

why you have no power to overcome the sin in your life. If this is you, repent and turn to Christ, before it's too late!

Just because a person claims to know Jesus, does not mean they are a Christian. Jesus is saying that the fruit of your life will give evince to whether a person is saved or not. Do you love Christ? Do you long to spend time with him? Do you want to know Him deeper? These are evidences of a true follower of Christ.

Jesus is giving you a choice, you will either pursue God and His things, or you will pursue the world and the things of the world, but you cannot do both. You cannot enter through the narrow gate, and travel down the broad road. Jesus is not a "Get Out of Hell Free" card. Jesus does not allow for this option. He says, "If you love me, then you will keep my commands." If you follow Jesus, the way will be hard.

Jesus has given us two choices, one leads to hell, the other leads to life. Set your minds on the things above. Walk with Christ in daily devotion. I don't mean just a daily quiet time, but walk with Christ throughout the day. You don't take your spouse out of the closet for thirty minutes a day then put them back and not talk to them the rest of the day, do you? Make Him part of every moment of your day. Be devoted to Him. Be open to His leading. Trust Him when He asks you to do something that makes you uncomfortable. When you're uncomfortable, you are dependent upon Him.

When you are saved the commands of the Lord are not burdensome, you begin to love the law of the Lord. When the Lord saves us, he gives us a new heart. He gives us a heart that loves righteousness and a growing hatred of the sin in our lives. He gives us a heart that loves His word. He gives us a heart that loves His people. If this does not describe you, examine yourself, see if you're in the faith. Again, you will not be perfect, no believer is, but there will be growth in your life. There will be evidence in your life that you are growing in Christ. The trajectory of your life will be towards godliness.

Through Christ, you can live out what God wants you to live out. You can live according to the law of Christ. He did not give you the Spirit of God so that you stay where you are at. He gave you His Spirit to enable you to live according to His standards. He gave you His Spirit so that you can live for His Glory. Apart from Christ you cannot live this out. It is impossible. It is only by trusting in Christ that any human being can live this way.

Life at the Crossroads, Which Road Will You Choose? Aug. 6, 2017

We have been studying the Sermon on the Mount for several weeks now and as Jesus closes out this sermon, He will not let his listeners get away without making a decision. He presses in on them. He gives them two choices. There is not a middle-of-the-road choice. There is not a way to follow Him and be comfortable. There is not a way to sit on the fence about what he has just preached. There is not a choice where you can choose Jesus and live how you want to live. You will either follow Him, His way, or you will follow the way of the world. Even if the choice looks religious, if it is not Jesus' way, it is still the way of the world. He is very clear, if you are going to follow me, the things I just preached will characterize your life.

Jesus has given many warnings throughout this sermon so far, and as He begins to conclude this teaching, He intensifies His warnings. When teaching about being salt and light, He warns the people that if salt loses its saltiness, how can it become salty again. He states, it is good for nothing and is to be thrown out to the street to be trampled on by men. He warns his listeners about their anger and tells them they are in danger of the fire of hell if they even call their brother a "fool." When teaching on adultery, Jesus tells his listeners that it is better to gouge out their eye, or cut off their hand rather than to allow sin to reign supreme in their lives. If they do not deal ruthlessly with their sin, then they are in danger of hell. You get the point. Jesus was not afraid of warning His disciples of the consequences of not following His commandments. Now as Jesus is concluding His sermon, He gives warning after warning about the consequences of choosing to ignore his words.

Jesus now turns His attention to the choice that His disciples need to make in Verse 13, "Enter through the narrow gate." What does the narrow gate represent? **The narrow gate represents Jesus.** Jesus declares many times that He is the only way to the Father and that no one will enter the Kingdom without coming through Him. The narrow gate is the focus of these two verses. The narrow gate is Jesus. The only way any one enters the kingdom of God is through Jesus. **The narrow gate is exclusive.**

Verse 13 in contrast to the narrow gate, **the wide gate is not exclusive.** Anything goes, Muhammad, Buddha, Spiritism, you name it, anything goes and fits through the wide gate. That's part of the reason it is so popular, it's not exclusive. You can add Jesus to any of these things, as long as you do not say He is the only way.

The wide or easy road is talking about the way of a person's life. They have

not put their trust in Jesus for their salvation. They live like the world, because that is their nature. They love the things of the world, because they are children of Satan. Though many times it looks like they are living “the good life,” the road they are on is leading them to eternal destruction. It is leading them to hell. The fruit of their lives reflects their nature. Selfishness, greed, hatred, anger, lust, adultery, judgmental attitudes, you name it. It is no surprise they have no desire for God or the things of God. It is in their nature to reject God. Scripture says they are haters of God. There are many that are on this road.

Verse 13 continues by saying, “many enter through it.” Now it is easy for us to sit here and point our finger out there and say well of course many of those people are on the broad road. Of course, those who do not claim to know Jesus are on the road to destruction. But we need to remember the context of this sermon. Read 5:1. This sermon was preached to those who claimed to be Jesus’ disciples. This was not spoken to the crowds, but to those who claimed to be His followers. This should give us pause. This should be a warning to us. Look at verse 7:21 “not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven.” This is written to those who would not obey the law of Christ.

The broad gate and the wide road lead to hell. The word used for destruction means eternal damnation. Jesus is very clear in His warning. Jesus speaks plainly. If you live according to the world’s standards, if you love the world and the things in the world, then you are on the broad road and you are heading to hell for eternity.

Verse 14 **Salvation is a work of God, it is supernatural.** When we enter through the narrow gate we are given new hearts. Our hearts of stone are taken away and we are given hearts of flesh. We are given the Holy Spirit and our nature is changed. (Pig vs human) To the carnal man, the teachings that Jesus has just taught are repulsive. Every part of him revolts at what Jesus has just taught. In contrast, the saint longs to please his master, he longs to follow his King. This is the difference. Jesus declares you are either mine or you’re not. **The fruit of your life will give evidence as to whether you are saved or not.** Your behavior will give evidence to whether you are on the broad road or the narrow road. Just like the difference between a pig and a human being, there is a stark difference between the converted and unconverted man.

The things Jesus taught throughout the Sermon on the Mount will characterize the disciple’s life. What do I mean by that? **The true disciple**

will have a way of life that reflects the character and nature of God.

(Example: snap shot vs. video camera) A true disciple will sin on occasion and might even fall into repeated sin, but they will turn from it. Their sin will grieve them. They will hate their sin. They will understand that they are bankrupt before a holy God. Even though they might on occasion go back to the pig slop of the world, they will hate it and find no pleasure in it. The Lord will discipline them and bring them back to fold. They will not stay there. But if they do stay there, it gives evidence that they were never saved in the first place.

The true disciple understands that their righteousness, is like filthy rags, in God’s sight. They understand that they have no hope outside of Christ. It is that desperation that will lead the true follower of Christ to pursue holiness and righteousness. Not because they think they can earn their way to God by doing so, but because they know they have no other hope but Christ, and they will throw themselves on the mercy of Christ. They will deeply love their Savior, because of what He has done for them.

Where the western church is struggling, is that it has forgotten that the way is narrow. Many who claim to know Jesus live no differently than the those in the world. If the western church could rewrite this verse it would go something like this, “Enter through the narrow gate, for wide is the road and comfortable is the way that leads to life.” Jesus does not say that. Jesus says that the gate is narrow and the way is hard. If you claim to know Christ, if you claim to be saved, if you claim to be a Christian, and you are living on the broad road, you need to examine yourself.

How many of you will leave this gathering and go and entertain yourself with things God hates? How many of you men will go home and look at pornography? How many of you women will gossip about or slander your friends and family this next week? How many of you will get drunk? Many of you fill your minds and bodies with things that God hates and wonder why you have no desire for God or for the things of God. Some of you might be filling your minds with things that are not in and of themselves evil, but they have so captured your heart that you have no desire to spend time with God. You have no desire to read his word. You have no desire to have a conversation about God with another believer or non-believer. You so love your sin that you have no desire to pursue righteousness or holiness. And when you hear someone say that the Christian life is about pursuing the face of God, you have no idea what they are talking about. And you wonder