

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: *Christ the King*

Outline:

Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)

Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King’s baptism.

Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)

Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)

Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)

Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.

Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.

Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.

Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.

Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.

Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.

Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.

Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

We now come to the formal conclusion of the greatest sermon ever given – namely the Sermon on the Mount as seen in Matt. 5-7. The sermon proper ends at 7:12 and then in the remainder of the chapter Christ challenges the people to make a choice on whether they are going to commit to Him and His teaching or not.

There is a real debate as to whether Matt. 7:7-12 builds on and deals specifically with just the issue of JUDGING dealt with previously in the immediate context of 7:1-6 or whether the application in 7:7-12 is intended to be broader relating to the entire preceding Sermon on the Mount.

Certainly, it applies to the most immediate context related to judging, but I tend to think it is broader than that having application to all that Jesus has brought out regarding how kingdom citizens should now live.

And a KEY reason to hold to this view is because of the bookend “Law and the Prophets” emphasis on both the front end of the sermon and the back end of the sermon.

Slide # 2

Matthew 5:17 (NKJV)

17 “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

Matthew 7:12 (NKJV)

12 Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Jesus in 7:12 with the “*golden rule*” concludes the exposition that He began at 5:17 which in turn rests upon the beatitude directives, etc., that He gave in 5:1-16. Thus, Matt. 7:12 in effect summarizes all that He taught about human relationships which of course rests upon a proper relationship to God.

Jesus in saying that He came not to destroy the Law but to fulfill it is saying that He came to make it possible for His kingdom people to now live according to the moral intent of the law. No one can do this within their own power. To try and do so amounts to an outward/legalistic form of righteousness represented by the scribes and the Pharisees.

In contrast to this Christ came to bring about an inward dynamic in which we are empowered by the Spirit which allows us to now live according to the moral intent of the law. This is what Christ meant in Matt. 5:20.

Slide # 3

Matthew 5:20 (NKJV)

20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Christ is talking about changed lives based on true repentance as emphasized in chapters 3 and 4. Repentance and faith is an inward/heart dynamic that effects the life. This is what Christ came to do: To bring about changed lives that align with the moral intent of the law through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Slide # 4**Romans 8:3–4 (NKJV)**

3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,

4 that **the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us** who do not **walk** according to the flesh **but according to the Spirit**.

The point I want you to see is that this higher standard of righteous living, higher than the ritualistic/legalistic righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees is what Christ has in view throughout the entire Sermon on the Mount. It is application of this higher standard of righteousness that Christ now addresses in totality as He brings His sermon to a conclusion in Matt. 7:7-12.

Matthew 7:7–14 (NKJV)

7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

Ask, seek, and knock are all descriptive of PRAYER. They are all in the present tense indicating, “**keep on asking**”; “**keep on seeking**”; and “**keep on knocking**”. The sense is we are going to need God’s continual help to live out Christ’s higher standard of righteousness as presented in His teaching in the Sermon on the Mount.

And that is most certainly true in the matter of “judging” just discussed in the preceding verses. In order for us to see clearly and make proper discernment and judgment calls we need God’s help, and we need it constantly. Life involves constantly making judgment calls and to do it right we need God’s help.

J. Vernon McGee was a pastor for many years and then began a ministry called “Thru The Bible” in which he taught verse by verse through the Bible every 5 years. What made him so popular was that he emphasized “the Bible in shoe leather” as he might say. He brought it down to where the common man lived in terms of application.

On these verses here in Matt. 7:7-8 he wrote this:

How to meet the people of this world is the greatest problem facing a child of God. Every day we rub shoulders with princes and paupers, gentlemen and scoundrels, true and false professors. Some folk need our friendship and help, and we need them, and we ought to pull them to our hearts. Others are rascals and will destroy us, and we need to push them from us. How are we to know? To ask, seek, and knock definitely refers to this problem. ... While I was a pastor in downtown Los Angeles for twenty-one years, I met people from all walks of life. ... Some people would need my help, but others might try to put a knife in my back. You would be surprised how many times I have been fooled by people. ... God wants to help you in these matters.

This is the immediate context – the matter of making proper judgment calls related to logs and splinters, related to dogs and swine. We need to constantly be asking, seeking, and knocking on God’s door to help us properly discern and thereby properly respond to each situation as it comes at us.

And God wants to help us. Everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. The problem is we so often try to go it alone without God’s help and that doesn’t work well. God is telling us we need His help in dealing with people.

But again, while I think this has application to the matter of properly “judging” I think it also has application to all manner of kingdom living: to humility, to purity, to sincerity, to love, and to all the righteous standards presented in the Sermon on the Mount. We need help with all of these things which is why we are ever to be asking, seeking, and knocking.

Slide # 5

WE NEED GOD’S HELP TO...

- Discern and judge properly.
- To not worry and depend upon God.
- To keep the proper focus in serving our Master.
- To not be hypocritically pious.
- To live out how Christ taught us to pray.
- To love our enemies.
- To be truth tellers.
- To be people of fidelity and sexual purity.

To not be retaliatory or hateful.

To live out the beatitudes such as being pure in heart.

We need God's help in all these areas and we need it all the time.

Asking, seeking, knocking, implies a state of constant need. We need God's help on a constant basis to live out His kingdom standards. I don't know about you, but I fail to live up to this standard as I should. I will say something or do something and then think: ***"Is that really up to Jesus' kingdom standard?"*** It drives me back to saying, ***"Lord I need your help. Lord help me be discerning. Lord help me to live it out."***

And here is Jesus point: He didn't just give us a bunch of kingdom directives and then say, ***"Now go do it on your own."*** No, He is here giving us the secret that will empower us to live it. We need to constantly pray – constantly be seeking God for discernment and strength. This is right in keeping with 1 Thess. 5:17 which says, ***"pray without ceasing"***. Praying acknowledges our dependence upon God – that we need His help.

Slide # 6

James 1:5 (NKJV)

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

James 4:2 (NKJV)

... you do not have because you do not ask.

In the whole surrounding context in the Sermon on the Mount the great majority of the emphasis is on spiritual character and spiritual qualities. This is the great concern. This is our great need as God's children – to know how to live and then be empowered in the living of it.

And God is there for us if we will but ask, seek, and knock. And now Jesus goes on to illustrate this reality.

9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

The way they made bread in Bible times often looked a little bit like a stone – a flat round stone, but no one would give their child a stone for breakfast. It gives new meaning to "crunchy".

Slide # 7

**10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?**

There are some snakes that look somewhat like a fish in form, but no one in their right mind would give their child a serpent to eat instead of a fish.

Slide # 8

“Daddy, what’s for dinner?” “Oh, you know the usual- stones and serpents.” No way, no sane parent would do this to their child. Even the thought of it is repulsive.

And here is the application...

11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Christ here shows that even though we as believers know God as our Father, we still have a sin nature. We still know evil in that sense. Even the disciples of Christ still deal with ***“being evil”*** in the sense of ***“sinfulness”***. None of us are perfect in practice although we are in process.

Nevertheless, although we are tainted by sinfulness, yet we still know how to give good gifts to our children.

We know what is good for them and we desire to provide it for them. If this is true of us (sinful beings) how much more will our holy Father give good things to His children who ask Him.

The contrast is drawn to make a point of emphasis. God wants to give us GOOD THINGS, enriching things that empower our spiritual lives. On another occasion, in what in many ways is a parallel passage, Luke replaces “good things” with “Holy Spirit”.

Slide # 9

Luke 11:13 (NKJV)

13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father **give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!**

This indicates that what Christ essentially has in mind are “spiritual gifts” related to spiritual growth and empowerment. It is by the Spirit that we are enabled to live out the commands of Christ. This a “gifting” from God. In view is being able to respond to people and life circumstances with God’s wisdom – that is in a godly way as brought out in the Sermon on the Mount.

It is by the Spirit that we are able to properly discern (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14-16). It is by the Spirit that we can love and live out the fruit of the Spirit (cf. Gal. 5:14-23). It is by the Spirit that we enjoy all the spiritual blessings that we have in Christ (cf. Eph. 1:3).

But note the emphasis here: **We must ask!** This shows that Christ is dealing with practical sanctification and not our position as God’s children. We don’t have to ask about our position because that is a settled matter!

In terms of practical sanctification God is happy to give us what we need spiritually but He wants us to ask. If we lack wisdom we are to ask (cf. Ja. 1:5-8). If we are struggling with temptation, we are to ask for help (cf. Heb. 4:15-16). Whatever our need may be related to our walk we are instructed to ask, seek, and knock and to do so persistently. You can’t ask too much or too often. God wants us to be constantly depending on and looking to Him.

The issue here is not “informing” God because God already knows everything that we need. In Matt. 6:8 Jesus said, ***“your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.”***

The reason for persistent asking is because of our constant need for divine help and our asking indicates our realization of continual dependence upon God. God wants us to recognize our total dependence upon Him. As Jesus said in John 15:5, “***without Me you can do nothing.***”

Here is the point: Jesus wants us to recognize our continual dependence upon our Father God, but He also wants us to realize that our Father is a GIVER Who wants to bestow His riches upon us. Jesus wants us to have the proper view of our Father. God wants to share with us. He wants to fill our lives with the good things of the Spirit. God is not some miserly giver. No, He wants to give His children good spiritual gifts.

Slide # 10

James 1:17 (NKJV)

17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

If it is truly good for us, which is to say for our ultimate good and God’s glory (they go together), if it is truly good for us - then we can be assured that God will give it to us! The only condition is that we ask. God wants us to ask. Remember James said, “***you do not have because you do not ask.***” (Ja. 4:2) How much is left in the Father’s storehouse simply because we do not ask?

We need to do more asking – not selfish asking but truly asking for our ultimate spiritual good and God’s glory.

Slide # 11

Psalm 23:1 (NKJV)

1 The LORD is my shepherd; **I shall not want.**

Psalm 34:10 (NKJV)

10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the LORD shall **not lack any good thing.**

Psalm 84:11 (NKJV)

11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; **No good thing will He withhold** From those who walk uprightly.

I love the Psalmist's testimony...

Slide # 12

Psalm 37:25 (NKJV)

25 I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have **not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread.**

Philippians 4:19 (NKJV)

19 And **my God shall supply all your need** according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Now if this is true physically, how much more so spiritually as our spiritual lives are ultimately more important than our physical lives. As Jesus said, *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."* (Matt. 4:4).

Slide # 13

John 1:16 (NKJV)

16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

John 1:16 (Amplified Bible)

16 For out of His fullness [the superabundance of His grace and truth] we have all received grace upon grace [**spiritual blessing upon spiritual blessing, favor upon favor, and gift heaped upon gift**].

Note the tremendous emphasis on you will receive if you ask. It's there for the asking!

Slide # 14

Matthew 7:7-8 (NKJV)

7 "Ask, and **it will be given** to you; seek, and **you will find**; knock, and **it will be opened** to you.

8 For everyone who asks **receives**, and he who seeks **finds**, and to him who knocks it **will be opened**.

There is a six-fold affirmation here that those who ask God for good things will get them. If it is good for you and you ask, rest assured you will get it. The only qualifier is that we don't always know what is truly good for us. This is so true that Romans 8:26 says this:

Slide # 15**Romans 8:26 (NKJV)**

26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For **we do not know what we should pray for as we ought**, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

The real challenge is to align our prayers with what is really good for us. But when we do our gracious Father always says, “Yes”.

12 Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

The word “**therefore**” indicates that this principle in verse 12 (the golden rule) is connected to what has already been stated. As shown earlier this formula according to “**the Law and the Prophets**” is a bookend for the beginning of the sermon as well as for the end of the sermon as seen in Matt. 5:17 and 7:12 respectively.

Slide # 16

Embodied in the Mosaic code and amplified in the prophetic word, the golden rule is the underlying principle of all morality. – **John Phillips**

It is pointed out that other religious leaders had often stated the underlying principle in NEGATIVE terms, but Jesus is the first on record stating it in POSITIVE terms.

For example, the Jewish rabbi Hillel said, “**What is hateful to yourself do not to someone else.**” The book Tobit in the Apocrypha said, “**What you yourself hate, to no man do.**” The Stoics said, “**What you do not want to be done to you, do not do to anyone else.**” In each case the emphasis is NEGATIVE.

But Jesus came emphasizing the POSITIVE in what is commonly called “The golden rule!” (cf. Lk. 6:31)

Slide # 17

Or as the verse specifically says, “***whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them***”. This principle of treating others the way you want to be treated serves as a good summary of the moral law represented in “***the Law and the Prophets***”.

Man’s basic problem is preoccupation with self. ... In the final analysis, every sin results from preoccupation with self. We sin because we are totally selfish, totally devoted to ourselves, rather than to God and others. ... How we treat others is not to be determined by how we *expect* them to treat us or by how we think they *should* treat us, but by how we **want** them to **treat** us.

– **John MacArthur**

What a wonderful principle to govern human relationships! J.C. Ryle wrote: “[This truth] settles a hundred different points,...it prevents the necessity of laying down endless little rules for our conduct in specific cases”.

This “**golden rule**” has been called “**The Mount Everest of Ethics**”. Some argue that this is the most famous verse in all the Bible. It is the capstone of the whole Sermon on the Mount.

Over 10 years ago we had new carpet installed in our Church auditorium. It was not done right so it was redone. It still was not right so I wrote to the owner.

As we have prayed and thought about this we believe that this is a case where we should "love my neighbor (one who is near) as myself" (cf. Rom. 13:8-10, Gal. 5:14). In Matthew 7:12 Jesus said: "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."

So we have tried to put ourselves in your shoes and ask what is proper and fair in light of all the factors. It is true that the carpet is not installed properly as even the impartial third party indicated. The pattern does not match up. The seams are not well done, etc. We realize that you have tried to make it right but it is still not right. As such we have to live with it.

We think it proper to cover your ACTUAL expenses. As a matter of conscience we would like for you to determine what you think we still owe you of the remaining balance and we will pay it.

The owner wrote back to me...

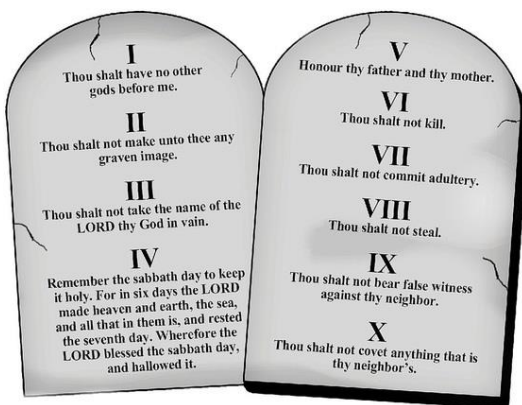
Dear Pastor Dwight J. Oswald,

Your quote from the bible hit home with me. This is just the way I have always tried to live my life. Your proposal is very fair in light of all the circumstances that have taken place. [He then told me what his expenses were – deducted an extra \$500 and we paid the rest of the bill].

That settled it! We took care of it the Jesus way – the golden rule way!

The 10 commandments consist of what we call the two tablets of the Law. The first tablet is the first 4 commands that are all God-oriented in nature; the last 6 commands all relate to human relationships.

Slide # 18



Slide # 19

This [Golden Rule] 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. – ***Wycliffe Bible Commentary***

What we have in "***the golden rule***" amounts to a pithy form of the command to "***love your neighbor as yourself***" which is a summary of the second table of the law (cf. Lev. 19:18; Mt. 22:39). Those who truly live this way actually fulfill the moral standard of the Law and the Prophets.

Slide # 20

Romans 13:8–10 (NKJV)

8 Owe no one anything except to love one another, **for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.**

9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; **therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.**

Slide # 21

Galatians 5:13–14 (NKJV)

13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but **through love serve one another.**

14 For **all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”**

There is a “***glory of God***” moral standard of ethics. Romans 3:23 says, “***all have sinned and fall short***” of this glory of God standard. This standard was represented in the Law of Moses, but no one could live up to it. Then Christ came and modeled it perfectly. And not only that, He taught obedience to the moral law of God was an internal issue of the heart instead of just outward/external conformity which was reflective of the righteousness standard of the scribes and Pharisees.

Christ not only taught His disciples how they should then live in keeping with true repentance, but He also sent the Spirit to empower them to live consistent with this kingdom standard. It is this standard that is presented in the Sermon on the Mount which is summarized in the golden rule.

The golden rule is essentially the rule of LOVE which is to govern God’s people.

We are not under the Law of Moses, but we are under the law of Christ which is the law of love (cf. Gal. 6:2; Ja. 2:8). Those that live out the law of love in essence fulfill the spirit and intention of the moral law represented in the Law and the Prophets. It is this standard of righteous living that is indicative of those who will enter the kingdom which brings us full circle to what Christ said in Matt. 5:20.

Slide # 22**Matthew 5:20 (NKJV)**

20 For I say to you, that unless **your righteousness** exceeds the **righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees**, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

It is the law of love lived out in the life that is indicative of true repentance and faith which is reflective of those who will indeed enter the kingdom. If **legalism governs your life and not love** you will not enter the kingdom. This is difference between the righteousness that will enter the kingdom and that which will not.

The golden rule to do unto others as you would have them do unto you is in essence the fulfillment of the moral teachings of the Law and the Prophets.

It is this standard that Christ came to bring about the fulfillment of in the lives of His followers. This standard of righteousness demanded by the OT is now fulfilled in the lives of believers as they walk in the Spirit (cf. Rom. 8:4). Thus, they fulfill the kingdom standard as presented in the Sermon on the Mount.

This brings to conclusion the formal “Sermon on the Mount”. What remains in the rest of the chapter is a challenge to how people will now respond to Christ and His teaching. This teaching demands a response. Either people will repent and align with it or they will not.

We have noted that the Sermon on the Mount in the main addresses those that are the true disciples of Christ. However, as noted in verse 28 at the end of the chapter many people in addition to His disciples had gathered to hear what Christ was saying.

Jesus addresses persons who have heard His teachings (cf. vv. 24, 26), are aware of the options, and must now choose one gate or the other. – ***Evangelical Commentary on the Bible***

As I say 7:12 concludes the Sermon on the Mount but what now follows in 7:13-27 are four warnings given to those listening about importance of applying it. These four warnings present four contrasts.

Slide # 23**Matt. 7:13-27 – FOUR WARNINGS**

Two ways (vv. 13-14).
 Two trees (vv. 15-20).
 Two professions (vv. 21-23).
 Two builders (vv. 24-27).

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.

Christ makes a contrast between the narrow gate and the wide gate. The gate is the entry way that puts you on the path to your destination. The people hearing the message of Christ were at a crossroads. The teachings of Christ and the Person of Christ go together. To accept or reject the one is to accept or reject the other.

Just as a tree is known by its fruit, so the gate is known by the way.
 – ***Stanley Toussaint***

The “gate” is mentioned first as this is the starting place representing the place of conversion. This is the place of decision. The way is the course that is followed once the choice is made.

Christ invites people to enter by the narrow gate. The narrow gate is Christ Himself. The narrow gate is Christ’s message of repentance and faith. That is the way in. It is narrow in that you can’t add anything to it. It is narrow in that one must enter all by them self with nothing but faith alone. In John 10:9 Jesus said, “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved...”.

Slide # 24

Acts 4:12 (NKJV)

12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

1 Timothy 2:5 (NKJV)

5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,

The narrow gate is Christ and His gospel message ALONE. The response that gets you in is repentance and faith ALONE.

The person who enters the narrow gate must enter alone. We can bring no one else and nothing else with us. ... Furthermore, God's gate is so narrow that we must go through it naked. It is the gate of self-denial, through which one cannot carry the baggage of sin and self-will. When we sing, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling," we are testifying to the way of the gospel.

– **John MacArthur**

In contrast to the narrow gate is the wide gate. It involves the broad way that leads to destruction. This way calls for no repentance. One can hold on to all sorts of legalism, ritualism, pride, and self effort – which is the way of the scribes and Pharisees. But that way ends in destruction.

Slide # 25

In light of the whole sermon, it was obvious that Jesus was comparing the wide gate and the broad road to the outward righteousness of the Pharisees. If those listening to Jesus followed the Pharisees' teachings, their path would lead to destruction. The narrow gate and road referred to Jesus teaching which emphasized not external requirements but internal transformation.

– **The Bible Knowledge Commentary**

Slide # 26

The two ways would be compared to the two-forms of righteousness which He has been contrasting throughout the discourse. Repentance is the narrow gate through which Christ invited His audience to enter. The narrow way represents the restrictions laid upon one who walks in the way of true righteousness which the King has just outlined. The broad way is the natural walk of all flesh, characterized oftentimes by Pharisaic hypocrisy and outward righteousness. – **Stanley Toussaint**

The word "destruction" (Gk. *apoleia*) does not refer to annihilation or extinction but rather to utter ruin and loss. It is the loss of well-being in a place called "hell" or "the lake of fire".

Notice Christ said, "**there are MANY who go in by it.**" This is the hypocritical religious way that is so popular and which Christ has repeatedly mentioned. By far the majority of religious people, including nominal Christians are on this broad way that leads to eternal destruction.

14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

In contrast to the broad way that leads to destruction is the narrow gate which leads to the difficult way which leads to life. There are relatively FEW who find it. There is always a remnant, but only a remnant – never a BIG PICTURE majority. Most people are going to hell!

The narrow gate leads to a “difficult” (Gk. thlibo) way. This word difficult “almost always refers to persecution.” (D.A. Carson)

So this text says that the way of discipleship is “narrow,” restricting, because it is the way of persecution and opposition – a major theme in Matthew (see on 5:10-12, 44; 10:16-39; 11:11-12; 24:4-13).

– **D.A. Carson**

Slide # 27

Acts 14:22 (NKJV)

22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, **“We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”**

The narrow way is the difficult way because on the way one can expect to encounter persecution and abuse because of their faith. It’s not the easy way but it is the way that leads to life. And according to Jesus there are FEW who find it.

Did your profession of faith in Christ cost you anything? If not, then it was not a true profession. Many people who “trust” Jesus Christ never leave the board road with its appetites and associations. They have an easy Christianity that makes no demands on them. Yet Jesus said that the narrow way was hard. We cannot walk on two roads in two different directions, at the same time. – **Warren Wiersbe**

The fact that few are those who find God’s way implies that it is to be sought diligently. “And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jer. 29:13). – **John MacArthur**

There are relatively FEW who are saved.

However, we note that in heaven according to Rev. 7:9 there are “a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues”. So, FEW is to be understood in a relative sense.

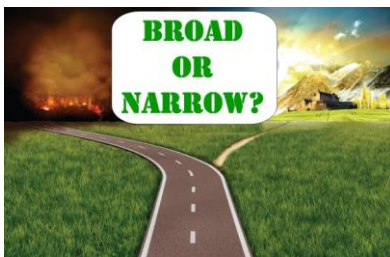
Sometimes Christians are derogatorily called “narrow minded”. But in truth, according to Jesus it is only the narrow gate that puts you on the difficult way which is the way to life. This is the Jesus way and it is the only way. The early Christians were called those of “the way” (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).

There is a narrow way that runs from earth to Heaven, and there is a broad way that runs from earth to Hell. But there is no road that runs from Hell to Heaven (Luke 16:26). The broad road intersects the narrow road at just one place: Calvary. At the cross one can leave the broad road, accept Christ as Savior, and start along the narrow way.

– *John Phillips*

The book of Psalms begins with Psalm One which has as its theme: “Two men, two ways, two destinies”. This is the ultimate issue. It all comes down to the Jesus way versus any and all other ways. Only the Jesus way will get you to heaven.

Slide # 28 – Crossroads...



Slide # 29 – Cross way v. Broad way



Slide # 30 (On my kitchen wall)

To every man there openeth a way, and ways, and a way,
 And the high soul climbs the high way,
 And the low soul gropes the low.
 And in between, on the misty flats, the rest drift to and fro.
 But to every man there openeth a high way and a low;
 And every man decideth the way his soul shall go.

- ***John Oxenham***

In the words of Jesus....

Matthew 7:13–14 (NKJV)

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.

Jesus invites you: “Enter by the narrow gate...which leads to life”. God help us all to enter in.

Jesus ALONE is the door!

Jesus ALONE is the way, the truth, and the life.

Enter by the narrow gate!