

Matthew 7:13-20

“Enter by the Narrow Gate & Recognize False Prophets”

Pastor Robb Oram

There are many paths, but different destinations. If you know the benefit of being on the right path, and know someone will guide you, help you make it, and know the journey will be epic, you'd want to take it. Jesus presents a choice of paths and encourages us to choose life with God through Him.

Discussion Qs

1. What are some of the obstacles to entering by the narrow gate?
2. Why does the broad path seem attractive?
3. How is the experience of life in Christ better than the broad way?
4. What advice would you give to people to help them grow in understanding the Bible?

Vision 2016: **Jesus is our King and Family**

When Christ is King parents prioritize life in Christ to help their kids avoid the broad path that leads to destruction.

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“Enter by the Narrow Gate & Recognize False Prophets”

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subject: enter by the narrow gate & recognize false prophets

objective: go the right way & follow the right guides

I. there's a way to life & a way to destruction (vv. 13-14)

A. the way to destruction is easy (v. 13)

B. the way to life is hard (v. 14)

Discussion Question: Why is the way to heaven difficult?

1) there's only one way: Jesus Christ

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6).

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.” (Proverbs 16:25)

2) following Jesus costs everything

“Then He said to them all, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.’” (Luke 9:23)

II. be careful whom we follow (vv. 15-20)

A. watch out for impostors (v. 15)

1. whom we choose to guide us is critical

B. we recognize impostors by examining their lives (vv. 16-20)

1. “fruits” = works; results of their lives

C. 3 fruits of the life of a true prophet (good guide):

1. they proclaim Jesus for Who He truly is (1 John 4:1-3)

2. they proclaim the complete Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

3. they demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

Matthew 7:13-20

“Enter by the Narrow Gate”

Pastor Bruce Zachary

Intro. Hiking in YNP. There are many paths, but different destinations. If you *know the* benefit of being on the right path, and know someone will guide you, help you make it, and know the journey will be epic, you’d want to take it. Jesus presents a choice of paths and encourages us to choose life with God through Him.

Subject: Enter by the Narrow Gate and Recognize False Prophets

Object: Commit to Christ as king

Context: In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus reveals God’s love, glory, and high standard. Realizing that we cannot measure up on our own, we seize the opportunity to experience life with God today and forever by submitting our will to Jesus as king.

I. The choice of paths: choose life with God through Jesus [13-14]

¹³ “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. ¹⁴ Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

A. The narrow gate

1. Enter by the narrow gate without delay [13] Enter by the narrow gate

a. Greek tense is a command to enter now

2. Enter by the narrow gate and experience life [14] Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

a. The gate is narrow: restricted

i. I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me [Jn. 14:6]

ii. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved [Jn. 10:9].

b. The way is difficult: requires true worship of God and sacrifice

Lu.9:23 Then He said to *them* all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

c. There are few who enter:

i. In Rock n roll there is: Stairway to Heaven and Highway to Hell - sense of anticipated traffic

...

ii. There is a difference between knowing about God and submitting to God

d. Those who enter experience life: purpose, meaning, hope, love, + hope

3. Obstacles to entry

a. Pride [Matt. 5:3] Big head, feeling sufficient apart from God vs. poor in spirit

b. Possessions [Matt. 19:16-24] love the material world more than God

What are some other obstacles to entry?

B. The broad way [13]

1. The broad way leads to destruction: Destruction: *apoleia* loss of well being leading ultimately to spiritual ruin.

Why does the broad path seem attractive?

a. The broad way offers “life” but destroys

Prov. 16:25 There is a way that seems right to a man but its end is the way of death

*Las Vegas: Neon lights, beautiful hotels, glamour, but never satisfies, can't save

2. There are many who go in by it [7 on-ramps to the broad way]

a. There is no God: We are a result of natural selection.

i. Cf. Scientific evidence supports creation.

b. There is no hell: 92% of U.S. believe in heaven, but only 60% believe in hell

c. God is too loving to send anyone to hell: you choose to reject Christ

d. All roads lead to heaven: all forms of spirituality are acceptable worship to God

e. I'm a good person Assumes that man is the standard

f. I'm as good as others: Assumes that God is grading on a curve.

g. I go to church: Going to church is good but doesn't make you a subject of the king unless you submit to Christ [Cf. going to a dog park doesn't make you a canine]

How is the experience of life in Christ better than the broad way?

II. The choice of prophets [15-20]

A. Beware of false prophets [15] Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

1. Be careful, because they claim to represent truth: claim to be sheep but really are wolves. Don't lead people to Christ, but mislead with deceptive words

i. Seek to exploit people rather than serve [Ac. 20:28-30; 2Pet. 2:3, Matt. 5:14]

ii. Cults, legalists, liberalists

2. How you can tell the true from the false [16-20] You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

a. You'll know the true from the false by their fruit [16-18, 20] [2x]

i. Doctrine and deed: Fruit: life, words, works, & teaching

b. You need to know the Bible and be filled with the Holy Spirit

i. You need to learn the Scriptures to test the doctrine

Ac.17:11 The Bereans searched the Scriptures daily to see if Paul's teaching was true

ii. Expository Bible teaching helps to ensure sound doctrine and maintain healthy balance

2 Tim. 4:3 Need for sound doctrine not entertainment to scratch itching ears

iii. The Holy Spirit provides discernment to help test [**1Jn. 2:20**]

What advice would you give to people to help them grow in understanding the Bible?

** Study bibles, Commentaries – Blue Letter Bible.org

B. Be aware of God's judgment of false prophets [19] Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

1. God will judge false teachers harshly [Ja. 3:11]

a. Aesop fable re wolf in sheep's clothing and the hungry shepherd who killed the biggest sheep.