

# Gospel of Matthew



## ***Suggested responses to questions about Matthew 7:1-29***

**Note:** Be sure to respond to all the questions yourself before reading the suggested responses in order to make the most of this study.

1. Scripture teaches that humans don't have the ability to judge others correctly because they don't have the same perspective as God. In 1 Samuel 16:7b, God tells the prophet Samuel: "[T]he LORD sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." Proverbs 21:2 teaches: "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the heart." In Luke 16:15, Jesus explains: "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts; for what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God." The Church encourages Christians regularly to make an examination of conscience. Paragraph 1778 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that Christians are to judge themselves according to conscience, which is described as: "a judgment of reason whereby the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act that he is going to perform, is in the process of performing, or has already completed." Paragraph 1781 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains that conscience enables one to assume responsibility for his or her actions by calling to mind "the forgiveness that must be asked, the good that must still be practiced, and the virtue that must be constantly cultivated with the grace of God."
2. Paragraph 2477 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that "rash judgment . . . assumes as true, without sufficient foundation, the moral fault of a neighbor." In paragraph 2478 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the Church encourages people to avoid rash judgment by taking caution as much as possible to interpret others' "thoughts, words, and deeds in a favorable way."
3. Swine are offensive to the Jews because Mosaic Law considered swine to be unclean. Leviticus 11:7-8 explains that this is because a pig "parts the hoof and is cloven-footed but does not chew the cud." The Israelites were not permitted to eat the flesh of swine or to touch these animals. In Revelation 22:15, the apostle John records that he saw dogs outside the gates of the new Jerusalem, along with "sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and every one who loves and practices falsehood." Paragraph 2013 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: "In order to reach this perfection the faithful should use the strength dealt out to them by Christ's gift, so that . . . doing the will of the Father in everything, they may wholeheartedly devote themselves to the glory of God and to the service of their neighbor. Thus the holiness of the People of God will grow in fruitful abundance, as is clearly shown in the history of the Church through the lives of so many saints."
4. In Luke 18:1-8, Jesus tells of an unjust judge who finally gave in to the persistence of a widow in order to teach his followers "they ought always to pray and not lose heart"—the

### **Matthew Lesson 7 Suggested Responses**

same message that Jesus preaches in the Sermon on the Mount. Paragraph 162 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “To live, grow, and persevere in the faith until the end we must nourish it with the word of God; we must beg the Lord to increase our faith; it must be ‘working through charity,’ abounding in hope, and rooted in the faith of the Church.”

5. The author of Tobit 4:15a writes: “What you hate do not do to anyone.” Jesus teaches the “Golden Rule” set forth in Matthew 7:12, but it’s presented in a positive way—instead of “don’t do to others what you hate,” Jesus tells his followers to do to others what they would have others do to them. Jesus goes beyond the letter of the law and discloses the spirit of the law—a spirit that comes from God as Father.
6. In Deuteronomy 30:16-20, Moses tells the Israelites that “by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his ordinances, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you are entering to take possession of it. But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you this day, that you shall perish. . . . I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice, and cleaving to him; for that means life to you and length of days, that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.” Wisdom 5:6-7 shows the results of the choices made by the Israelites: “So it was we who strayed from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness did not shine on us, and the sun did not rise upon us. We took our fill of the paths of lawlessness and destruction, and we journeyed through trackless deserts, but the way of the LORD we have not known.”
7. When Jesus says “On that day . . .” in Matthew 7:22, he’s referring to the judgment of the Last Day. Paragraph 678 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “Then will the conduct of each one and the secrets of hearts be brought to light.” Paragraph 1040 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that Jesus’ role on that day will be to “pronounce the final word on all history.”
8. In Psalm 62:2, David calls God his “rock” and his “salvation” and his “fortress,” and he says that because of this he “shall not be greatly moved.” The man in Jesus’ parable who builds his house on a rock builds his life on the Lord where there is protection and stability. James 1:22-25 repeats Jesus’ message found in Matthew 7:24—“Everyone who hears these words of mine and does them. . . .”—when he urges Christians to “be doers of the word, and not hearers only.”
9. In 1 Corinthians 15:14, St. Paul teaches that the Christian faith rests on the authority of the risen Christ: “[I]f Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.” Paragraph 651 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains that the Resurrection is “definitive proof” of Jesus’ authority. Paragraph 551 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “From the beginning of his public life Jesus chose certain men, twelve in number, to be with him and to participate in his mission. He gives the Twelve a share in his authority and ‘sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal.’”

10. What's radically new about the New Covenant is that it's no longer the servants of God who are delivering the covenant, it's the Father's Son. The Sermon on the Mount can be divided into five parts—"The Beatitudes," "The Six Antitheses," "Principles of Piety," "Cares of This World," and "The Way to Life."

*Responses to the Questions for Reflection will vary.*

**Matthew Notes**