

Living in the Kingdom of God

When we really make Jesus the “King” of our “kingdom,” we begin to look at life – ourselves and others quite differently. We begin to see that only God can change people. What they need is God’s grace, not our condemnation or our “pearls” of wisdom. What they also need is our honest, prayerful requests. The best thing we can do for others is to be the best person we can be! When we find the “zōē life” in following Jesus, we can invite others to join us!

- **Day One - Read Matthew 7:1-2, 12**

Why is it so natural for us to “judge” each other? What kinds of judgments are right and helpful? Which kinds of judgments are wrong and harmful?

Pray – Ask God to help you be discerning and wise, without being judgmental and condemning.

- **Day Two - Read Matthew 7:7-8**

Why is persistence needed in prayer? What things can God do *in us* before he gives *to us*?

Pray – Ask God to help you learn to pray with persistence, realizing that he is working in us through prayer. Do not become discouraged in prayer! Learn to pray “make me” prayers (more loving, kind, and holy) and not just “give me” prayers.

- **Day Three - Read Matthew 7:13-14**

What does it mean to “enter” the gate through Jesus? And, what does it mean to “follow” Jesus on the “narrow road?” How do “limited” choices now, bring maximized life later?

Pray – Make sure you’ve begun the journey to life! Enter the gate through receiving Jesus as your personal savior. Ask him right now to forgive you of your sins and come into your life. Ask him to give you the grace and strength to follow him to life!

New Life Lessons
July 6th, 7th & 8th, 2012
Pastor Ron Salsbury

“The Smaller Road to a Larger Life”

The Sermon on the Mount– Part 7
Matthew 7:1-14

Matthew 7:1-2, 12 (NLT) “**Stop judging others**, and you will not be judged. [2] For **others will treat you as you treat them**. Whatever measure you use in judging others, it will be used to measure how you are judged. [12] **Do for others what you would like them to do for you**. This is a summary of **all that is taught in the law and the prophets**. “Judge” *krinō* - “to determine, distinguish, decide” Matthew 7:15-23; 18:15; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; Galatians 6:1-2

The Smaller Life of Being Judgmental

Judgment >

Contempt >

Condemnation >

Matthew 7:3, 5 (NLT) “**Why do you look** at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye **and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?**

[5] You hypocrite, **first take the plank out of your own eye**, and then you will **see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye**.

Matthew 7:6 (NLT) “**Don't waste what is holy** on people who are unholy. Don't throw your **pearls to pigs!** They will **trample the pearls**, then **turn and attack you**.

“The point is not that pigs are not deserving of pearls, but that pearls are not useful for pigs!”

The Larger Life of Being Prayerful

Matthew 7:7-8 (NLT) "Keep on asking, and you will be given what you ask for. **Keep on looking**, and you will find. **Keep on knocking**, and the door will be opened. [8] For **everyone** who asks, receives. **Everyone** who seeks, finds. And the door is opened to **everyone** who knocks.

Two Ways to Cause Change:

Physical Actions and Prayerful Requests

Under our control

Under God's control

James 5:16b (NLT) The earnest prayer of a righteous person has **great power** and **wonderful results**. James 5:14-16a; Exodus 32:10-14; 2 Kings 20:1-6

Why is Persistence Needed in Prayer?

- **To Test Our Motives**
- **To Strengthen Our Resolve**
- **To Allow for God's Timing**
- **To Focus Our Trust**

Hebrews 11:6 (NIV) And **without faith** it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must **believe that he exists** and **that he rewards** those who earnestly seek him. Jeremiah 29:13

The Smaller Road to a Larger Life

Matthew 7:13-14 (NIV) "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and **broad is the road** that leads to **destruction**, and many enter through it. [14] But small is the gate and **narrow the road** that leads to **life**, and **only a few find it**. John 10:9; 8:12, 31-32

Life (zōē) is the fullness of life as God intended!

John 10:10b (Jesus) I have come that they may have **life**, and have it to the **full**. John 3:16-17; 17:3

Destruction (apoleia) means "ruined, or lost"

Mark 8:35 Whoever wants to **save his life will lose it**, but whoever **loses his life** for me and for the gospel **will save it**.

The "Broad Road" is:

Doing Whatever We Want.

Doing what is easy, obvious and popular

Proverbs 14:12 (NLT) ¹² There is a **path** before each person that seems right, but it ends in death. Proverbs 13:20

The "Narrow Road" is:

Trusting and Obeying Jesus.

Doing what Jesus says - usually unpopular, not "natural" and seems counter-intuitive

Matthew 7:14 (NLT) But the gateway to life is small, and the road is narrow, and **only a few ever find it**. Matthew 7:23

John 8:31-32 "You are truly my disciples if you **keep obeying my teachings**. [32] And you will **know the truth**, and the **truth will set you free**." John 14:6; 8:12; Matthew 9:36; 11:28

Which is your road? Are you finding life in Jesus?

"They have a right to censure that have a heart to help."

- William Penn