

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Ms. Dannels, Mr. Dowling, Mr. Garner, Mr. Hadley, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Owens, Mrs. Ross, Mrs. Siota, Ms. Ward, Mr. Winns.
Out of Town: Mr. and Mrs. Mark Law.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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Casting Your Pearls Before Swine

By Derek Long

Jesus teaches in Matthew 7:6, "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" (NKJV). The passage reminds us we have something holy and valuable. The word of God is certainly a valuable message (Psalm 19:10; 119:72, 127). The passage teaches there are certain people who will appreciate the word of God the same way a dog would appreciate something holy or swine would appreciate pearls. Dogs and swine do not appreciate something holy or valuable. Jesus is teaching us there are certain people who will not appreciate the wonderful truths contained in God's word. 1 Corinthians 2:14 states it this way, "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (NKJV). Let's look a little bit more closely at what Jesus is teaching us in Matthew 7:6!

Matthew 7:6 is a command and not simply a suggestion. It is easy to approach a passage like Matthew 7:6 and think about it being a good piece of advice we can either take or leave. However, Matthew 7:6 is actually a command for us to obey. When Jesus says, "Do not," we need to be obey His

command. To do what Jesus says not to do in Matthew 7:6 is just as much sin as committing adultery, murdering, etc. (James 2:10-11). If we have been giving what is holy to dogs or casting our pearls before swine, we need to repent and stop doing what Jesus tells us not to do.

Jesus commands us to, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15, NKJV). How does the command to "preach the gospel to every creature" and the command "do not give what is holy to the dogs, nor cast your pearls before swine" go together? Matthew 7:6 is not a passage teaching us to look at a person and make a judgment based upon the outward appearance as to whether they are going to be receptive to the gospel or not (John 7:24). How do we determine who falls into the category of "dogs" and "swine" in Matthew 7:6? The way we can determine who is the "dogs" and "swine" of Matthew 7:6 is by presenting the word of God to the person and seeing how they respond. A person who is receptive to the word of God does not fit into the category of the "dogs" or "swine" of Matthew 7:6. A person who refuses the word of God and perhaps even becomes hostile toward the word of God falls into the category of the "dogs" and "swine" of Matthew 7:6. When Jesus would later send out the twelve apostles, He gave them similar instructions. In Matthew 10:11-15 He taught them, "Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. And when you go into a household, greet it. If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Assuredly, I say to you, it

will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!" (NKJV). A house or city who refused to receive their message was to be treated the way Jesus teaches us to treat those who are like "dogs" and "swine" in Matthew 7:6. Paul at times in the book of Acts recognized some people were refusing to receive the word of God and moved on to teach other individuals (Acts 13:50-51; 18:6). If Jesus teaches us to move on from those who reject the word of God and the apostles demonstrated that behavior, we certainly need to adopt this practice in our lives.

Why do we sometimes keep giving what is holy to dogs or casting our pearls before swine? I have thought at times it is our desire to see someone be saved which motivates us to keep giving holy things to dogs or casting pearls before swine. A desire to see them saved may be partly to explain our actions. However, who wants to see someone saved the most - God or us? God certainly wants a person to be saved as much if not more than we do (2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4). God recognizes and we need to recognize as well people have to make a choice whether to be saved or not. Recently, I heard someone point out it is perhaps due to our pride that we give what is holy to dogs and cast our pearls before swine. Perhaps we think do to our abilities we can convert people when the gospel will not convert them. God's word is powerful enough to convert the sinner (Romans 1:16). If God's word cannot convert someone, we certainly cannot (Luke 16:27-31). If we are successful at convincing someone to do something when the word of God could not do it, we have not truly converted them to Christ anyway. Let's make sure we do not give what is holy to the dogs or cast our pearls before swine!