

# GREG'S NOTES

## A NEW BEGINNING TEACHING OUTLINES

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### THE NONBELIEVER'S FAVORITE VERSE

Matthew 7

The nonbeliever's favorite verse—can you guess what it is? It is the first verse of Matthew 7: “Judge not lest you be judged.” And why do they choose it as their favorite verse? Because generally nonbelievers use it to stop you from calling attention to their sin. But, what does this verse mean? Are Christians to avoid making opinions or judgment calls? How do we apply this verse practically?

#### PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES

1. **We should be discerning but not condemning.** Being a Christian does not mean tolerating and accepting everything. When confrontation was necessary, Jesus would speak the truth to a person. And we must do the same. However, we need to do so lovingly. The better translation of this statement of Christ is: “Condemn not lest you be condemned.”
2. **Our desire should always be to restore and not condemn a person who is living in sin.** Paul says in Galatians 6:1–2, “Brothers, if someone is caught in sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (NIV). Speak the truth in love. Restore in gentleness. That is our goal.
3. **I can't see a speck in my brother's eye if I have a telephone pole in mine.** If we were to loosely paraphrase it, why are you worrying about the sawdust in your brother's eye when you have got the 2 x 4 in yours? The words that Jesus used for the speck or the splinter and/or the log speak of the same material but in a smaller dimension. The reason sometimes I can spot certain sins in other people's lives is because those are my sins. It is actually more about me than it is about them.
4. **Some people just don't want our help.** We can only restore those who are open to restoration. Jesus illustrates this in Matthew 7:6. “Don't give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.” Pearls before swine is communicating the idea of giving something valuable to someone who does not care.

#### RELEVANT REMINDERS

- Don't try to judge a person's motives in the sense of passing final judgment on them. Yes, we should evaluate. No, we should not condemn. We are to judge for identification, not for condemnation.
- A believer should be discerning, thoughtful, should think biblically, and run everything through the grid of Scripture. A believer should make judgments this way.

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### APPLICABLE ACTIONS

The next time someone says to you, “Judge not lest you be judged,” say, “Hey man, that means condemn not, lest you be condemned, and I am not condemning you. That is for God to do or not to do. However, I love you enough to tell you the truth. Let’s help you get right with God.”