

Sermon Study

Enter The Narrow Gate
Mathew 7:13-14

August 18th, 2019

vision

Eastview
Christian
Church is a
fearless church
of Christ
followers whose
ridiculous love
and dangerous
witness are
irresistible.



AUTHOR'S NOTES (summary of key points for this study)

Ancient cities were often surrounded by walls, and you could only enter through gates. This is the imagery Jesus calls to mind. Simply put, a gate (like a wall, or a fence) separates one space from another. If you have no need of separating spaces, you have no need for a gate. The big principle we can take from this passage, then, is that there **is** a separate space we're all heading toward, and to get there, we must go through a gate. In this study, we'll see how Jesus describes the gates, and get at the deeper meaning packed into these short verses.

Gather (your group getting to know each other)

What's the tightest space you've ever had to pass through? Maybe while driving, or walking, or moving large items through a doorway or elevator?

Go

(your group on mission)

Sometimes well-meaning Christians can turn the narrow gate into overly-narrow thinking. In our desire to be set apart from the non-believing world, we're often prone to set up legalistic rules and unnecessarily burdensome expectations that go beyond Scripture. Remember, the Pharisees likely thought they were on the narrow path too. Pray for discernment as you navigate those waters this week, and stay within the narrow gate while showing your neighbors a balance of truth and grace.

Grow (your group growing as Christ-followers)

Key Scripture: "Enter by the narrow gate..."
(Matthew 7:13, ESV)

Discussion

1. Have someone begin the discussion time by leading the group in prayer, then read Matthew 7:13-14 aloud
2. According to Jesus, there are two gates. There aren't infinite gates (universalism), nor are there zero gates (atheism). Further, of the two gates, one leads to destruction, and the other leads to life. This means there *really is* objective right and wrong. There *really is* objective good and evil. How does this message fit with our culture?
3. We're all headed to a destination: life or destruction. We aren't just wandering aimlessly. How often do you consider where your life is headed? What sort of space do you think you're headed in the next 5 years? Is there a plan or a goal, or are you going through the motions as though there's no destination?

4. So how can you tell the gates apart? Jesus gives us three clues; the gate that least to destruction is wide, easy and crowded. How would you explain the application of these ideas? What does it mean for the gate to be wide? What does it mean that the way is easy? What does it mean that many enter by it?

5. By contrast, the gate that leads to life is narrow, hard, and scarcely populated. Apparently it's also not obvious because you have to "find" it. What's the applications of these ideas? What does it mean for the gate to be narrow? What does it mean that the way is hard? What does it mean that only few find it?

6. Why not make the gate to life wide and easy? What could God be showing us by setting up the kingdom this way?

7. Close by reading John 10:1-9 and discussing how it relates.

Give

(your group serving each other)

Serve your group this week by encouraging each other not to do what's easy.