

# A Harmony of the Gospels

## The Citizen of God's Kingdom

# The Kingdom citizen judges with discernment.

## Matthew 7:1-6

- The prohibition is against condemnation of another.
- We are reminded to allow God to assess our lives and to bring our lives in alignment with His standards.
- This passage does not prohibit the assessment of another's life in light of biblical standards and then seeking to help that person be reconciled to God. See John 8:1-11
- We are to practice discernment both in our lives and in the lives of those we are engaging with the Word of God. See Luke 23:8-9

The Kingdom citizen comprehends the exclusive nature of the Kingdom of God. Matthew 7:13-23

- **The Narrow and Wide Gates**

- Jesus is that narrow way (John 14:6)

- It is hard for us with our sinful, rebellious nature to admit we are hopelessly lost because of our sin and embrace the salvation exclusively offered through our Lord Jesus Christ.
    - It is hard to deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow Jesus when your flesh, the world and the devil offer attractive alternatives.

The Kingdom citizen comprehends the exclusive nature of the Kingdom of God. Matthew 7:13-23

- The Narrow and Wide Gates

- The many and the few

- The clear message is that there will be more who reject God's plan of salvation than accept it.
    - Be very careful not to allow your pride to take you to the place of standing in judgment of God. We must come to the place where we trust God to act within His revealed character. We must accept the fact that we understand things incompletely.

The Kingdom citizen comprehends the exclusive nature of the Kingdom of God. Matthew 7:13-23

- False Prophets

- Appear to be the real thing
- Known by their fruit

- False Professions

- Their self assessment is that they did much activity in Jesus' name.
- Jesus' assessment is that they did not have a relationship with Him. Difference between religion and relationship.

The Kingdom citizen has rejected foolishness to embrace wisdom. Matthew 7:24-27

- The inevitable challenges which come in life expose the integrity of what our life is built on.

# Reaction of the crowds to the Sermon on the Mount Matthew 7:28-8:1

- Scribes were experts in the Hebrew scriptures. This expertise came from their ability to read and from copying the scriptures.
- A strong connection is made with the Pharisees which would also associate them with the traditions which were attached to the law.
- Their teachings therefore would be simply reference back to the law and traditions.
- Jesus' teaching in contrast carried an authority which calls for action from the hearer.

# Reaction of the crowds to the Sermon on the Mount Matthew 7:28-8:1

- The teaching of Jesus touched people deeply and they could not get enough of this spiritual food.



# A centurion's faith and the healing of his servant

## Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10

- Centurion-a Roman military officer commanding 100 soldiers. Roughly equivalent to a Captain in the U.S. Army.
- This Centurion:
  - A compassionate man-cared deeply for a slave
  - A devout man-Would have been known as a God-fearer i.e. one who embraced the God of the Jews but had not become a Jewish proselyte. Seen from the fact that he had been instrumental in building the synagogue in Capernaum.
  - A humble man-did not consider himself worthy to come to Jesus in person
  - A man of profound faith in Jesus. The centurion was a man who had authority and recognized that Jesus had the authority to command and things happened.



# A widow's son raised at Nain Luke 7:11-17

- A widow on the way to bury her only son describes a desperate situation. Jesus responded to this situation with compassion.
- A bier is a platform on which a body or coffin is displayed and/or carried. This would have been like a stretcher on which the body was carried to the burial site.
- The ones carrying the bier stopped in shock. To touch a dead body or the vehicle carrying it made a person ceremonially unclean.
- Jesus the author of life returned this man's life to him and gave him back to his mother.
- This would have been the same day the man died since the burial had to take place before sundown of the same day of death.