

# "I Never Knew You" Part 2

By Wayne Vasilenko

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In part one of this series I talked about judging others. I pointed out that whenever you judge or criticize someone else you open yourself to the same and in some cases harsher judgment. I also mentioned that Christians are often criticized as being judgmental simply for telling others about the shortcomings of man in relation to God even when including themselves in the illustration. People who do not have a relationship with God naturally gravitate to the other influence in the world being Satan as according to the Bible, there is no middle ground...

## **Matthew 12:30 (New King James Version)**

He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

## **Revelation 3:15-16 (New King James Version)**

<sup>15</sup> I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. <sup>16</sup> So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

These verses make it clear that even "not choosing sides" is indeed a choice; and that as far as God is concerned all of us at some point will have to own up to the fact that if we do not choose Him (God) we have chosen Satan who is against Him. All Christians are called to be a witness for the Gospel. Jesus made it clear that we are all commissioned to go out and make disciples spreading the Gospel throughout the world. As we execute this mission we will inevitably come across people who are receptive to what we are presenting as well as those who will reject what we present. This brings us to the next verse in Matthew Chapter 7 concerning this series:

## **Matthew 7:6 (New King James Version)**

Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

The question that this verse brings to my mind is "how far should we go when presenting the Gospel?" In other words, if we come across someone who adamantly rejects the Gospel or is hostile in responses... when do we move on? We are not called to force the Gospel on anyone; however we are called to present the Gospel to everyone! In the process we will encounter some people who are willing to listen, some who are willing to debate, and some who will simply argue for the sake of arguing. These types of people are not necessarily rejecting the message; I was an example of all three before I was saved! I love to debate issues with people, and sometimes I will say something "provocative" for no other reason than to see how serious or knowledgeable my opponent in the debate really is. I was interested in, and searching for God as long as I can remember, but I was in no way an easy person to witness to! I had a lot of personal opinions and had a lot of religion that I had been exposed to by relatives to deal with. I thank God that the people who did witness to me didn't give up on me but the question remains..."when is it time to move on?" Before we continue I feel it is necessary to put some things into perspective. It is always important to consider who is being spoken to and the situation at the time; and we must consider these things when we read Matt 7:6. In order to understand what I am getting at we have to jump further down in Matthew's Gospel.

## **Matthew 10:5-6 (New King James Version)**

<sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. <sup>6</sup> But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

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### **Matthew 15:22-28 (English Standard Version)**

<sup>22</sup> And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon." <sup>23</sup> But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying out after us." <sup>24</sup> He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." <sup>25</sup> But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." <sup>26</sup> And he answered, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." <sup>27</sup> She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." <sup>28</sup> Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly.

There are a few interesting things brought out in these passages. The first is that Jesus came into the world first and foremost for the people of Israel (God's Chosen Ones). The second point is that the Gentiles were turning out to be more receptive than the people Jesus came to redeem! The third thing that stands out to me is that no matter what your background is, if you reach out to God, you will be greeted with open arms. With this in mind let's go back to **Matthew 7:6 (New King James Version)**

Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces. To me, the spirit of the message is as follows: We are to present the Gospel to all who will listen. If they are receptive to the message we should continue; however if you are rejected or attacked by the people you present the Gospel to, then it is time to move on in search of someone else willing to listen. Keep this in mind however... Some people will have a change of heart over time so keep your eyes open for evidence of such change. In my own experience, if a change of heart occurs, those people will more than likely seek you out to resume the debate. Join us again for Part Three of this series, "I Never Knew You" coming soon.