



## Accessorizing Pigs

By Dr. Gregory Wiens

Have you ever quoted the verse: *“Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs”*? Did you realize that the context in this verse is about not judging others?

One of the dark sides of being a leader is that you can always see where a church, leader or ministry could be improved. You are wired to think this way and so it is as natural as breathing...you just see how things could be better. This is not always good because, if you are not careful, you find it easy to judge. When you can see a better way, it is logical to be critical.

Recently, I was reading *Matthew 7.1-6* and heard Jesus say some pretty harsh words to me. Jesus states:

<sup>1</sup>*“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. <sup>2</sup>For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.*

<sup>3</sup>*“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? <sup>4</sup>How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? <sup>5</sup>You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.*

<sup>6</sup>*“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.”*

As I meditated on this, I realized that I am pretty good at accepting people who are different from me. However, I first go through a process of writing them off before I can come to the point of acceptance. It usually takes me a while to understand their unique calling, gifts, and circumstances before I can embrace that they are where God wants them; and that I don’t need to judge them. This is not acceptable to God. Jesus is pretty clear that I need to judge MYSELF first.

Most of the time, I don’t readily see myself as judging them. I just see myself as knowing more than they do or having a better perspective than they do. But, judging others is not simply seeing how things could be different. Judging has more to do with criticizing them and seeing them as wrong or inferior. Judging carries with it a sense of moral failure. As I see things that could be different (as long as it is not in a moral area), I need to simply accept them for where and who they are. To be honest, most people don’t really want to know what you think they could do better.

I am a passionate leader, which God desires to use to expand the Kingdom of God. But this passion must first be directed toward how can “I” be more impactful for God, rather than focusing on how can others be more impactful. If someone asks me for my observations, that is a totally different situation. That is called coaching. But, if I am not asked and it is not a moral issue, then I simply need to leave them to God. This isn’t really hard to understand or even apply; I just need to do it.

The interesting part of this passage is verse 6. This verse is often quoted in contexts very different from judging others. Why does he mention pearls and pigs in his admonition not to judge? As I

meditated on this, it hit me that judging and criticizing others IS like throwing your pearls to pigs. It has to do with not wasting your God given time criticizing others!

What do I gain from judging others? Nothing! It simply takes my time and energy to do so. We have only so much time to use for God's work. Our days are numbered; and if we spend any portion of it judging others rather than constructively seeking to be better at who God created us to be, it is squandering something of value. The time I take to criticize another is such a waste of a precious commodity! How does it benefit my life or even the Kingdom of God when I criticize others? Not much. In fact, Jesus tells us the Kingdom is hurt when we criticize others.

I began to think about all of the times I have criticized others in my mind. My mind raced through just the past few months...I wondered what could God have done with all that thinking and time, had I invested it in something constructive (sacred). I was ashamed, embarrassed and humiliated. I confessed my sin to my Lord and repented.

If the Lord has been given control of your life, then he has redeemed all of your time and energy as sacred. So when you judge or criticize others, you are casting your pearls (your precious time and energy) before pigs (wasting time as it accomplishes nothing positive). We have been given sacred time and resources, which God desires us to put to good use, not judging others. This passage took on new meaning as I realized the many times my judging others involved taking something sacred and using it for unsacred purposes.

I am and always will be a visionary who can see better ways of doing everything, from designing roadways to developing people. Seeing these things and even journaling about them is one thing. However, my Lord and I have been doing better these past few weeks at allowing him to fix other's issues and concentrating more on my own shortcomings. That way, I am spending a lot less time accessorizing pigs!