

**Matthew 7:6:** Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

**Intro: Last Week:** We should be gracious, loving people who turn from being sinfully critical & turn from hypocrisy so that we might lovingly & humbly correct others, in love, for the glory of God, through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**This Week:** We must be discerning and judge wisely who we should share Christ and His Gospel message with, and we must be discerning and judge how best to share Christ and His Gospel message.

### **1. Who Are The Dogs And The Pigs?**

Jesus is using the terms “dogs” and “pigs” to refer to a certain type of person. A kind of person who has received the truth of God’s Word and the Gospel and who should know better not to reject it, but who has constantly and persistently rejected the Gospel with hatred, scoffing, ridicule, and even violent persecution.

**a. Dogs: Not Gentiles: Matthew 15:26-27:** "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

- **Philippians 3:2:** Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

- **Revelation 22:14-15:** Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

**b. Pigs: Leviticus 11:7-8:** the pig, because it parts the hoof & is cloven-footed but does not chew the cud, is unclean to you. You shall not eat any of their flesh, & you shall not touch their carcasses; they are unclean to you.

**c. The fact that there are dogs and pigs highlights God’s sovereign choice to save some and not others:**

- **John 15:16:** You did not choose me, but I chose you

- **Luke 10:21:** In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.”

- **John 17:9:** I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.

- **Romans 9:18:** So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

- **Matthew 11:27:** All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

- **Matthew 13:11-15:** And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: ‘You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive. For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.’”

### **2. What Is The “Holy” And Our “Pearls”?**

Holy means set apart, separate, consecrated to God, pure. Pearls are smooth, rounded beads formed inside of an oyster used like gems for jewelry. They have great value – they had even greater value in the ancient world!

Jesus is using “holy” and “pearls” as metaphors for Himself & His Gospel of the Kingdom & the Word of God.

### **3. What Will Dog-Like People And Pig-Like People Do With Christ And His Gospel?**

**Matthew 7:6:** Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

**a. These kinds of wicked people will belittle and trash the Gospel:** If we give dog-like people and pig-like people the holy Word of God and the Pearl of greatest price – the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ – they will treat what is most glorious and valuable as dirt and mud and valueless and trample it down and turn and attack you!

**Jeremiah 15:3:** I will appoint over them four kinds of destroyers, declares the LORD: the sword to kill, the dogs to tear, and the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy.

**Charles Quarles:** Pushing the Gospel on the wicked often exposes the Gospel to ridicule.

**Proverbs 9:7-8:** Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse, and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury. Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you.

**b. See how this principle works in the rest of the New Testament: Matthew 10:13-15:** if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup> And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. <sup>15</sup> Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.

- **Matthew 13:57-58:** they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household." <sup>58</sup> And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

- **Paul & Barnabas' ministry at Antioch in Pisidia: Acts 13:38-51:** Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is justified from everything <sup>39</sup> from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. <sup>40</sup> Beware, therefore, lest what is said in the Prophets should come about: "Look, you scoffers, be astounded and perish; for I am doing a work in your days, a work that you will not believe, even if one tells it to you." <sup>42</sup> As they went out, the people begged that these things might be told them the next Sabbath. <sup>43</sup> And after the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God. <sup>44</sup> The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. <sup>45</sup> But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. <sup>46</sup> And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. <sup>47</sup> For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth." <sup>48</sup> And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. <sup>49</sup> And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. <sup>50</sup> But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. <sup>51</sup> But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium.

- **Acts 18:5-6:** When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus. <sup>6</sup> And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

### **4. What Should We Do?**

**a. We should pray for discernment about who we should keep sharing the Gospel with over and over again & how we should keep sharing the Gospel: D. A. Carson:** Disciples exhorted to love their enemies and not to judge might fail to consider the subtleties of the argument and become undiscerning simpletons. This verse guards against such a possibility.

**Two Examples: 1 Pet. 3:1-2:** wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

**Titus 3:10-11:** As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

**b. We should pray for discernment about how to correct a sinning brother or sister, in love: Keith Throop:**

Jesus seems to anticipate in verse 6 that confronting sin in a brother will not always go well, even if done in the right way. There may be times that they will respond quite negatively to our attempts to offer correction based upon God's Word. And it is important to recognize that this may sometimes reveal that one who has professed to be a brother is in reality not a brother. In fact, Jesus will refer to such false professors of faith later in the same context: Matthew 7:21-23: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."

**Someone:** If you want to see how spiritually mature someone really is, watch how they respond to rebuke & correction or how they respond when they don't get their way.

**c. We should pray & pursue God so that we are an easily correctable, humble, open to rebuke kind of people**

**Ligon Duncan: d. Believers must realize that there will be some people who are permanently hateful of the Gospel:** When someone has great knowledge of the truths about God and the Bible (like the unrepentant Jews!), they've heard the Gospel over and over again, they know the truth, and yet they hate Christ and the truth, reject Him and it, and belittle Him and His Gospel over and over again, it may be best to be silent and pray.

**Mark Dever:** If you watch a young person who's very excited about a particular idea, you will often observe a trail of people in their wake who now oppose that idea. Why? Because they haven't yet learned how to read their audience. So they argue and argue, and people respond by taking the opposite side. In fact, the knot of their opposition grows tighter the more a person argues. We once had one brother around our church who believed in infant baptism. My keen and passionate Baptist staff all had the instinct to argue with him, yet I quickly forbade them from doing so. I explained that arguing with him would harden him in his position, and he would only get better at making his arguments. "Instead," I said, "ignore the topic, love him, encourage him in the fruits of the Spirit, and let him find on his own what Scripture says in that contested territory." I'm happy to say that that man, by God's grace, is now a Baptist minister.

**e. Remember that we must take a different approach when correcting a brother as opposed to when we are witnessing to obstinate unbelievers:** We are patient with those in Christ and keep correcting, over and over again!

**1 Thessalonians 5:14:** we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.

**f. We must guard against giving comfort to those who are actually without hope. Duncan:** It is a tempting thing when a person is facing grief & difficulty to give them comfort despite the fact that they have not embraced the Gospel. It is especially tempting to do that in a hospital & at a funeral. & we must not give hope where there is no ground for hope, lest we become like the false prophets who cried peace, peace where there is no peace. & there are many churchmen worldwide who prostitute the Gospel by pronouncing God's blessings on everyone apart from their saving relation with Him. We must beware of giving comfort where there is no ground for hope and comfort.

**g. We must be careful of giving ourselves in relationships to those who obstinately refuse the Gospel:** Be careful about who you are close friends with, who you enter into dating/marriage relationships with, etc.

**h. We must remember that all people will not respond to the Gospel alike:** Prepare for rejection & hostility!

- **John 15:20:** "A servant is not greater than his master." If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.

- **2 Timothy 3:12:** Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted

**i. We must be careful not to change the Gospel in order to make it more easily received for those who are rejecting it: Tell the Story over and over again, faithfully! GOSPEL!**

### **5. What Should We Not Do?**

**a. We should not stop sharing the Gospel with all people: Phillip Way:** Now today, we must admit that we do not cross the line very often as far as offering holy things to dogs. Actually, we are so timid and so infrequent at sharing the truth, that I believe we are in no danger of violating this verse. We must be sharing and witnessing if we are to know when enough is enough. We can't even for a moment think that we should share a "God bless you" once and think that we have been a witness and that to press things any further would violate this principle. NO! In order to understand this principle we must be doing what He says. We must be obedient to witness before we can judge when to stop. (Pray; Ask people if you may share; Don't beg people to take tracts)

**b. We should not stop sharing the Gospel over and over again, even with the same person: Patience! Persist!**

**c. We should not lose hope that God can save the vilest and most hardened of sinners: Michael Card:** One day Joseph, who was walking along one of these hot, dirty African roads, met someone who shared the gospel of Jesus Christ with him. Then and there he accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior. The power of the Spirit began transforming his life; he was filled with such excitement and joy that the first thing he wanted to do was return to his own village and share that same Good News with the members of his local tribe. Joseph began going from door-to-door, telling everyone he met about the Cross of Jesus and the salvation it offered, expecting to see their faces light up the way his had. To his amazement the villagers not only didn't care, they became violent. The men of the village seized him and held him to the ground while the women beat him with strands of barbed wire. He was dragged from the village and left to die alone in the bush. Joseph somehow managed to crawl to a waterhole, and there, after days of passing in and out of consciousness, found the strength to get up. He wondered about the hostile reception he had received from people he had known all his life. He decided he must have left something out or told the story of Jesus incorrectly. After rehearsing the message he had first heard, he decided to go back and share his faith once more. Joseph limped into the circle of huts and began to proclaim Jesus. "He died for you, so that you might find forgiveness and come to know the living God," he pleaded. Again he was grabbed by the men of the village and held while the women beat him reopening wounds that had just begun to heal. Once more they dragged him unconscious from the village and left him to die. To have survived the first beating was truly remarkable. To live through the second was a miracle. Again, days later, Joseph awoke in the wilderness, bruised, scarred—and determined to go back. He returned to the small village and this time, they attacked him before he had a chance to open his mouth. As they flogged him for the third and probably the last time, he again spoke to them of Jesus Christ, the Lord. Before he passed out, the last thing he saw was that the women who were beating him began to weep. This time he awoke in his own bed. The ones who had so severely beaten him were now trying to save his life and nurse him back to health. The entire village had come to Christ. (**Jim Elliot Story**)

**Jesus is the Pearl of Greatest Price! Look to Him! Matt. 13:45-46:** the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went & sold all that he had and bought it

Jesus Christ was the holy, holy, holy One given over to the scoffing, dog-like Pharisees and Jewish leaders! Jesus is the Pearl of great price given into the hands of the unclean, pig-like men. He bore God's wrath for us! He rose!

Christ Is The Pearl Of Greatest Price  
The Holy One Of God Called Thrice  
Yet He Was Counted As Our Vice  
A Crown The God-Man's Head Would Slice  
He's Beaten, Whipped With Cruel Device  
And Bore God's Wrath In Sacrifice  
He Died To Pay Redemption's Price

But Rose Alive Gives Life With Spice  
So By The Spirit We're Born Twice  
By Faith Alone His Works Suffice  
Now We Discern With Minds Precise  
And Give Our Pearls With Wise Advice  
His Life Our Hearts Does So Entice  
For Jesus Is Our Paradise!