That was the environment on the earth. That's what prompted God to flood the earth. That is the foundation of the flood story. Violence broke out. The flood story is such a nuanced story. Because after you're done reading the flood story, you have to ask the question, did it work? Did it work? God saw the violence. That's fine. We'll send a flood and we'll stop the violence. Not even divine violence is enough to stop human violence. It plants a seed in the biblical story at the very beginning that violence does not work to stop violent behavior. It may band-aid it. It's not a solution. It is ineffective in the long game.

Didn't someone else teach that too? Yeah, that was Yeshua. That was Yeshua. Forgive them. Show them what it looks like to be loved and accepted and included at the table, and that is how you defeat violence. Insanely radical, this holy book of ours is.

Speaking Truth, Inviting Response

The message of God will always be offensive to the world and to those who seek to control others. And the Sermon on the Mount is an adjustment, if you will, to how the Torah had been taught incorrectly or without such clarity among the religious, especially in the time of Yeshua. And Yeshua is calling out the hypocrisy of the religious elites once again, which he does throughout the entire sermon, showing us how we're actually supposed to live out the teachings of God. That's the setup and the contrast with the current teachers of the law that were coming against Yeshua, which leads to his chapter-long criticism of how the religious want to control other people in [Matthew 23](#).

Do you realize that in [Matthew 23](#), when Yeshua criticizes the Pharisees, the religious pastors of the community, their deep need to want to manipulate and control other people under the guise of righteousness, he calls them the offspring of Satan. And that's a hard lesson. It's a hard one to swallow.

So don't condemn or you will be condemned in the same regard and measure that you set up the condemnation of others. That's the setup. See, the Pharisees were judging people based on their actions and not their heart and intent. And Yeshua actually implements this standard on them in that entire chapter, the uncomfortable chapter, because Yeshua welcomes them into the courtroom that they created. So while the Pharisees were judging people based on their actions and not their heart and intent, Yeshua judged the Pharisees for their heart and intent and not their actions. You whitewashed sepulchers. Those are sobering words for the call of believers.

Don't condemn and don't judge in condemnation by default. Of course, Yeshua is not saying that we should ignore wrongdoing. Of course not. Rather, our approach to others should be one filled with grace. We look at the way that Yeshua lived this out, how he spoke truth, but always in a way that invited rather than coerced. Coercion, even for the right reasons, is still a form of manipulation, a skill set taught to us by the snake in the garden.

Does that mean we don't push back against evil and evil people? No, no, no. No, we push back. We push back in ways that are infuriating for evil, but we do it with truth. We do it with love and we do it with grace.

The Generosity of Grace

And as Christians, being generous is one of the staples of our faith walk, especially financially, right? But sometimes we forget that the generosity runs beyond money. How generous are you? When it comes to seeing someone that you may not like, holds a different opinion from you, dresses different, has another lifestyle than you, fill in the blank. How much grace do you have to share? That's the challenge.

Do Not Judge

And so reviewing these verses in Matthew chapter 7, starting in verse 1, do not judge or you will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged. And with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. 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? How can you say to your brother, let me take the speck out of your eye when this entire time there's a plank in my own eye? You hypocrite! First, take the plank out of your own eye. Then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. Do not give dogs what is sacred. Do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample you under their feet and turn and tear you to pieces. It's such a graphic. I've never seen a pig tear someone to pieces, but do not give.

Do Not Give Dogs What Is Sacred

So this is the verse we're going to focus on for this message, verse 6. Do not give dogs what is sacred. We've heard this verse before. And at first glance, this verse may seem like a really comfortable way to dismiss people that may have been ungrateful for your advice. In actuality, it's a continuation of the theme of judgment and discernment from the earlier verses. It's connected. It's the same topic that we're still on.

I tried to give a person some of my time, some of my attention. I tried to give a person some advice to help correct their ways. And they didn't listen to me.

In fact, they were upset with me. "Ah, I shouldn't have given my pearls to pigs." Anyone know what I'm talking about? It's a traditional way I've historically referenced this verse. It's a tool to make ourselves feel better when people don't receive what we have to say the right way. There's a good lesson for that. The other day at homeschool co-op with the kids, there was a girl that dumped out a bunch of toys on the floor. And I'd ask the kids, hey, clean this up real quick. Come on, a bunch of little kids. And one person ran out and screamed, "I didn't do it. I had nothing to do with it." When everybody saw, she was gone. So my son's there. He's like, "What do we do?" It's a big mess. I'm like, come on, let's clean it up. It'll take like 10 seconds. He's like, "Dad, that's not fair. How come she doesn't have to clean this up when she made the mess?" And it was a great lesson for me to teach him that you're right, it's not fair, but sometimes it's not worth trying to correct someone and get them to make it right when you can spend 10 seconds and forget whatever happened. Sometimes there's a time and a price. Other times, don't cast your pearls to the pigs, right? It's a good lesson.

But Wait—What's the Context?

But wait a second. What's the context here? And what Yeshua is saying drives me to ask the question that I think he's actually asking. Why were we trying to give pearls to pigs to begin with? Were you trying to give your pearls to the pig to eat? Were you trying to give it to the pig to wear? See, we tend to view the pigs and the dogs in this metaphor as the antagonists, and we are the protagonists trying to help them. No, they shouldn't. They're pigs and dogs. The pigs and dogs are the victims here, not you. They're the victims in this metaphor. A pig has no concept of their value. It only knows what it needs. It needs to be taken care of. It needs food, shelter. It needs mud to stay cool. When you throw pearls at a pig, it will instinctively sniff it, realize that it's inedible, trample it, and then it will be furious and confused, and it'll try to attack you.

That's the setup. Same thing with the dogs. It's not that the pearls aren't valuable. It's that they weren't needed or wanted to fix the situation in the pig's life. And we do this all the time to people. We're so good at it. We see someone who is hurting. We see someone who's broken. We see someone who's lost in our view. And instead of giving them what they need, we will throw a shiny, big, religious pearl at them. We'll send them YouTube links to lectures and sermons. We'll talk about the commandments of God and the rules in the Bible, expectations that don't actually meet their real need.

The Pearl-Throwing Pattern

Someone comes to us in a crisis, and instead of listening, we give them some Bible verses and we move on—a.k.a. thoughts and prayers. Someone struggles with doubt, and instead of walking with them, we hand them a theology book or we send them a YouTube video of an apologist. Someone is drowning in grief, and instead of weeping with them, we try to say something like, "God has a plan." All right, what does that have to do with the pain and the vacuum that is in my soul right now? Yeah, God has a plan. Is that supposed to heal this, make me feel better? Because if you've ever mourned and grieved, you know that anyone who sent you Bible verses via text message in the pit of your despair, it didn't help, if I'm being real. And then we're shocked, just shocked that they would reject what we're offering them. Of course they do, because it's not what they needed.

We are such a beautiful creature, human beings, because we will see someone in need, but we will give them what we want them to have as a way to control them. Make them how we think they should be or should look right now. We get upset when we don't actually give people what they need. We just try to wrap the spiritual pearls around them. And we're upset that they don't smile at us like this. Yeah, a nice, grateful, happy pig with pearls. Why aren't you grateful for the pearls I just gave you? It's because they weren't appropriate to give for that problem. Yeah, but it's in the Bible, but it's spiritual, but I said Jesus' name at the end of it. That's great. What else did you do to actually facilitate a solution to whatever their need or problem was? Acting religious only is what got the Pharisees in so much trouble with Yeshua.

Finding the Wisdom to Know When

Why would we ever give pigs pearls? And you know, when we learn something about the wisdom of God in the Bible and we get all excited and we can't wait to go tell the whole world, none of you may have experience with that. Reading a nugget in the Bible that's so cool, seeing something you're now convicted of, I'm going to tell everybody. Everyone needs to know this

right now. And we dump pearls on people who have no point of reference, who have no background understanding, who aren't in a place where they are even pursuing these things. And what happens? Do they appreciate you cornering them about what the Bible says? Probably not. They've probably become upset with you at times. Maybe. And Yeshua is saying they have every right to. They need something else in their life, but you were too busy thinking about what you wanted them to need, so you completely ignored them as a fellow human being and what they actually needed.

If people are consistently upset when you share things with them about the Bible, the problem may not be them. Look at your resume as I constantly look at mine. Maybe you're not doing a good job at balancing your zeal of the Word with wisdom. What to say or how we approach people. Maybe we forgot a piece that makes it all work. Imagine being at the park and seeing someone in need. Maybe they're homeless, and you're a prayer warrior, so you know exactly what to do. You could pray for them, but you want to walk over to them, tap them on the shoulder, and say, "Let me pray with you." Yes! So you walk over and you tell them, "Hey, God told me, convicted me, whatever, pulled me, and I want to pray with you." I feel like I've been called to pray with you right now. So you pray for this person, and it's a passionate prayer, and you can feel the Holy Spirit working.

The Prayer Without the Help

And then when you're done, they ask you for five bucks so that they can go get something to eat, and you say no. Do you know why they might get upset with you? I mean, "I just gave them a great prayer." No, they're upset with you because that person now sees you for what you really are. And that is someone that exploited their circumstances to parade around your religiosity. You used them to make yourself feel more righteous, not to actually help them. And they bit back at you as they would.

Jesus is teaching something critical here. The problem is not the truth itself. It's timing and delivering. Yeah, but Matt, you know good and well they were just going to take the money and go use it for drugs. And then the truth comes out because you had already condemned them without even knowing them. You had already labeled them. You used them in a selfish way. And they saw you, and now they're angry. Just like the example of the animals. The dog does not need anointing oil and prayer. The dog needs food and water and shelter and maybe a heartworm pill. I don't know. We need things. Prayer is not bad. The zeal, the zeal to cry in the name of God over someone is what we're called to do. It's not all that we're called to do. And if

you only have some and not the rest, it's going to look disproportionate and they're going to bite back. People are going to get upset.

A Difficult Teaching

Sermon on the Mount just takes no prisoners, doesn't it? Goodness, let me find some happy sermons and happy topics after this. So messy being a human, isn't it? Because many times when we judge and condemn people, when we label people anything other than a human made in God's image, we think we have good intentions. We don't even realize it sometimes. But then we don't understand why our faith and the things that are holy and godly don't take root in the people around us. Because sometimes we just lack wisdom. Sometimes we don't slow down. Sometimes our default is not grace, love, mercy, patience, kindness. Sometimes our standard is not the right place, despite having all the right tools. Sometimes we don't take into consideration that the person is not me. It's another person with another history, with another future. And instead of approaching them as a human being first, trying to have empathy for who they are and what they need, we turn them into a religious project at our own hands.

And where does it all start? Judging inappropriately. Judging inappropriately. It's tough. Because when Yeshua was speaking the Sermon on the Mount, remember, it was contrasting other teachings about the Bible that were being used to support a hierarchy in the community. Yeshua is really radical when he says these things. So much so that it feels uncomfortable. Sometimes it even seems naive. That's why the teachings of Jesus till this day are mocked or belittled by both non-believers and even believers. "Yeah, that's not what it really meant." Yeah, it is what he really meant.

The Wisdom to Discern

Yeah, but that's too hard. Yeah, because it's like nothing you've ever seen in this world because it's completely opposite of how the world wants you to operate. It's going to be hard.

King Solomon, that was a man that had some wisdom. He messed it all up, but he got the wisdom. In [1 Kings 3](#), you have Solomon, and he's praying to God, and what's he ask for? Not just wisdom. There's a phrase there, I want to determine good and evil. I want to have wisdom. I want the fruit of the tree, and I want to know how to handle it correctly. God says, I'm glad you asked. Because of this, I'll give you all of that and the riches and honor.

And the very first thing that happens after he wakes from this vision that he has, this dream that God gave him, two prostitutes walk into his court holding one baby. It's showtime, right?

That's how the story's set up. It's like, bam, the next scene, we're about to impart this wisdom.

Two prostitutes come before Solomon because they live in the same house. And they each had a baby around the same time. And one woman said that she had her child, she was sleeping with it, but the other woman rolled over in the middle of the night and killed her baby. Really dark. And she believed that the woman came and swapped the babies out, took her alive child and left her with the dead child. And so now before King Solomon, she has my baby. No, it's not your baby. Yes, it is. How do you determine that? Like, what do you—no DNA tests, what do you do?

King Solomon said, asks for a sword, not the small one. Jacob, bring the big one. What are you going to do with that? We are going to make this fair. Hear me out, okay? We're going to cut the baby in half so that each mother gets an equal portion of the baby. That's fair, isn't it? It's pretty fair.

Of course, one woman cries out. She says, King, let her have the baby. Please just don't kill it. She can have it. That's fine. I won't say another word about it. The other woman said, you know what? I think that is fair. Let's go ahead and cut it in half. You know, this is pretty fair.

King Solomon, wisdom. Obviously, we know who the mother is. It's the one who would rather lose the child than see it killed. Return the child. All of Israel heard about the story, and they celebrated God's wisdom through Solomon.

Justice Before Judgment

Awesome story. One detail. Notice King Solomon did not try to tell them that prostitution was bad and they need to stop prostituting themselves in his kingdom. We gloss over that as if that's not a big deal. He never even addresses it. Never even addresses it. Why? That was not what they needed in that moment. One mom needed justice and the other one needed permission to grieve. That's what they needed. It was not the time and the place to throw out the big pearls about their lifestyle, what they were doing, why it was sinful, why it was bad. They needed to fix a few things first, some really big things. And King Solomon, with God-given wisdom, understood that. He discerned the truth, not by condemnation, but by wisdom. And when he suggested cutting the baby in two, the real mother revealed herself.

I believe this is the same type of thing that Jesus is teaching us in [Matthew 7](#). Wisdom isn't about forcing truth on people. It's about discerning what they actually need and how you can be a vessel for that need. Some people do need correction. Some people need patience. Some people need space to wrestle with God on their own. And just like Solomon, we can't treat every

situation the same way. We need wisdom and we need discernment. Are we actually giving people what they need or just what we want them to have? Are we forcing pearls when people really need bread? Are we cutting people off when we should be showing patience? Are we spending too much energy arguing with people who are not even ready to listen?

The Way of Yeshua

Because Yeshua didn't do that. Yeshua didn't stand at the well telling the Samaritan woman she needed to change before he had given her the living water. He didn't demand Zacchaeus clean up his act before he ate with him. He didn't tell the woman caught in adultery to change her career. He told her she was forgiven. He always gave people what they actually needed first because love leads to transformation, not the other way around.

And so, as we conclude today, the challenge is clear. Will we walk in discernment and not condemnation? Will we give people what they need instead of what we think they should have? Will we trust that God is working in their hearts even though we don't see it? Because Solomon didn't need to force the truth. He just needed to create the space to reveal it for itself. And maybe, just maybe, if we live with that kind of wisdom, the people around us will actually see the truth. Not because we force it on them, but because we created a space for God to move within the relationship we have with them. That's the way of wisdom. That is the way of Yeshua. That's the way of the kingdom. And I believe that's what we're called to walk in.

Where Is Your Default?

Where's your default when you look at people in the world? Where's your default even in this political climate—low-hanging fruit? What's your default when you see another person that is zealous about an opinion about something? Someone has a different opinion than you about a secular government of a secular empire. It might be a big opinion. It might be a great discussion point. What do you view them as first? An enemy, someone who's bad, or another human being with a whole different past and experiences who has a different perspective on things you have no clue about? Are they still a human being made in God's image, even though the world would tell you to label them as your enemy? Where's our default when we look at other people?

Alvina Marqueno, our Father, our King, Father, we thank you for this opportunity to once again read over the hard words of King Yeshua. Words that are intimidating, but words that carry truth. Father, as we continue moving through the greatest sermon ever preached, that you would allow us to have the strength and the clarity and the self-awareness to make changes in

our lives so that we can truly embody what it means to be a follower and disciple of Yeshua. That we would treat people like you would want us to treat people. That we would understand that the sun shines on both the good and the bad. Therefore, if we want to emulate you, we do the same with our love. We thank you, Father, for your healing. We thank you, Father, for your conviction. We thank you, Father, for the life-giving power that you freely give to all of us. In the name above all names, we pray. Amen.

Shema Yisrael, Elohe, Elohe, Elohe, Elohe. Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one. Blessed is the name of his glorious kingdom for all eternity. And may the Lord also cause you to increase and overflow in love for one another and for all people in order to strengthen your hearts as blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Yeshua with all of his holy ones. And may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift up his countenance toward you and give you his peace. In the name of our Tsar Shalom, our Prince of Peace, Yeshua HaMashiach, we pray. Shabbat Shalom, family.

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