

**Divine Conspiracy Book Study**  
Reflection/Discussion Questions – Aug 3, 2009

**Chapter Seven – The Community of Prayer Love**

If you recall, the Sermon on the Mount is not a disjointed collection of random ethical teachings. Instead as a unified message, we should interpret (all his teachings) with the understanding that Jesus' gospel was the availability of the kingdom of God and the fullness of life under that rule. The teachings in Matthew 7:1-12 "illustrate the kingdom attitude toward those closest to us." We should be free of "condemnation engineering," by identifying how we push or even force our good ideas upon others, whether or not they want them." (study guide p. 75)

*No Condemnation*

1. If a person has laid aside anger, contempt, verbal manipulation, getting even and has even stopped worrying about looking good and having wealth (Mt 5-6), how will that person find it easier to put the ideas in Mt 7:1-12 into practice?

*Judge Not*

2. What are we doing when we condemn someone? (p. 218) What are the sorts of people we can rightly condemn?\*

*Who Can "Correct" Others*

3. What insight is helpful to you from Gal 6:1 with regard to its teaching on how to correct others?
  
4. Can you identify a person in your life that has been able to correct "with gentleness and kindness in such a way that no one was upset" like Saint Dominic? (p. 220) Share this with the group.

*Condemnation's Involvement with Anger and Contempt*

5. How would you explain the interaction between condemnation, anger and contempt? (p. 221)

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\* (a trick question for UCLA and USC graduates)

6. What is the “ministry of condemnation” and how is it possible to condemn “without anger and contempt” (p. 222)

#### *That You Be Not Judged*

7. Why does correcting someone fail as a strategy for “helping” them?

#### *Eliminate Condemnation and Then Help*

8. What does Willard mean when he writes, “Condemnation is the board in our eye.” p. 224

#### *“Judging” and Discerning*

9. How is the illustration of the dentist in making the distinction between “judging” and “discerning”?

#### *A Family Without Condemning*

10. In the last two paragraphs on p. 227, describe the strategy presented to help us when we are condemned.

#### **When Good Things Become Deadly**

##### *Of Pearls and Pigs*

11. What is “condemnation engineering”? In what ways would your spouse or close friend say you are guilty of this? Is being pushy a form of condemnation?

#### **The Request As the Heart of Community**

##### *The Dynamic of the Request*

12. In Mt 7:7 we are to understand that “asking” is a better posture than telling or being pushy. How is the dynamic of the request a healing one? (p. 231)

13. Finally, has this study given any new or additional insights into how you understand the Golden Rule? “Do to others what you would have them do to you...”?