

# “Christian Character- And the Twin Views of Treating Others”

## Matthew 7:1-6

The word “discriminates” or “discrimination” has a very prominent role in our society these days. It definitely conveys the meaning “to make distinctions in treatment, show partiality in favor of, prejudice against” (Websters), but at the pivot point is “a choice”. To “choose” to be critical or judgmental may not be a mental, cognitive decision we make as much as it is a prevailing attitude within one’s spirit. Jesus is very quick to expose the evil of hurting others to elevate our own superiority. A Christian must possess a character within that reveals a “behavior” on the outside! Can you really see the change Jesus has made and is daily making inside each of us when it comes to how we treat another human being? Which viewpoint are you showing?

### I. View #1- Express Your Behavior as an Opportunity

- Believers must take the opportunity to “evaluate” and judge themselves before they stand for final judgment. (v.1)
- This self-judgment will also prepare us to best serve others. (We are to help one another grow in grace.) (v.3)
- Only God sees the heart; so now is the best moment to present Him a clean heart myself. (See that your heart is “clean” before rendering aid to another.)
- We have an opportunity several times each day to uplift a fellow believer in his peril or criticize his poor choice: what avenue are you and I choosing?
- We can comfort instead of censuring: It is our choice! (This is a fellow “believer”, not a dog or pig; discern wisely.)

### II. View #2- You Can Choose to Exhibit Your Behavior as an Obstacle.

<Realize This Truth- There is nothing more un-Christlike than a critical spirit.>

- Reflect on this thought- Anything directly in the path between us and Jesus must be taken seriously!

#### A. Realize the damage of the critical spirit.

- When we foster a critical spirit, we will “reap what we sow”; it will catch up with us.
- A person who has slipped in the mud and mire of life needs a helping hand more than a sharp tongue.
- There is never a spirit of criticism inside a humble, loving heart; only compassion. (Galatians 6:1-3)

#### B. Reasons why we “fall into the criticism trap”:

1. Criticizing another boosts our self-image.
2. Criticism makes us feel more advanced personally than our friend.
3. Criticism is an outlet for hurt and revenge.

#### C. Releasing the urge to judge and criticize:

1. All the circumstances and facts of any situation are only fully “known” by God; leave the situation in His Hands.
2. All of us- saved and lost- come short, fail, and fall often (John 1:8,10). No one is exempt from sin, so we should face our own and forget the sins of others.

3. Judging usurps God's Authority; we can grow closer to Him by treating others with compassion!

4. Keep "beholding" (v.3) grace- See how much grace God has poured in you just this last week!