



Narrow and Wide Gate

Matt VanCleave
July 24, 2022

GROUP ICE BREAKER

Share whatever is resting in your heart and mind, be it a prayer request or a story.

REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week? How did it go?

- I will pray about whatever is on my heart, the ordinary events of my day.
- When my mind wanders in prayer, I will pray about whatever that is.
- I will make a commitment to pray for people who don't know God.
- I will ask God to open the door to spiritual conversations with people who don't know him.

THIS WEEK'S SERMON RECAP

This week we look at one of the more controversial and often misunderstood statements Jesus made in the Sermon on the Mount. It's Matthew 7:13-14 where Jesus said, "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."

If you look carefully and examine the life and teachings of Jesus, you'll notice what looks like a very strange paradox. On the one hand, Jesus makes statements that appear to be outrageously exclusive, and yet he pursued relational connections with people who were scandalously inclusive. It's like the narrower Jesus gets in his devotion to God the more broad-minded he is in his love for people. Maybe the possibility of finding deep truth and offering broad tolerance are not mutually incompatible. Maybe they're mutually inseparable. Join us as we unpack these two verses this week.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Matthew 7:13-14 together. How would you summarise or how would you explain this verse? Did the sermon change the way you understand the verse?



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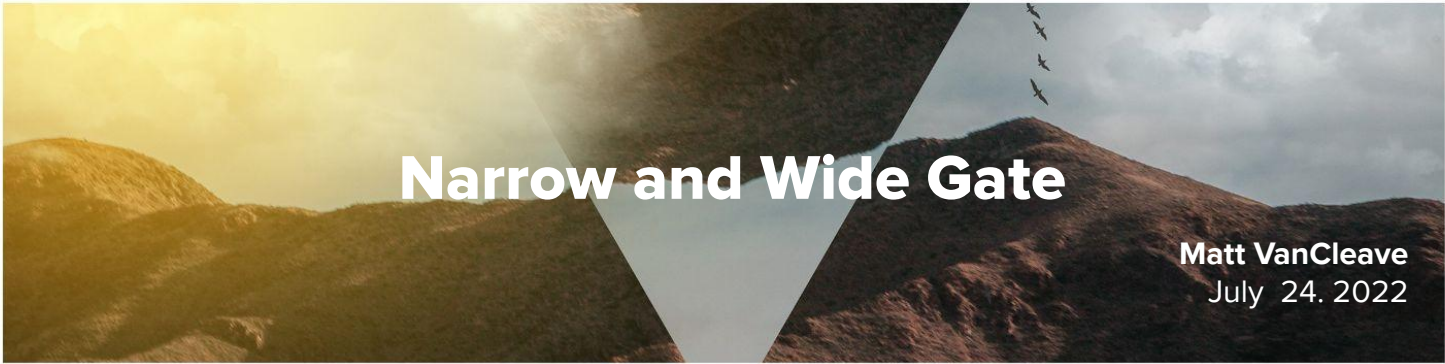
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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CONT)

2. Why do you think the narrow gate is difficult to walk through?
3. Jesus says the narrow gate is hard but that it leads to life. What do you think that means?
3. Matt noted that ‘the narrower Jesus gets in his devotion to God the more broad-minded he is in his love and reaching out to human beings.’ How does this help you understand the character of Jesus? What would it look like to adopt this narrow devotion to God and broad-minded love in your own faith?
4. What does it mean to you to be someones disciple? What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus?
5. How does being a disciple of Jesus, to walk through the narrow gate, impact your day to day?

NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)

- I will define “narrow gate” as obeying Jesus in all things, not narrow-mindedness, doctrinal correctness, or how many people will end up in Heaven.
- I will begin thinking and praying about putting obedience to Jesus above all else.
- I will be narrow in my devotion to God and broad-minded in my interactions with people who are different than me.
- I will read through the Sermon on the Mount, asking God to speak to me.
- I will consider obeying Jesus as the greatest opportunity I’ll ever know in my life.



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SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Matthew 7:13-14

John 17:3

John 14:6

John 8:31-32

Prayer Requests

Take time to share how you can be praying for each other over the next week:

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