



LIFE IN THE KINGDOM

The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 7:6 "Pearls to Pigs"



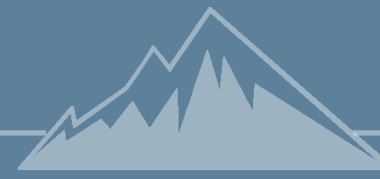
Matthew
7:6

“Do not give dogs what is sacred;
do not throw your pearls to pigs. If
you do, they may trample them
under their feet, and turn and tear
you to pieces.”



A Difficult Teaching

- It doesn't seem to fit in with the teaching that surrounds it.
- It sounds really harsh and condemning, calling people dogs and pigs.
- It's hard to understand what we're commanded not to do.

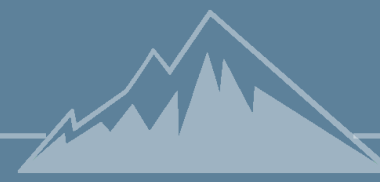


Proverbs
16:2

All a person's ways seem
pure to them, but motives
are weighed by the LORD.



The discernment that
Jesus is calling us to is the
receptivity of the person
we're trying to help.



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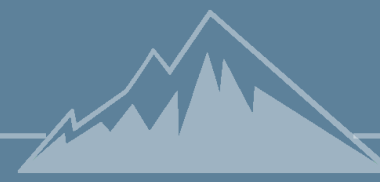
The problem with pearls for pigs is not that the pigs are not worthy. It is not worthiness that is in question here at all, but helpfulness. Pigs cannot digest pearls, cannot nourish themselves upon them.



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And what a picture this is of our efforts to correct and control others by pouring our good things, often truly precious things, upon them—things that they nevertheless simply cannot ingest and use to nourish themselves. Often we do not even listen to them. We “know” without listening.

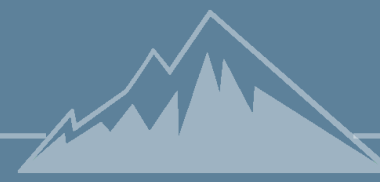
Our good intentions make little difference. The needy person will finally become angry and



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attack us. The point is not the waste of the “pearl” but that the person given the pearl is not helped. How often this happens between child and parent!

... Frankly, our “pearls” often are offered with a certain superiority of bearing that keeps us from paying attention to those we are trying to help. We have solutions. That should be enough,



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shouldn't it? And very quickly some contempt, impatience, anger, and even condemnation slips into our offer.

And the very goodness of our "pearl" may make us think that we couldn't possibly have the wrong attitude toward the intended recipient. Would we be offering them such pearls if our heart were not right? Unfortunately, we just might.



Ephesians
6:4

Fathers, **do not exasperate** your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Colossians
3:21

Fathers, **do not embitter** your children, or they will become discouraged.





We may have truth on our side
and even sincere motives, but still
bring harm to the people we're
trying to help if they are not ready
to receive it .



Matthew 7:7-8

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

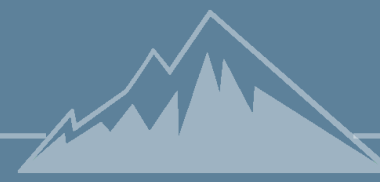


Rather than pushing our convictions on others when they are not ready to receive it, we need to pray that God will change their hearts in his timing.



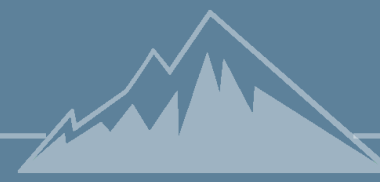
Luke 22:31-32

“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”



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I think there is perhaps no other scene in all scripture that so forcefully illustrates the community of prayerful love as this response to Peter. How earnestly Jesus longed for Peter to come out right in his time of testing! But he left him free to succeed or fail before God and man— and, as it turned out, before all of subsequent



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human history. He used no condemnation, no shame, no “pearls of wisdom” on him. And he didn’t use supernatural power to rewire his soul or his brain. It was just this: “I have requested, concerning you, that your faith might not die.” ... It is Jesus’ beautiful pattern for us to practice in our relationships to those close to us.

