Sermon on the Mount 9 - Inductive Study Guide

Sermon on the Mount

Treasure

Mt 6:19-24

How does Mt 6:19ff relate to the previous section in Mt 6:1-8? In other words what is repeated in Mt 6:1-18 that is related to Mt 6:19-24ff? Or stated still another way what is the connection of "reward" from men or God to the storing of "treasures?"

"**Reward**" is a key word, mentioned 7 times (What is it related to?) in association with the **practice of righteousness** - if before men for their "applause", one has their full reward in this life, a temporal, perishable reward; but if before God in secret, the reward is from Him and is lasting or eternal. In Mt 6:19-21 Jesus speaks of "**treasure**" on earth versus heaven which is analogous to **reward** on earth versus heaven. Jesus then relates anxiety over things we need. If one truly trusts the heavenly Father to provide, the focus will not be storing up earthly riches.

If one is practicing true righteousness before the heavenly Father, then that one is storing up for themselves treasures in heaven.

Mt 6:19-20: What is Jesus command regarding treasure?

What is your focus - earthly and temporal or heavenly and eternal?

Mt 6:21: How do you determine where you focus (heart) lies?

Our focus is indicated by where we store up their treasure.

Earth = temporal, perishable

Heaven = eternal, imperishable

Our heart follows your money! Always!

If we want to know where the center of our being is, all we have to do is honestly admit where our treasure is.

> **Comment**: Most people feel that wherever their heart is, that's where their money will be. That's true, but it's only true because our heart and our money go together. That's the real point Jesus is making. You can talk all you want about how much something means to you, but your checkbook tells the truth. Nothing reveals the condition of your heart, and the ultimate values of your life, like the way you spend your money.

Have you ever heard the saying

> "*When you buy a boat, you don't own the boat. The boat owns you*"

Discuss this vital principle. When we spend all you have on the things of this world, is it any wonder why we have trouble contemplating heaven and eternity or the things of God? If we invest in the things down here, we become tethered to the world. Think about what happens you make a major investment of resources like your first house (This is not saying you should not buy a house!) Where is your heart after you've made that huge investment? Is it not focused on your new house? You think about it, worry about it, dream about it and talk about it. What is the center of your life? Your house. Why? Because our heart always follows our money. (Again, don't misunderstand, this example is used for illustration of the principle and does not imply one should never purchase a home!)

Where is your heart? (Answer: Where are you spending your money?)

What are you sending ahead to heaven ?

What investments are you making today that will make a difference in eternity?

What are the things you treasure the most?

What are your goals—your desires in life?

How does what you treasure relate to your ambitions or goals and where you spend your time and money?

Remember the whole teaching of Matthew 6:19-21 can be summarized in six simple words: Invest in that which lasts forever!

Mt 6:22-23: How does Jesus emphasize the importance of where our heart's affections lie? What does he say about the "eye" of our body?

He speaks of a "clear eye", one that has a single focus (not double), generous, seeing all things from an eternal, heavenly perspective, understanding what's truly of value from God's perspective.

Ideas of singleness, sincerity, integrity

Whole body full of light

Bad = Evil = "evil eye" (which in Jesus' day meant stingy or greedy)

Body full of darkness (and it would be great - ponder this serious warning)

Jesus affirms that if a man's spiritual sight is healthy, single focused with affections directed toward heavenly treasure, his whole personality will be affected.

This is a sobering thought that the way we look at and use our money is a sure barometer of and determinant of our entire spiritual condition!

Mt 6:24: Why is this single focus so important?

It's impossible to place equal value on both the earthly and the heavenly. Love of one is incompatible with love of the other (in fact the other will be hated). Devotion to one will result in despising of the other.

Mt 6:24b: How does Jesus sum up this point with the slave/master analogy?

It is impossible to serve two masters - God versus Mammon

If you try to serve both, the danger is a divided heart and mind

Vine says that **mamonas** is an Aramaic word for riches, and is akin to a Hebrew word signifying `to be firm, steadfast' ('whence Amen'), hence, `**that which is to be trusted**!' But Jesus says that there is no security for the earthly treasures or mammon.

What would be lifestyle of one serving mammon? God?

Which one better describes you?

Are you trying to serve both???

1John 2:15 What does John teach about how we should relate to the world and its "toys"?

Do not love the world or the things of the world (materialism)

"Stop loving it" which implies that we are loving it

1John 2:15 What is John's warning?

Anyone who continually, habitually (**present tense**) as their lifestyle loves the world and material things does not have the love of the Father in themselves = unbelievers

1John 2:17: What's the fate of worldly treasure?

This world is passing away along with it's lusts

(Worldly treasure is passing away).

1John 2:17: What's the promise to citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven?

The person who (as the general direction of their life) does the will of God will abide forever (dwell forever with God)

> Compare to Matthew 7:21 "*Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.*"
>
> **1John 2:15-17**

15 Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

17 And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

2Cor 4:18 What are believers to keep their focus on in this present life? Why?

Context: When we are experiencing **affliction** and yet not **losing heart**...

Don't focus on the seen but the unseen (cf our focal point = treasure in heaven)

This verse describes God's perspective.

Why? Because...

The things we can see are **temporal** (literally "for a season")

The things that are not seen are **eternal** (everlasting)

2Cor 4:16-18

16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Hebrews 12:1-2: In light of Jesus' teaching that we can only serve one master, what should we do according to this passage?

First remember that others have run the race of faith ("great cloud of witnesses" = Hebrews 11) and finished

Second, let us lay aside whatever encumbers us and slows us down (even "good things")

Third, let us lay aside the sin which so easily entangles us (in context of Hebrews 11 this could be "unbelief" in general)

Fourth, run with endurance (bearing up under the load of circumstances that are difficult)

Fifth, continually keep fixing (verb means to look away from distracting things and unto) our eyes on Jesus, Who ran the full course (This speaks of an eternal perspective, a heavenly vision)

Hebrews 12:1-2:

1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 11:24-27: How does Moses exemplify the "clear eye" in Mt 6:22-23? What is Moses' example in regard to earthly versus heavenly treasure?

Moses' storing up his treasure in heaven, is an example of one with a **clear eye**

He refused earthly treasures (power, wealth, etc)

He saw earthly treasures as associated with passing pleasures of sin

He thought about earthly versus heavenly riches and concluded the riches of Christ was greater and was worth the reproaches he would experience for His Name

He was looking for the reward (of the treasure in heaven)

He endured and saw Him Who is unseen

> **Hebrews 11:24-27:**
>
> 24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;
>
> 25 choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin;
>
> 26 considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.
>
> 27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

Galatians 1:10 What does Paul teach us in this verse about a servant of God? What happens when we become men pleasers?

Who we seek favor with determines who our master is - God or man

A bond-servant of Christ seeks the favor of God, striving to please Him and not men

Are you seeking the favor of men, like the scribes and Pharisees?

Are you seeking the favor of the perfect heavenly Father Who sees the secret things and rewards with the heavenly?

> **Galatians 1:10:**
>
> 10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.
>
> **Comment**: If you want to walk as without the fear of man, then you must walk as a "God-pleaser". You must live with the abandon that whatever pleases your Father, you are willing to do no matter what man thinks of me! And you can be secure in this truth (Pr 29:25 "*The fear of man brings a snare, But he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted*") for God will never forsake you (Heb13:5) but man will.

1Ti 6:6: What does Paul teach about storing up treasure?

Godliness and contentment = great gain (contrast with material gain of the heretics in verse 5 "who suppose that godliness is a means of gain")

1Ti 6:7: Why?

We brought nothing into the world and cannot take anything out (focus on on financial or material things is futile)

No one can take anything out of the world when that one dies.

So why spend a lifetime striving for or storing up worldly possessions or riches?

1Ti 6:8: What about material things?

If we have food and covering we should be content

Food and clothing are needs, and with the provision of those one should be content in life.

1Ti 6:9: What the danger of material things (treasures on earth)?

Desire to get rich leads to temptation, snare, harmful desires that drown (KJV) men in ruin (not annihilation but unavoidable distress & torment) and destruction

Some people love money, have as their goal in life to get rich. This love produces temptations, snares, foolish and harmful desires leading to ruin and destruction. You might ask if any of your students have ever seen this firsthand.

1Ti 6:10: Why are material things so dangerous?

Because the love of money = a root of all sorts of evil

Longing for it has caused some to wander away from "the faith" (the gospel) and pierced themselves with grief and sorrow including intense anxiety ("many a pang")

Paul does not mean that they lost their salvation, but that they never had genuine faith. Their love was always for the world, riches,

wealth, mammon first and you can't serve two masters.

1Ti 6:11-12: What's the antidote for desiring to get rich?

Flee (love of money, etc), **pursue** (righteousness, godliness, etc), **take hold** of the eternal life

> **1Timothy 6:6-12, 17**
>
> 6 But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment (Self–sufficiency in a good sense).
>
> 7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. (cf Job 1:21)
>
> 8 And if we have food and covering, with these we shall **be content** (be enough, be sufficient)
>
> 9 But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.
>
> 10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for (present tense = habit of one's life. Literally this verb describes a stretching out in order to touch or to grasp something and so to desire, covet, long after) it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang.
>
> 11 But **flee** (present imperative) from these things, you man of God; and **pursue** (present imperative) righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.
>
> 12 **Fight** (agonizomai - English agonize, present imperative) the good fight of faith; **take hold of** (grasp, seize, aorist imperative = sense of urgency, do it now! Don't delay!) the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.
>
> 17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.

In summary, if one is a servant of Christ, then he cannot be a **servant of riches** or a **pleaser of men**.

How does this relate to Matthew 6:1-18?

Practicing righteousness before men can be a way to try to please men.

Worry/Anxiety

Mt 6:25-34

Mt 6:25-34: What is the key word or phrase in and how does this relate to Mt 6:19-24?

> Mt 6:25: Do not be worried
>
> Mt 6:27: Who of you by worrying?
>
> Mt 6:28: Why are you worried?
>
> Mt 6:31: So do not worry
>
> Mt 6:34: Therefore do not worry

Jesus taught that those who are part of the kingdom of heaven are not to worry about what they eat, drink, or wear.

What is the meaning of the verb "to be worried"? What is the English derivation of "worry"?

The Greek word for be worried is ***merimnao*** which is derived from a root word ***merizo*** which means to divide or draw in different directions, which is what anxiety does.

Worry is from Old English akin to Old High German ***wurgen*** = to strangle

Anxious is from Latin ***anxius***; akin to Latin ***angere*** to choke, strangle or torment

Worry divides the mind and makes it "unsound." The eye no longer has a single focus, can't see clearly (Mt 6:22-23).

Mt 6:25: How does Jesus begin? For "what reason"?

He has just explained that we should store up heavenly treasure (which is the only eternally safe investment), that we should have a "clear" (single and focused not on the things of the world which is passing away) and we should serve God Alone as our masters. When we do that, then we can fulfill His command, to stop worrying about the earthly things related to mammon.

What are we to stop worrying about?

Your life, food, drink, clothing

Mt 6:25-30: Why should we stop worrying about these essentials?

Mt 6:25 Life is more than food and the body more than clothes

Mt 6:26 Addresses worries over food - **Look** - a command (**aorist imperative**). This verb (**emblepo**) means to look in the face, to fix the eyes upon, to stare at, to contemplate or to look at distinctly.

Birds don't sow, reap or gather and our heavenly Father feeds them - we are worth **much more**. If we worry constantly about having these essentials, we show that we have not yet learned the basic lesson nature teaches that God provides for His creatures' needs.

Mt 6:27 Addresses worries over Life - Worry cannot add a single hour to our life or 18 inches to our stature. Believers should not worry about how long they'll live.

Mt 6:28-30 Addresses worries over clothing - **Observe** - a command (**aorist imperative**). This verb is unusual and is found only here (katamanthano = learn thoroughly, to study carefully so that one learns thoroughly) Study the Lilies - they do not toil or spin, but are glorious, God clothes, the grass is alive today (speaks of temporary nature) and tomorrow thrown into the furnace - we are worth **much more**. Note that this is the second time Jesus emphasizes our worth! We need to hear this and believe this. It is part of the truth that will set us free from worry or anxiety..

It's repeated that the heavenly Father knows the needs of His children on earth. He provides for the birds to eat and how the flowers are clothed. His children are far more important to Him than birds and flowers.

As practical application, you might consider taking up the "avocation" of "*spiritual bird watching*" and/or "*spiritual gardening*." One cannot help but wonder whether bird watchers and gardeners worry less? Although you might think it somewhat unorthodox, consider setting up a bird feeder that you can easily observe and then every time you see one of God's beautiful creatures, ask God by His Spirit to bring the simple but profound truths of Jesus' message on worry to mind (cf Pr 23:7a, Ro 12:2 renewing your mind, Phil 4:8-9 dwelling on what is true and practicing it brings peace). Might such an "exercise" of meditating upon the trustworthy, dependable watch care of our Father for our feathered friends begin to free us from fretting?!

Mt 6:30: What does Jesus cite as the problem with their worry?

You of little faith - failure to believe that our heavenly Father can supply all our needs.

If one truly trusts the heavenly Father to provide, the focus will not be storing up earthly riches, the eye will be clear and the body full of light and a desire for mammon holds no control or mastery over our heart..

Worry shows little faith. It is a trust issue. Worrying never solves anything, but wastes energy and time concerning things that are usually beyond one's control. God provides; trust God; don't waste energy worrying about how God will do His job. He cares for the least of the creatures of His creation. Can't you see how He will take care of you who are so much more special to Him? Believers shouldn't spend their energies worrying about things on earth. Ask your students to evaluate if they are faithful to their heavenly Father regarding worrying. Are the Father and His will their treasures?

LITTLE FAITH - failure to believe Father can supply all needs. OUR FATHER LOVES US MUCH MORE – Do you believe this? Do you have difficulty believing this?

Mt 6:31-32 What do the Gentiles do? Why mention them?

The Gentile eagerly seek all these things. Why? Because they don't know God as Father.

By contrast...

Our heavenly Father knows they need all these things (food, drink, clothes)

"Gentiles" is **ethnos** which is nation, people, multitude.' It usually refers to non-Jews, those pagans who did not have God's laws. Those who don't have hope in God put their hope in the temporal things of this world.

Explain Matthew 6:32. Is there a contrast here? Who are the Gentiles to whom Jesus is referring?

Mt 6:33: What is Jesus solution for worry and anxiety? **What is the promise? Is it conditional**?

Seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness

All the essentials we need will be added to us

If they are seeking the Father's heavenly kingdom, then they'll not worry about their earthly provision from Him. If they are seeking His righteousness, He'll take care of their needs on earth so that they can do what is righteous.

Seek is in the **present imperative** so what Jesus is saying is that the **antidote to anxiety and worrying** over our life and our needs is to make a daily choice to **prioritize** God. Make it the habit of your life to**prioritize** seeking His Kingdom and His righteousness. The concept of "**seeking first**" for the things of God is a predominant biblical concept that touches one's motivation and priorities including how one spends their "leisure" time, the goals one sets in their life, and whether or not they experience spiritual growth.

Pastor Ray Pritchard writes that...

> Here's a simple test to help you discover what you truly seek in life. This test is absolutely foolproof. You tell me how you spend your **time** and your **money** and I'll tell you **what you are seeking**. You can say anything you like, you can come to church and look very religious, but your time and your money don't lie. Time is life and money is nothing but the time it takes to make the money. Show me your calendar and your checkbook and I'll know the truth about your priorities... What we seek, we find. This is true in every area and realm of life. Unless we seek, we will not find. And what we seek, for good or for ill, we eventually find. (Matthew 6:33 The Fourth Law: What You Seek, You Find)

What would keep a person from seeking His kingdom and His righteousness above all?

Mt 6:34 What is Jesus teaching about worry? **Why**?

They should not worry about what will happen tomorrow because He has given us the conditional promise that if we focus on God's kingdom and righteousness, He will meet our daily needs.

Each day has enough worry of its own. Worry and anxiety are the interest paid on trouble before it is even due and most of which never even occurs. So focus on today, not tomorrow!

Spurgeon wrote that...

> "our **anxiety** does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, but only empties today of its strength."

Someone has written that an average person's **worry and anxiety** focuses on

• 40% of things that will never happen

• 30% of things about the past that can't be changed

• 12% of things about criticism by others, mostly untrue

• 10% about health, which gets worse with stress

• 8% about real problems that will be faced

JESUS' PRESCRIPTION FOR ANXIETY/WORRY - IN 3 WORDS

1) FAITH (v30) trust God to meet our needs. Study His Names like Elohim, Creator & sustainer of all (because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ)

2) FATHER (v32) know He cares for His children (**much more** x2) – study His creation – Birds, flowers

3) FIRST (v33) Seek Him first like Mary & like David.

Ray Pritchard paraphrases Jesus' words...

> "Don't borrow trouble. There's plenty to be thinking about right now. So many people are frozen with fear over what might happen two or three months down the road. Listen, if God could create the world in seven days, He can surely handle your problems in June or July. Each day has enough trouble to keep you plenty busy.

You take care of today and God will take care of tomorrow." (Matthew 6:19-34 The Treasure Principle)

Phil 4:19: What does this verse teach that should address our tendency to worry?

Note the context of this verse. Paul thanked the Philippians for giving to support him and providing for his needs. He then stated "**and**" God will supply all your needs. In other words, there is a condition to this promise.

> **Philippians 4:19**
>
> 19 **And** my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Phil 3:7-9: What was Paul's view of "things"? **Why - what did he seek**?

This is stating in different words to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Here it is stated as counting as loss, worthless, the things which used to be viewed as gain for the surpassing value of knowing Christ.

Having true righteousness through knowing Him is the single goal of one who is truly seeking God's kingdom first. One with this goal is looking to the eternal.

> **Philippians 3:7-9**
>
> 7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.
>
> 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ,
>
> 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,

Ps 27:4-8: What does David teach about seeking God and the reward?

David's "one thing" he asked and sought was to dwell in God's presence continually

God would conceal and hide him when trouble came, lifting his head above his enemies

David's prayer was to seek the face of the LORD.

What does it mean to seek the Lord?

One thing—behold His beauty, meditate on Who He is. Seek His face, to know Him above all else.

It's the same thing that Paul desired.

It's what Jesus said to do—seek first His kingdom and righteousness.

> **Psalm 27:4-8**
>
> 4 One thing I have asked from the LORD, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to meditate in His temple.
>
> 5 For in the day of trouble He will conceal me in His tabernacle; In the secret place of His tent He will hide me; He will lift me up on a rock.
>
> 6 And now my head will be lifted up above my enemies around me; And I will offer in His tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.
>
> 7 Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice, And be gracious to me and answer me.
>
> 8 When Thou didst say, "Seek My face," my heart said to Thee, "Thy face, O LORD, I shall seek."

Luke 10:38-40: What does Jesus teach about worry?

Mary chose the good thing, to sit at Jesus' feet, listening to His Word. That's how to seek the face of the Lord, to seek first His kingdom and righteousness. Her sister loved the Lord Jesus, but was distracted by her "serving." Martha became bothered because of her distractions, instead of sitting at His feet for the one thing necessary.

WHO IS BEING CONTRASTED?

MARY?

Position? Seated at Jesus' feet

Practice? Listening

MARTHA?

Distracted = drawn all around, pulled apart

Running in circles with busyness

Worried = inward anxiety

Bothered = outward agitation, confusion

Lu 10:42 Greatest need?

Sit at Jesus' feet & listen (seek)

FELLOWSHIP before SERVICE (see Mary's "service" in John 12:2-3)

ARE YOU LIKE MARY OR MARTHA?

DO YOU CHOOSE THE ONE THING NEEDED OR "MANY THINGS" LIKE MARTHA?

WILL YOU…SEEK HIM…Bow down on your knees & open the Word?

SIT at Jesus' feet …LISTEN to His Words - You may be surprised at the effect on worry!

> **Luke 10:38-42**
>
> 38 Now as they were traveling along, He entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home.
>
> 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who moreover was listening to the Lord's word, seated at His feet.
>
> 40 But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him, and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me."
>
> 41 But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things;
>
> 42 but only a few things are necessary, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

What do you worry about?

Why should we not worry?

Would this help you in any way when you find yourself worrying?

Does this passage teach you in any way the cure for worry?

Warren Wiersbe has an excellent summary of Jesus' prescription for **worry** writing that...

> Three words in this section point the way to victory over worry:
>
> (1) **faith** (Matt. 6:30), trusting God to meet our needs;
>
> (2) **Father** (Matt. 6:32), knowing He cares for His children; and
>
> (3) **first** (Matt. 6:33), putting God's will first in our lives so that He might be glorified. If we have faith in our Father and put Him first, He will meet our needs. (Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor)

Judging

Mt 7:1-5

Mt 7:1-5: What is the main topic? Why would Jesus introduce it here? What is the flow of thought?

Judging others - This forbids hypocrisy and a condemning spirit rising from self-righteousness. It does not condemn true discernment.

In the overall context He is explaining how the righteousness of kingdom citizens must surpass that of the Scribes and Pharisees, who used their own standards to measure everyone else. He emphasized the importance of this surpassing righteousness in Mt 5:20 and then began to illustrate it first by showing the heart of the Law, then dealing with righteous practices before God and not men and then beginning in Mt 6:19 giving a series of "do not" statements that should characterize those who live out this surpassing righteousness.

In addition, having explained righteousness that is to be lived from the heart and righteousness to be practiced before God and not men, there might be the temptation to begin to judge others who "don't do it the way we do it". There is always within our old flesh nature, the subtle tendency to slip into a judgmental mode. Jesus' command jolts us all back into reality of what "real righteousness" looks like in interpersonal relationships.

What type of judging is Jesus forbidding? All judgment of any kind? How does the context (read all of Matthew 7) **help answer this question?**

Judging others

Clearly not all judging is forbidden (such as law courts, etc)

But even "judging others" is not forbidden for Mt 7:5 states that after we have performed the "log removal" we are to remove the speck from our brother and this necessitates some degree of discernment ("judgment").

Mt 7:6 implies a discerning judgment must be made regarding who is a "dog" and who is a "swine".

Mt 7:15, 20 "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves... So then, you will know them by their fruits."

(If time permits) **What do the following passages teach about judging?**

Romans 14 (Paul instructing the Roman church)

> 1 Now accept the one who is weak in faith (one who does not yet have full knowledge of how to live as a Christian. In this case it is one who eats only "vegetables" and not meat.), but not for the purpose of passing **judgment** on his opinions.
>
> 2 One man has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only.
>
> 3 Let not him who eats regard with contempt him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat**judge** him who eats, for God has accepted him.
>
> 4 Who are you to **judge** the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and stand he will, for the Lord is able to make him stand...
>
> 10 But you, why do you **judge** your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with **contempt**? For we shall all stand before the **judgment seat of God.**
>
> 11 For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD."
>
> 12 So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God.
>
> **Comment**: Brethren are not to be judged over differences in questionable matters. Reason: We will all give an account. (cf Mt 7:2)

John 7:24 Jesus speaking

> "Do not **judge** according to appearance, but **judge with righteous judgment.**"
>
> **Comment**: Jesus commands us to judge, but to do so fairly and on the basis of truth and fact rather than by outward appearances

Matthew 18:15 Jesus speaking

"And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

Comment: Sin must be "judged"

2Corinthians 5:3-5, 12-13 Writing to the Corinthians, Paul addressed the issue of the church's lack of action and failure to mourn over and deal with the grievous immorality in their body...

For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already **judged** him who has so committed this, as though I were present. In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus...For what have I to do with judging outsiders (unbelievers)? Do you not **judge** those who are within the church (The NLT paraphrases it "*but it certainly is your job to judge those inside the church who are sinning in these ways*")? But those who are outside, God judges.

Comment: Sin must be "judged"

1John 4:1, Acts 17:11

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Now these (Bereans) were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining (a word used in Greek to describe the questioning of someone in order to pass a judicial sentence!) the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so. (Acts 17:11)

Comment: Doctrine must be judged whether true or false

Mt 7:1-2: What then is Jesus forbidding?

He is forbidding judgment which is critical, mean-spirited, censorious, fault finding.

Mt 7:2: What is Jesus' warning if we judge inappropriately?

The way you judge will determine the way you will be judged

Whatever measure or standard you use to judge others will be used to judge you.

The "boomerang" principle.

"*For just as you judge and criticize and condemn others, you will be judged and criticized and condemned, and in accordance with the measure you [use to] deal out to others, it will be dealt out again to you.*" (Amplified Bible - Lockman)

Note: Jesus' warning is similar to the ideas Jesus taught earlier in His sermon of blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy and we will be forgiven as we forgive others. (see notes on Matthew 5:7, Matthew 6:12, Matthew 6:14-15)

Mt 7:2: What standard or measure were the scribes and Pharisees using? What should they have used?

They were using their own standard - self-righteousness

We should only judge righteously and this can only be done using God's perfect standard.

What can believers not evaluate that only God can evaluate?

The other person's motive (and all the contextual circumstances leading up to or associated with the action or behavior)

Mt 7:5: How does Jesus characterize critical, fault finding type judgment?

Hypocrisy - the scribes and Pharisees were hypocrites, judging others by the letter of the Law but failing to fulfill the heart of the Law.

We are all show ourselves to be hypocrites each time we judge and condemn others without first judging ourselves. When we become provoked by the faults of others and have far bigger faults it our own life we are hypocrites. When we are acting out the part of righteous speck removers, oblivious to our own sin, we are hypocrites!

Pastor Ray Pritchard illustrates the tendency we all have to hypocritically criticize others of the very things we are guilty of writing

that...

> "The tendency toward hypocrisy shows itself in many subtle ways. Have you ever noticed how we like to "rename" our sins? We do that by ascribing the worst motives to others, while using other phrases to let ourselves off the hook. If you do it, you're a liar; I merely "stretch the truth." If you do it, you're cheating; I am "bending the rules."

And then **Pritchard** lists additional examples of such hypocritical statements, some of which come too close to home (!)...

> You lose your temper; I have righteous anger.
>
> You're a jerk; I'm having a bad day.
>
> You have a critical spirit; I bluntly tell the truth.
>
> You gossip; I share prayer requests.
>
> You curse and swear; I let off steam.
>
> You're pushy; I'm intensely goal-oriented.
>
> You're greedy; I'm simply taking care of business.
>
> You're a hypochondriac; but I'm really sick.
>
> You stink; I merely have an "earthy aroma". (Mr. I. M. Okay Meets His Maker)

Mt 7:3-5: How does Jesus illustrate this type of judgment?

Critical fault finder = beam or log in their eye (cannot see others clearly)

One criticized = speck in their eye

Mt 7:3-5: What is the correction for a judgmental spirit?

First remove the log out of your eye

This allows you to see clearly

Then you will be able to remove the speck out of your brother's eye (implying this is primarily in the body of Christ but the principle applies to everyone a believer encounters!)