

## **Two Ways; One Choice**

*Matthew 7:13-14*

**Introduction:** Up to this point in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus has focused on ethical instructions. He has been teaching about what it looks like to live as a disciple of Jesus in the kingdom of God. But Matthew 7:12 marks a transition in the focus of the Sermon. Jesus gives the Golden Rule as a kind of summary of all that He has taught up to this point. He then turns His attention to warnings and challenges in the remainder of the Sermon. He will present four contrasts between two ways, two trees, two claims and two foundations. All of these designed to call for a commitment. In the passage that we are looking at today, He makes it clear that there are two ways, but only one choice.

**Opening Discussion:** What is one of the most enjoyable "ways" you've ever been on either walking or driving?

### **Read Matthew 7:13-14**

1. Jesus commands us to "enter by the narrow gate." What does that mean?
2. Jesus presents two contrasting options. What are they? How does He describe each one?
3. What is the ultimate destination of each way?
4. What does it mean that the way that is broad leads to destruction? What is this destruction (See also Matthew 25:32-46)?
5. What are some of the difficulties of walking on the narrow path? What makes it hard?

Brian said:

Two gates. Two paths. Two groups of travelers. Two destinations. Jesus says that there are no other options. There are no other gates. There are no other paths. There are no neutral-party travelers. We might like to think that there is a third option where we can say, "Yes, I want Jesus as my Savior, but I don't really want to follow Him full out. I want Jesus as my Savoir, but I don't want to lay down my own ambition and plans and ways." But Jesus doesn't give us a third option. Either a person follows Jesus full out on the narrow path or he doesn't.

6. How do you respond to this comment?

Brian said:

If you struggle to make this choice because it just seems too costly and too hard I would say to you that it is costly and it is hard. But here's the deal, you need to look at it from the vantage point of the destination. In the end when you arrive at the final destination, I can guarantee you that you will look back at the cost and any difficulty and you will say that the cost was worth it.

I would also add that Jesus, the same one who is calling us to this radical life of discipleship, is the one who says:

<sup>28</sup> "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> "For My yoke is easy, and My load is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

The reality is that from the outside of the gate this narrow path can look so restrictive and narrow, but the reality is that once on the other side, though it is narrow and can be hard, it is the path of joy and peace.

7. In what ways have you experienced this truth that from the outside the gate can look too restrictive and the path too narrow, but once inside the gate and on the narrow path you see it so much differently?

8. What things cause you to struggle with fully following Jesus on the narrow path?

9. What does the Matthew 11:28-30 passage add to our understanding of walking the narrow path?

10. What response do you sense God calling you to in light of this passage?