

Lighthouse Group Student Handout

Choose Wisely | Matthew 7:13-14

Series: *The Sermon on the Mount*

Main Idea

Our eternal destination is determined by the path we take today, and the only path to life is through the narrow gate of Jesus Christ.

Before Group: Read and Reflect

Main Text: Matthew 7:13-14

Supporting Text: John 14:6

Optional Supporting Texts: Proverbs 14:12; Matthew 11:28-30; John 17:3; Ezekiel 18:30-32; Luke 13:22-30

Short Sermon Recap

Jesus makes it clear that there are only two gates, two roads, and two destinations. The wide gate and easy road represent a life of self-rule and autonomy that leads to destruction, while the narrow gate and hard road represent a life of repentance and faith in Christ that leads to life. We do not "drift" into the Kingdom; we enter it deliberately by choosing Christ over culture and surrender over self.

Preparation Questions

1. The Myth of Drifting

Teaching Point: Entering the Kingdom of God is a deliberate act, not an accidental occurrence.

Question: Why do you think it's common for people to assume they are "on the right path" simply because they haven't intentionally chosen a "bad" one?

Dig Deeper: How does the idea that "nobody drifts into the Kingdom" challenge the way we view our daily spiritual habits?

2. The Offense of Exclusivity

Teaching Point: The gate is narrow because Christ is the only way (John 14:6).

Question: Our culture often views the "narrow gate" as intolerant or hateful. How can we explain the exclusivity of Jesus in a way that shows it is actually an expression of God's love?

Dig Deeper: In what areas of your life do you feel the most pressure to "widen the gate" to fit in with the world?

3. Repentance vs. Admiration

Teaching Point: Many admire Jesus without repenting; true faith requires a change of direction.

Question: What is the practical difference between "respecting Jesus as a great teacher" and "surrendering to Jesus as Lord"?

Dig Deeper: If someone looked at your life this past week, would they see an admirer of Jesus or a follower of Jesus?

4. The Seduction of the Easy Road

Teaching Point: The broad road is attractive because it is "paved by the desires of the heart."

Question: Proverbs 14:12 says there is a way that seems right but leads to death. What are some "easy roads" in our modern culture that seem right or "good" but actually lead away from Christ?

Dig Deeper: How do we discern the difference between God's peace and the "comfortable ease" the world offers?

5. The Reality of the "Hard" Way

Teaching Point: The narrow road is described as "hard" or "afflicted."

Question: If the Christian life is meant to be "hard" (persecution, self-denial), why are we so surprised or discouraged when we face trials or spiritual resistance?

Dig Deeper: How does knowing that the road is supposed to be narrow change your perspective on your current struggles?

6. Sustained by the Savior

Teaching Point: We walk the hard road not by our own strength, but because Christ holds us.

Question: Jesus calls us to a hard road but also promises "rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:28-30). How do these two realities coexist in the life of a believer?

Dig Deeper: When you feel like you can't keep walking the narrow path, what specific truths about Jesus keep you from giving up?

7. The Ultimate Treasure

Teaching Point: The destination (Life) is fundamentally about a relationship with God, not just a place.

Question: If you could have "Heaven" (no pain, streets of gold, reunion with loved ones) but Jesus wasn't there, would it still be a destination you desired?

Dig Deeper: How does viewing "eternal life" as a relationship today change how you approach your time with God this week?

Carry-It-Forward Question

What's one thing God impressed on you tonight that you want to carry into this week?

Follow-up: Is there a specific "wide-road habit" you need to prune, or a "narrow-road hardship" where you need to ask for Christ's strength to endure?

Prayer Preparation

Adoration: Praise Jesus for being "the Gate" - the only way we can be reconciled to the Father.

Confession: Confess the ways we have sought the "easy road" of comfort and self-rule this week.

Petition: Ask for the Holy Spirit's power to "walk faithfully" on the hard road, especially in the face of pressure or persecution.

Go Deeper (Optional)

Read: Ezekiel 18:30-32. Reflect on God's heart in calling His people to turn and live.

Study: Compare Matthew 7:13-14 with Luke 13:22-30. Notice how Jesus emphasizes the urgency of the "narrow door."

Reflect: Listen to or read the lyrics of the hymn "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus." Consider the line: "Though none go with me, still I will follow."