

International Conversation Cafe

New Testament: Jesus Gives Advice About Relationships, Matthew 7

Often we get into trouble in relationships because we assume something about the other person. We assume we know the reason why someone hurt us, when in reality, we know and understand very little about the other person's intentions. When we judge or criticize another person and fail to see things from their point of view, our relationship is damaged.

Can you give an example of how judging, or unfairly criticizing, hurts relationships?

Here are the wise words of Jesus Christ found in Matthew 7.

¹“Do not judge others. Then you will not be judged. ²You will be judged in the same way you judge others. You will be measured in the same way you measure others.

³“You look at the bit of sawdust in your friend's eye. But you pay no attention to the piece of wood in your own eye. ⁴How can you say to your friend, ‘Let me take the bit of sawdust out of your eye’? How can you say this while there is a piece of wood in your own eye?

⁵“You pretender! First take the piece of wood out of your own eye. Then you will be able to see clearly to take the bit of sawdust out of your friend's eye.

Summarize Jesus' thoughts in your own words.

How do you think looking at an issue from someone else's perspective help to become less critical?

How can one see their own faults in order to “take the piece of wood in their own eye?”

What do you think is going on in the painting on this page?



Domenico Fetti. Parable of the Mote and the Beam, c. 1619. Oil on wood, 61.3 x 44.1 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. NY

Next Jesus gives us advice concerning our relationship with God.

⁷“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

⁹“Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to

those who ask him! 12 So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

What is the main point Jesus is making here?

How do you think it relates to the preceding words about not judging others?

Give an example of time when God answered your prayers?

The Parable of the Two Builders

The parable of the two builders is in conclusion of Jesus' teachings on many topics such as loving your neighbor, generosity, worry, prayer, and forgiveness found in Matthew 5-7. Keep in mind that:

"Houses," represent our lives.

"Foundations," represent the teachings we build our lives on.

"Storms," are the difficult things we face in life.

24 "So then, everyone who hears my words and puts them into practice is like a wise man. He builds his house on the rock. 25 The rain comes down. The water rises. The winds blow and beat against that house. But it does not fall. It is built on the rock.

26 "But everyone who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man. He builds his house on sand. 27 The rain comes down. The water rises. The winds blow and beat against that house. And it falls with a loud crash." Matthew 7

Tell the story in your own words.

What are examples of the storms of life?

What are some of Jesus' words that will keep one stable in the storms of life?