

## A Study of the Book of Matthew: Chapter 7 v. 13-20

- **Jesus continues this passage by explaining that there are two “gates” we can choose in life, the wide and narrow gate (v. 13-14).**
  - What is the purpose of a gate? \_\_\_\_\_
    - Gates were a part of everyday life for these people. Jerusalem had many gates/entrances, and typically people would want to travel on paths with wide gates and broad paths because they were safer. To put it simply, traveling on a road with a wide gate was easy.
  - What does the path of the wide gate lead to? \_\_\_\_\_
    - Just like the road in their present day on a wide gate would be easy, so it is also easier in our own lives to walk the same path as everyone else. Is that what Jesus wants for us?
    - As Christians we are called to love others more than ourselves, to practice self-discipline, be humble, and deny our sin nature. Does that line up with the teaching of the world?
  - What does the path of the narrow gate lead to? \_\_\_\_\_
    - The road from Jericho to Jerusalem was known to be a narrow, winding, rocky path that ascended quickly. Many of those listening to Jesus’s sermon would have traveled that road and know how difficult it was to travel the less taken path.
    - Not only is the narrow path difficult to travel, but it’s also more difficult for people to find, let alone stay on. (Matthew 7:21)
  
- **Not only is the narrow gate less common, but there are also forces at work against us that we must recognize and be able to discern against. (v. 15-16)**
  - Just like we see today, the early church had to work against false prophets and watch for people that tried to lead others away from God. (Acts 20:28-31).
    - There are some people that are enemies of God that have characteristics that are easy to see (2 Timothy 3:1-5).
    - Why is it important to recognize that these people would be in “sheep’s clothing”? \_\_\_\_\_
      - It is easy to prepare for an enemy that speaks loudly or announces their presence. However, someone working quietly against you is harder to find and work against.

- What are some examples of these wolves in sheep clothing that can appear?
      - Matthew 24:23-24
      - 2 Peter 3:16-17
      - 2 Peter 2:1
      - 2 Corinthians 11:13-14
- **We do have ways to discern who is serving God and who is serving themselves; by the fruits they produce (v. 17-20)**
  - What kind of fruit does an apple tree produce? \_\_\_\_\_
    - Just as a tree or vine is marked by the fruit it produces, so also will we be able to discern who serves God and who has alternative motives based off what “fruit” comes from their lives.
  - Good trees bear good fruits and bad trees bear bad fruits.
    - What are some examples of bad fruit? Read Galatians 5:19-21
    - What are some examples of good fruit? Read Galatians 5:22-26
    - Jesus doesn’t simply warn us about people having wrong motives or working against, but also helps us know how to identify them.
  - There are different fates for people that produce different things. What is promised for people who follow God and produce good fruit? \_\_\_\_\_
    - What happens to those who choose not to follow God and produce bad fruit? \_\_\_\_\_
  - Like we talked about a couple of weeks ago there are times where we need to judge (or use discernment) to truly know where someone’s heart is at. We will be able to know someone’s heart and intentions by the things that come from them.