

A MINISTRY OF HEALING - JESUS AUTHORITY

Matthew Chapters 7 and 8

“Thou art The Christ the Son of The Living God”
(Mt.16:15)

I. INTRODUCTION - CHAPTERS AND VERSES

II. JUDGING OTHERS (Ch. 7: 1-4)

Five examples of the attitude of Kingdom citizens were given in chapter 6. These were 1. Giving, 2. Prayer, 3. Fasting, 4. Wealth, and 5. Anxiety. Chapter 7 provides number 6. “Judging”. The sense in the Greek is that it is the habit of judging others that is condemned. Sometimes these words of our Lord are misconstrued by people to prohibit all forms of judgment. No matter what happens they say, “Judge not that you be not judged”. But Jesus is not teaching that we are to be undiscerning Christians. He never intended that we abandon our critical faculty or discernment. The NT has many illustrations of legitimate judgments of the condition, conduct or teaching of others. The Christian is commanded to make a decision to discriminate between good and bad or between good and best. Wm. MacDonald provides six examples of this:

1. When disputes arise between believers, they should be settled in the church by members who can decide the matter. (I Cor. 6: 1-8).

2. The local church is to judge serious sins of members and take appropriate action. (Mt. 18:17; I Cor. 5:9-13).
3. Believers are to judge the doctrinal teaching of teachers and preachers by the Word of God. (Mt. 7: 15-20; I Cor 14:29; I Jn. 4:1).
4. Christians have to discern if others are believers in order to obey the Apostle Paul's command in 2 Cor. 6:14).
5. Those in the church must judge which person has the qualifications necessary for elders and deacons. (I Tim. 3:1-13).
6. We have to discern which people are unruly, fainthearted, weak, etc., and treat them according to the instructions in the Bible. (e.g., I Thess. 5:14).

Critics of others must stop short of final condemnation for men cannot judge motives, as only God can (Jas.4:11-12). "**That you be not judged**", the Greek is better understood to be God's judgment rather than Man's. **A mote** is a splinter or a speck of straw whereas a **Beam** is a substantial plank used in building. A person with a censorious spirit who sets himself up as a judge is termed a hypocrite for he acts as a physician when he is ailing himself. Those who have heard the gospel and the invitation of Christ, and by their response have shown their nature to be unalterably vicious (dogs and swine, were particularly repulsive to Jesus audience), and must not be allowed to treat these precious things as cheap (cf. 13:11-15).

III. ASK, SEEK, KNOCK (7: 7-12).

These verses answer the believer's problem arising from the instructions on judging and the living out the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount. If we think that we can live out the teachings by our own strength we have not realized the supernatural character of the life the Savior calls us to. Here we have the invitation to ask and keep on asking; to seek and keep on seeking; to knock and keep on knocking. Wisdom and power to live the Christian life will be given to all who earnestly and persistently pray for it in faith.

No father would deceive his hungry child by giving him or her a stone or a serpent. If human parents can reward their children's request with what is best for them. **How much more will our Father who is in heaven** do so. The good things He gives is replaced in Luke. 11: 13 (another occasion) by the **Holy Spirit**. Homer A. Kent Jr. says ; "verse 12 applies the foregoing instruction. Though evil by nature, believers are still acknowledged by God as His children and promised answers to prayer. Hence, rather than judging others, we are to treat them as we would like to be treated. This summary of the OT (**The law and the prophets**) is a restatement of the second table of the Law (Mt. 22: 36-40; Rom 13:8-10), and rests upon the first, for man's relation to God is always basic to his relation to his fellows."

IV. THE NARROW AND WIDE GATES (7: 13-27).

Verse 12 concludes the Sermon on the Mount. What follows in vv. 13-27 are four warnings Jesus gives to His audience about applying the sermon. The first warning (vv.13-14) is a caution to the lost about where they are headed. The verb **enter** has no grammatical object, but v.14 indicates that eternal life is the destination. On the other hand Jesus is both the narrow gate (John 10:9), and the way (John 14:6). Jesus is saying that to follow Him would require faith, discipline and endurance.

Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. St. Augustine put it this way; “Faith is believing what we do not see and the reward of faith is to see what we believe”.

This often difficult life is the only life worth living. The first Christians were called “those of The Way” (Acts 1:9; 9:23; 22:4; 24:14,22). If a person chooses the easy way, (the wide gate), he will have plenty of company, but will be rejecting the love of God for him or her through Jesus Christ.

V. A TREE AND ITS FRUIT - FALSE PROPHETS, TEACHERS PREACHERS.

Verses 15-20 provides the second warning and Jesus caution to believers about pretenders. Outwardly they may not be recognized however, inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

You will know them by their fruit i.e., the doctrines they produce and eventually the works they perform. They advocate the wide gate and the easy way and water down the Truth. They are referred to as corrupt, worthless trees that bear no fruit for God and will be cut-down. The test of the

true prophet or leader is his conformity to scripture (I Cor. 14:37; Deut. 13:1-5).

With regard to believers and their works, Robert Murray McCheyne said: “ **No amount of activity in the King’s service will ever make up for neglect of the King Himself.**”

If we are to bear fruit for God we must be branches that are connected to the vine who is the Lord Jesus. He is the vine and He said without Me you can do nothing. (John 15:1-5).

VI. I NEVER KNEW YOU- I DO NOT RECOGNIZE YOU AS ONE OF MY PEOPLE.

Verses 21-23 The third warning is directed at those who claim to be part of Jesus company but are not. No one is allowed admission into the Kingdom on the basis of good deeds he has performed, no matter how spectacular they might be (**prophecy, cast out demons, perform many miracles**). Who then can enter? The answer is those who have received Jesus Christ and have had His righteousness imparted to them. Jesus solemnly implies His Divine Sonship, (**My Father**) and His position as judge (**will say to ME in that day**). The application is universal but the specific eschatological reference is to those still living at the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom.

VII. THE WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS

Verses 24-27 – The last of the four warnings, this one is a about receiving and obeying (acting upon) the words of Jesus. The houses mentioned are each person. All build their lives, both the foolish and the wise. The wise build

their house (lives) on the Rock which represents Jesus Christ (Psa. 28:1; I Cor. 10:3,4; Mt. 16:18).). The foolish build their (houses (lives) on sand. When the storms of life and later God's judgment comes those who built on the rock will stand and those who built on the sand will have a great fall. The interpretation of the parable actually carries us beyond salvation to its practical outworking in the Christian life.

VIII. THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS CHRIST (V. 28).

Lenski, *Interpretations of Matthew's gospel*, says; "when Jesus spoke the crowds were astonished and in rapt attention and when He concluded, *amazement* engulfed them. **Not as the scribes** calls attention to the fact that the scribes in lecturing appealed repeatedly to the opinions of distinguished rabbis and to traditional interpretations. How tedious compared to Christ's authoritative, **"I SAY UNTO YOU"**.

IX. A WORD ABOUT **AUTHORITY** (Gr. *Exousia; exousiazo*).

A root concept in "authority" is "authorship" not restricted to writing but as in "Originator" or "Creation". The creator determines the purposes of his creation and hold all rights to it. (Gen. 1:1). Jesus Christ, the Son of God, always maintained His ownership and authority over creation. The authority He won back at Calvary was what Adam lost but not His own. That is why Satan wants to dispel belief in God as the creator for if He is the creator then He has authority over His creation. Jesus Christ, the Son of God is the creator of all

creation therefore He has authority over all. (John 1:1-3).

The earth is the Lord's and all it contains (Psa.24:1).

The authority in which Satan operates is limited by God.

Martin Luther said;" God has Satan on a leash". Satan's activity is spread by the decisions and actions of sinful human beings. Satan through deception has deceived many to think that there is no creator so that ownerships and authority of the world is up for grabs. Therefore, in virtually all sectors of society, we see a departure from God's authority and independence from it e.g., Education-Government-Religion-Entertainment etc.

Dr. D. Sheets says; "A choice not to submit to Jesus Christ though permitted at this time is *rebellion*. This is why God reminds us that He is the judge who one day will hold every person, who ever lived, accountable for his or her deeds. (Rev. 20:11-15 (unbelievers); (Rom. 14:10(believer's works)).

X. THE MESSIAH'S MIRACLES OF POWER AND GRACE (8:1-9:38).

Ten miracles and related events are included in these verses and chapter eight contains six of them. Matthew 11:4-5, is a key to understanding chapters 8 and 9. In chapters seven and eight the Lord Jesus presents conclusive evidence by word and miraculous deeds that He was indeed the Messiah of whom the prophets had written. Israel by referring to her scriptures should have had no difficulty in identifying Him as the Christ. But none are so blind as those who will not see.

The narratives of chapters 8 and 9 are topically arranged, and the order differs somewhat from that of Mark and Luke.

However, Matthew's description of the cleansing of the leper as immediately following the Sermon on the Mount must be chronological, whereas neither Mark nor Luke is specific as to time.

XI. POWER OVER LEPROSY (8:1-4)

Jesus authoritative and radical teaching had the drawing power to attract a great multitude to hear Him. Truth is self-verifying, and, though people may not like it, they can never forget it.

The leper knelt before Jesus and worshipped Him saying, "**Lord, if You are willing You can make me clean.**"

Note, he called Him Lord and did not say if you can. Each an evidence of true faith which is never disappointed.

Leprosy is an appropriate picture of sin because it is loathsome, destructive, infectious and was in some forms incurable. Lepers were untouchable as physical contact with them might expose one to infection and in the case of Jews, make one ceremonially unclean to worship with the congregation of Israel. Jesus **touched** the leper and spoke healing words, the **leprosy** vanished **immediately**. Our Savior has the power to cleanse from sin and to qualify the cleansed person to be a worshipper. This is the first instance in Matthew's gospel where it is recorded where Jesus told someone to **tell no one** of the miracle that was done to them. Many think this was because the Lord did not want the people to try to make Him the King prematurely. Another thought is that Jesus did not want to prejudice the man to the priest by learning that it was Jesus who healed him. The spiritual implications are clear. The Messiah had come to

Israel with power to heal the nation of its illness. He performed the miracle as one of His credentials. But the nation was not yet ready for her Deliverer.

XII. THE FAITH OF THE CENTURIAN –HEALING OF PARALYSIS (8:5-13). (LK. 7:1-10).

Here we will rely on the more complete narrative as presented in the gospel of Luke. Jesus enters Capernaum and there a centurion sent elders of the Jews to meet Jesus and to ask Him to heal his servant. His servant was highly valued by the centurion and was paralyzed in terrible pain and about to die. He was sick of the Palsy (Gr. *(Paralytikos)* denoting paralysis caused by a variety of diseases affecting muscles and organs of the body. The elders pleaded with Jesus to come and heal the servant. They said the centurion deserves this as he loves our nation and has built our synagogue. Jesus said He will go. As He neared the home the centurion sent friends to say to Him: “Lord, don’t trouble yourself, for I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. That is why I do not consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word and my servant will be healed. The centurion spoke about his personal authority and acknowledged Jesus’s encompassing authority. He believed the Christ could heal at a distance. Jesus was amazed and marveled. This is one of two times Jesus is said to have marveled. (Mark 6:6).

An indication that the omniscience of Christ’s Divine nature did not prevent normal human responses. Jesus turned to the crowd and said, **“I have not found such great faith even**

in Israel. The friends returned to the house and found the servant healed. Jesus then announced that His Messianic kingdom shall be enjoyed by many who are not Jews. These (Gentiles) would sit down with Abraham. **The sons** (or children) of the Kingdom were here told that without true faith mere race was not sufficient qualification for Christ's Kingdom.

XIII. THE HEALING OF PETER'S HOUSE AND OF MANY (v14,15)

Peter's mother-in-law was sick of fever and Jesus touched her Hand and the fever left. She got up and had no post-fever symptoms. When evening came (after the Sabbath) many possessed of demons came and He drove them out with a word and healed all the sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah : *"He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases."*

XIV. THE COST OF FOLLOWING JESUS – HUMAN REFUSAL (vs. 18-22)

A teacher of the Law came to Jesus and said he will follow Him. Jesus told him that foxes and birds have homes but He had no place to lay his head. The rigors of following was too much for the man. A second man came to Jesus and said, "let me go first to bury my father. The lord said, "Follow Me and let the dead bury their own dead. Again this was met with human refusal to follow. The basic trouble was expressed in the contradictory words; **"Lord...me first."** He put self above Christ. It is perfectly proper to provide a decent burial for

one's father, it becomes wrong when such a worthy act takes precedence over the Savior's call.

XV. POWER OVER THE ELEMENTS (8:25-37)

*The Sea of Galilee is noted for sudden, violent storms. On this occasion Jesus and the Apostles were crossing from the east side to the west. Jesus was asleep **in the boat**. The frantic apostles woke Jesus up saying; **Lord, save us! We're going to drown.**" Jesus rebuked their little faith and rebuked the wind and the waves, and it was completely calm. How little they comprehended that the creator and Sustainer of the universe was in the ship with them and had even said: "Let us go over to the other side." All disciples encounter storms sooner or later. At times it seems we are going to be swamped by the waves. What a comfort to know that Jesus is in the boat with us. No one can quell life's storms like the Lord Jesus.*

XVI. JESUS HEALS TWO DEMON POSSESSED MEN (8:28-34)

On the east side of the Sea of Galilee was the country of the Gadarenes, so called from the city of Gadara. Mark and Luke have Gerasenes from the village of Kersa (Geresa) now in ruins on the lake shore. This was possibly in the district of Gadara. Two demon possessed men s lived in tombs and were so fierce they made travel there unsafe. As Jesus approached the demons cried out, "**What do you want from us Son of God? Have you come to torture us before the appointed time**". They knew who Jesus was, and that he would finally destroy them as they are evil spirits. Demoniacs in the NT are pictured neither as gross sinners

nor victims of insanity (though demonism may produce such effects), but as minds that have come under the control of an evil spirit or spirits. That such phenomena should be especially prominent during the days of Christ's earthly ministry is consistent with Satan's efforts to counteract God's program. Demons always gave Christ absolute obedience. They seek embodiment. Jesus granted their request to inhabit the nearby swine and in so doing He prevented other people to be brought under their destructive influence. Once the swine were "demonized" they ran down the hill and drowned. There is a divergence of speculation as to whether the swine were owned by Jews who were violating Mosaic law or by Gentiles. The herdsman told the people of the village what happened and they came to Jesus and asked Him to depart from their shores. Awestruck but unrepentant, they wanted no more of Christ.

Blessings!

