

## Church Group Discussion Guide for "Heart Check: First Aid for the Soul"

Sermon Text: Matthew 7:1-6 ESV

### Ice Breaker Question

- Share a time when you realized you needed to address something in your own life before helping someone else. How did that experience shape your understanding of self-examination?

### Discussion Questions

#### 1. Understanding the Analogy

- How does the military principle of "render self-aid before buddy aid" relate to Jesus' teaching in Matthew 7:1-6?
  - *Discuss how neglecting personal spiritual health can impact our ability to assist others effectively.*

#### 2. Interpreting "Judge Not"

- What do you think Jesus means by "Judge not, that you be not judged"? How is this often misunderstood in today's context?
  - *Consider the difference between making discerning judgments and having a judgmental attitude.*

#### 3. The Danger of a Critical Spirit

- In what ways can a critical or judgmental spirit harm our relationships and spiritual well-being?
  - *Reflect on personal experiences where criticism has affected you or others.*

#### 4. Self-Examination and Humility

- Why is self-examination important before addressing others' faults? How does humility play a role in this process?
  - *Discuss practical steps for conducting a "heart check" using Ephesians 4:31-32 as a guide.*

## 5. Learning from King David's Story

- What lessons can we learn from the encounter between Nathan and King David in 2 Samuel 12:1-7?
  - *Explore how acknowledging our sins can lead to repentance and restoration.*

## 6. Approaching Others with Love

- How can we approach others about their faults in a way that reflects love and compassion rather than judgment?
  - *Share examples of effective and ineffective ways of addressing sensitive issues.*

## 7. Exercising Discernment

- What does it mean to "not throw your pearls before pigs" in Matthew 7:6? How can we apply this in our interactions?
  - *Discuss the importance of discernment in knowing when and how to offer guidance or correction.*

## 8. The Role of the Gospel

- How does understanding the Gospel help us overcome our judgmental tendencies and extend grace to others?
  - *Reflect on how Jesus' example influences our attitudes toward others.*

## 9. Cultural Influences

- In what ways does our culture promote a judgmental spirit, and how can we guard against it?
  - *Consider the impact of social media, news, and societal pressures on our perceptions.*

## 10. Personal Application

- What specific steps can you take this week to perform a "heart check" and address any critical attitudes you may have?
  - *Encourage the sharing of personal commitments or accountability measures to foster growth.*

### Closing Reflection

- "Father, search my heart and reveal any wounds or faults I've overlooked; help me to seek Your healing first, so I may humbly and lovingly assist others in their journey."

### Note to Group Leaders:

- **Facilitate Open Dialogue:** Encourage participants to share honestly and listen respectfully.
- **Maintain Confidentiality:** Remind everyone that personal stories shared in the group should remain confidential.
- **Pray Together:** Consider opening and closing the discussion with prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your conversation.