

# JESUS ON JUDGEMENTALISM (MATTHEW 7:1-12)

## Video 1

Navigating relationships is hard. Even the closest friendships at uni can be put under strain, especially during the stressful times of the year.

Factor in student accommodation and the potential for arguments multiplies. Differing opinions about cleaning, sleep schedules and when to have guests over. Perhaps you've been drawn into an argument about varying standards of personal hygiene or who stole the milk.

Most of the time these problems are simply misunderstandings, but there are times when tension can be more serious.

Jesus wouldn't have been surprised that relational tension exists amongst students. Jesus was only too familiar with sin and its effects upon relationships, even amongst his people. But Jesus does those in his kingdom to navigate the arena of conflict in a way that marks us out as belonging to him.

We're going to see Jesus call us to two things: firstly, **to be very careful as we're involved in one another's lives** – but, secondly, **to be involved in each other's lives anyway**.

Let's consider the first of these – be very careful.

Jesus opens in verse 1:

Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way as you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

The verb 'judge' is flexible in the English language. It can be used neutrally – in the way that a court judges a case, having carefully weighed evidence.

It can also be used in a negative sense. It's possible to make a negative conclusion about something or someone without much evidence – to judge a book by its cover. Or, more seriously, to condemn someone for something they've done.

In verse 1, Jesus intends this second sense. He's not saying we can't make judgements. But he is warning us to be slow to condemn people. Verse 2 explains why. Jesus knows that we often judge others much more harshly than we judge ourselves.

This becomes clear in Jesus' famous parable about the speck and the plank. As he says in verse 3:

Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?

It's a deliberately absurd picture. But Jesus' wants to communicate how distorted things can be when we have an attitude of fault-finding in others. We are blind to the potentially much bigger issues in our own lives.

Jesus isn't saying we leave people alone and mind our own business. Remember at the start of his sermon. Jesus taught that peacemakers are blessed. Don't always avoid conflict.

But Jesus is saying that, as we address sin and failure in others, we must be willing to humbly hold ourselves to the same standards.

We dare not speak down to others, as if we have nothing to work on ourselves.

We must recognise that we are in as much need of help from Jesus as them.

Can you imagine how this would change conflict at your university? Perhaps even in your CU?

In the second video, we'll explore this principle further. We'll see that to do this well, we need others in our life.