

Talk it Over

Discussion Guide

September 6 – 2.0

MATTHEW 7:1-12

Welcome: This is the last message in our series studying and learning from the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. And, as you might have guessed, it is the hardest and most challenging teaching yet. The good news is that you're ready for it. Why? Because you've already heard the beginning of Jesus' teaching and sermon...which is the foundation for this one. So, get ready...here we go!!!

Theme: This is the time for a new future and a new story to be written.

We are designed by God and in the image of God. One of the great descriptors of God in the Bible is as the author of creation! What a great title! We are authors too! We author our future and write the story of our lives. And, Jesus is teaching us what we need in order to write a better future than the past.

Talk It Over: How are you going to make sure that you write a 'new' story?

Background: When Jesus met with the disciples on the hillside to teach them about the future, he knew that they had tried many times to write a 'new' story. He also knew that they kept coming up with the same outcomes. No matter how hard they tried, their future kept coming up short. It wasn't new. It was filled with old patterns and old ways of thinking. Jesus wanted to help them to change their patterns.

Read: Matthew 7:1-2

Idea: Judgmental thinking is the biggest and most dangerous trap you will ever encounter. As you head out on the journey Jesus is sending you on, there is nothing more detrimental or damaging than judgmental thinking.

Talk it over: Talk about a time that you noticed yourself being judgmental or critical of others.

Follow up: Where do you think this judgmental attitude comes from?

Read: Matthew 7:3-4

#signsofhope

Idea: Judgmentalism will blind you and cause you more pain than anyone else.

Remember all the times that Jesus said, "Don't be like the hypocrites?" He is warning us all that we need to be careful about judgmentalism because it can blind us completely.

Talk it over: Why do you think it's even possible for people to walk around with a log in their eye and not notice it?

Follow up: How will taking the log out of your eye change how you approach someone with a splinter in theirs?

#signsofhope

Read: Matthew 7:5

Remember this idea: You matter! Jesus started his message by saying “blessed are the poor... grieving... meek...” He wanted everyone to know that they matter. But, here’s what happens with people who have low self confidence, when they become self confident, they tend to look down on others.

Talk it over: How do you think self-esteem impacts how we view others?

Idea: You are blessed in order to be a blessing! Tell others they matter too! Jesus didn’t just come to bless us so we could be blessed. He wanted us to become good at speaking blessings over other people around us. He wanted us to know that we matter and to also know that all other people matter too.

Talk it over: Jesus wants us all to speak ‘blessings’ over others. Try doing this right now with the people you’re with. How does it feel?

Read: Matthew 7:6

Idea: Jesus teaches us to love others with the love we want to receive. There is no theological consensus on this verse. There are many different interpretations of what Jesus is saying here. But, the way that I (Pastor James) interpret this verse is by taking into consideration the verse before it and after it. I see this as Jesus warning us that the ‘pig’ or ‘dog’ of judgmentalism will trample on all the love that we ever try to share with the world around us.

Talk it over: How does judgmentalism ‘trample’ on this being done?

(think about the times that you’ve felt judged in your past)

Read: Matthew 7:7-12

Idea: Treat people well. Love them as Jesus does.

Talk it over: How does judgmentalism ‘trample’ on this being done?

(think about the times that you’ve felt judged in your past)

Pray: Share prayer requests & Share praise reports.

NEXTWEEK: A new series ‘BRAVE’. Get ready!