

## MATTHEW 7: CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM

### I. TEMPER JUDGEMENT WITH DISCERNMENT, LOVE AND RESTORATION

Matthew 7:1-6

- a. Judge: a divine sentence or decision
- b. Discern: (in Christian contexts) perception in the absence of judgment with a view to obtaining spiritual guidance and understanding.
- c. Jesus calls for RESTORATION
- d. Recognize your own need for restoration first.
- e. Be led by God to love and restore another citizen.
- f. *We might say that Jesus means, "Don't be judgmental, but don't throw out all discernment either." It may be that in Jesus' mind, the dogs and swine represent hypocritical, judgmental believers. These sinning hypocrites should not be offered the pearls that belong to the community of the saints."* (D. Guzik)

### II. ASK WITH EXPECTATION. SEEK WITH ANTICIPATION. KNOCK WITH AUTHORITY.

Matthew 7:7-12

### III. ACCEPT THE STRUGGLE OF THE NARROW GATE AND ROAD

Matthew 7:13-23

- a. A Warning to three groups:
  - i. Disciples: examine themselves to be sure they are truly members of the kingdom of heaven
  - ii. Crowds: consider carefully their choice of following Christ or following the popular religious leadership
  - iii. Religious Leaders: about their role in leading people in the wrong direction

### IV. ONE TRUE BUILDER: MY FOUNDATION IS CHRIST

Matthew 7:24-29

Jesus is communicating great ethical principles and how they affect the lives of those in the kingdom:

- A description of the lifestyle that is appropriate for citizens in His Kingdom.
- To create a sense of how short we fall of the kingdom's glory without Christ.
- A vision of what Christ wants our lives to become.
- Introduce a new behavior pattern to match this glorious Kingdom.

**Discussion Questions:**

- 1) What did you learn in your reading of Matthew 7? What takeaways do you have from the Sermon of the Mount as a whole?
- 2) In what situations do you see yourself shift from discernment to judgement? Why do you think this happens? Why is it so difficult to approach situations and people without judgement?
- 3) What relationship in your life is God calling for love and restoration? What would it take for you to make that happen?
- 4) How is God calling you to examination, confession and restoration in your own life? What "plank" do you need to remove from your eye?
- 5) How does this image of ASK, SEEK, KNOCK in Matthew 7 change the way you see prayer? How can you begin to pray more boldly as a citizen of the kingdom?
- 6) How does comfort and desire take us far from Jesus? What comforts and desires is He calling you to leave behind?