

## **Neighborhood Life Group Guide**

Matthew: The Two Ways  
Pastor Colton Tatham  
Matthew 7:13-23  
March 18, 2018



**Prayer:** Pray for friends, neighbors, co-workers, and family members who do not have a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

**Read:** Take a few minutes to read and mark up the following passage on your own.

### **Matthew 7:13-23**

#### *Two Ways*

<sup>13</sup> "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. <sup>14</sup> For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

#### *Two Trees*

<sup>15</sup> "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. <sup>16</sup> You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup> A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup> Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

#### *Two Destinations*

<sup>21</sup> "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>22</sup> On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' <sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

### **Discussion Questions**

1. After reading Matthew 7:13-23, share some observations from the verses you've just read or take-aways from this week's sermon?

2. What makes the wide way attractive? What makes the narrow way difficult?

3. Pastor Colton preached: "When Jesus describes these two ways, one way starts at a narrow gate that enters into a narrow, hard road that finishes with life. The other way starts at a wide gate that enters into a wide, easy road that finishes with destruction."

- In your own words, how does someone enter through the "wide gate" and the "narrow gate"?

4. How do you think Jesus wants his followers to view so-called “third-ways” like purgatory, reincarnation, enlightenment, humanism, etc.?

5. In Matthew 7:20, Jesus says, “You will recognize them by their fruits.”

- In today’s world, what is the difference between a good leader on the narrow way and a bad leader on the wide way?

6. In Matthew 7:21, Jesus says, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven.”

- According to Jesus, what kind of people will enter heaven and what kind of people will miss out?

7. At the end of the message, Pastor Colton read a quote from the book *Heaven, So Near – So Far: The Story of Judas Iscariot* by Colin S. Smith.

I came as close to heaven as a person can be, without getting in. For three years, I followed Jesus Christ and devoted myself to ministry. I was in the boat when Jesus calmed the storm. I served the bread and fish when He fed five thousand people. As an apostle, I was sent out to preach the gospel, I cast out demons, and I called people to repentance. But today, despite all that I did as a follower of Jesus, I am languishing in hell... I was at the gates of heaven, but ended up in hell. I was the disciple who betrayed Jesus. I want you to know that I was neither a helpless victim nor a hideous monster. I was a person with hopes, dreams, doubts, fears, disappointments, and frustrations very much like you. When I abandoned my faith, I felt that I had good reasons for doing so, though now, I live with perpetual regret. (p. 9-10).

- What can we learn from Judas Iscariot’s life about the wide way to destruction?

8. How do you know for certain if you’re journeying down the narrow way to life?

**Personal Reflection:** Take a few minutes to reflect upon how you have been living out your faith for Jesus Christ this past week.

- ❖ **Word:** Have I read God's Word every day this week? What has God been teaching me?
  
- ❖ **Prayer:** Have I prayed to God every day this week? What have I prayed for?
  
- ❖ **Fellowship:** Have I gathered with other believers for fellowship and worship this week? How have I encouraged other Christians? How are other Christians encouraging me?
  
- ❖ **Confession:** Where am I struggling with sin, temptation, doubt, or hardship? Is there someone I need to seek forgiveness from? Is there someone I need to forgive?
  
- ❖ **Praise:** How have I seen God at work this week? What fruit have I seen in other people's lives?
  
- ❖ **Mission:** How have I been on mission this week? Who needs to hear the Gospel? Who can I invite to church? Who can I encourage or pray for this week?

**Prayer:** After you've spent some time in personal reflection, share one prayer request – a praise, a need, a confession, etc. Write down your group's prayer requests and commit to praying for them this week.