

A Principle Concerning When *Not* to Share the Truth Matthew 7:6

I. The Meaning of the Metaphors Jesus Uses to State the Principle

See The Chiastic Structure of Matthew 7:6 at right

The First Metaphorical Expression:

“Do not give what is holy to the dogs [lest they] turn and tear you in pieces.”

The Second Metaphorical Expression:

“[Do not] cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet.”

Recall verses 3-5

II. The Application of the Principle to Professing Believers

Matthew 7:15, 21-23; 18:15-17

Proverbs 9:8

2 Peter 2:20-22

III. The Application of the Principle to Unbelievers

Philippians 3:2

Matthew 10:14-15; 15:7-14

Acts 13:49-51; 18:5-6

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

The Chiastic Structure of Matthew 7:6

What is Chiasm?

“An arrangement of the parallel members of a verse or literary unit to form an a-b-b-a- arrangement (the first line corresponds to the fourth, the second to the third). Chiasmus is also called inverted or introverted parallelism” (*A Student's Dictionary for Biblical and Theological Studies*, p. 42). For example:

The Chiasm in Romans 10:9-10

[a] that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus

[b] and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead,

[c] you will be saved.

[b] For with the heart one believes unto righteousness,

[a] and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

The Chiasm in Matthew 7:6

[a] Do not give what is holy to the dogs;

[b] nor cast your pearls before swine,

[b] lest they trample them under their feet,

[a] and turn and tear you in pieces.

Thus, 1) dogs may turn and tear you in pieces, and 2) swine may trample your pearls under their feet.