

FOLLOWING THE PATH OF JESUS

A Harmony Of the Gospels

A Daily Devotional Study Guide - Book 1



“Treasure in Heaven”

Study: Matthew 6:22-26

Reading: Luke 12:13-40

Memory: Psalm 51:19

I have been in the pastoral ministry for over 30 years and most of that time I have operated some type of side business. Having a side business has revealed to me how easy it is to trust in the things of this world and to worry about earthly provisions. This has been especially evident at times when things have not gone well and I have lost some money through my side business. I found that when my business was struggling, I would often be in a bad mood, but when things were going well, I would find myself in a good mood. There were times when I wondered how much easier things would be if I just received a consistent check each week that would cover all my expenses. Yet, that is not what God called me to and God used those times to teach me to depend on Him.

Today, we are going to see how Jesus challenged His followers to serve God with all their hearts. This specifically applied to the area of finances and trusting God to meet needs. He challenged His disciples to follow Him with all their hearts and allow God to provide all they needed.

What Does the Bible Say?

The focus of Jesus was on the heart. In this teaching about finances, it wasn't the amount of money that people gave that was a concern to Jesus but the heart behind it. He wasn't placing a focus on the rewards either, but He was challenging His followers to follow God with their hearts. In verse 22, He illustrated the heart with the eye. He described how the eyes are the only bodily organ that allows light into the whole body. If a person had good eyes, it would bring great color and light to the world. If a person had eyes that were going bad, their whole life would be spent in physical darkness. Though the eyes were tiny members of the body, they had great control over how a man lived and acted. The point of the illustration was that the heart is like the eyes. The person with a heart for God and His will will live a life full of light, while a person whose heart is for himself will live a life of darkness (vs 22-23).

Jesus then declared that a person did not have the ability to serve two

different masters at the same time. Each master would be pulling at that servant for their devotion and the servant would be split and unable to really serve both. Jesus was relating the fact that we as people can not serve God and serve money at the same time. We have a choice to either live for Him or live for the earthly desires that money can buy. We can't live for both at the same time because we will have to choose one to be our master. The challenge from Jesus was to live for eternal things and not for the temporal things of this world (vs 24).

Practically speaking, Jesus declared that you should not allow your worry about earthly provision to consume your mind. It is very easy to allow the daily cares of this life to consume your mind and become focused on the natural needs of life, but Jesus wanted His followers to be concerned with much more than daily living. After all, He has promised to meet all the needs of His followers. To illustrate this, Jesus described how the birds of the field don't sow or reap, but God provides the food they need to live. This provision isn't limited to the animals, but it extends much more to humans because He loves us deeply. The value that God places on humans is greater than any animal and if God provides for the animals, He will provide for His children (vs 25-26).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you serving God or are you a slave to the things of this world? The physical things of the world referred to here are not evil but are things that are needed to live. Yet, it is easy to start living for the things of this world and not live for the things of God. All of us need money and food to live so this is a constant struggle and battle that we will face. You must go to work and must do the daily things of life to help keep things orderly, but that should not be the focus of why you are living. Your mind should not be consumed with how you are going to provide for your needs and desires. God does not want you to live in worry, wondering if you will have enough money to pay for your next bill. You can't ignore money all together, but you need to view God as your Provider and not let the daily cares of this life consume you. Instead, trust that He will take care of you and choose to live out His will today.

Suggestions for Prayer.

- * Thank God for His provision in your life.
- * Ask God to help you to serve Him and not the things of the world.
- * Praise God because He will provide for your needs.

What did Jesus just talk about in verses 19-21?

What did Jesus say your eye was (vs 22)?

What happens if your eyes are healthy (vs 22)?

What will happen if your eyes are bad (vs 23)?

In light of the context, (the verses before and after vs 22 & 23), what do you think Jesus was illustrating?

****Jesus just finished describing that how you use your finances will reveal what is in your heart. He pictured the broad scope of finances but boiled it down to one main focus- your heart. The eye is an illustration of this because it is one small part of your body but has a major impact on how you live. How you view your money, though it is a small part of your life, has a major impact on how you live.*

What can no man do (vs 24)?

Why can't a person have two masters at the same time (vs 24)?

How have you seen this to be practically true?

****This would have been much better understood in the days when slaves were a common part of life. A person could not take instructions from two different masters because they would often be contrary to each other.*

What did Jesus say you can't serve at the same time (vs 24)?

What do you think it looks like to serve money?

What are you not supposed to worry about (vs 25)?

Why do you think that Jesus said that there is more than life to these things (vs 25)?

What illustration did Jesus use (vs 26)

What was His point?

“Don’t Worry about Money”

Study: Matthew 6:27-34

Reading: Philippians 4:4-20

Memory: Psalm 51:19

Between my fall and spring semesters of my sophomore year of college, I wasn’t sure if I would be returning to school. This was because I had run out of money. I had saved up a great deal during the summers and worked as much as I could in college, but I realized that it wasn’t enough to help me make it through. I worried about this and was making plans not to return, until I finally talked to my parents about it. I was planning to pay for my own college, but my parents told me not to worry about it because they would step in and take care of what I couldn’t. God had blessed them, and in turn, they wanted to bless me and help me finish college without any debt. (And praise God, because that next semester is when I met my wife!)

Today, we are going to see how God is a heavenly Father who has our good in mind. He has plans to take care of our needs and provide for us. This means that we don’t have to worry, but we can simply trust Him.

What Does the Bible Say?

Jesus knew the internal battle that many of His followers would face when they dealt with the money of this world. He knew how much of a draw that Satan would make the riches of the world and how much time and energy people can spend worrying about their daily needs. After declaring that man can’t serve God and money, He told His audience that God could take care of them just like He takes care of the birds of the field. The problem that most people run into is not the shortage of money but the worry about not having enough. Jesus addressed this by asking a questions about the ability worry had to change things. The translations of verse 27 vary, but the point is still the same. In the KJV, Jesus asked who can add a cubit (around 18 inches) to his stature by worrying about his height, and the ESV has Jesus asking who can add one hour to the span of his life. Again, the point is the same. Worrying about things doesn’t change them one bit, yet many people spend hours doing it. Jesus then asked a convicting and obvious question next when he asked why we should bother worrying if worry won’t change anything. He used the lilies of the field to

illustrate this point. He described how God took care of them and clothed them with great beauty. They were more beautiful than all the man made things that Solomon’s wealth could buy and build, and yet they did nothing to earn this beauty (vs 27-29).

God cares more for men than He does the plants and animals, and if He takes care of them and provides for their needs, He certainly will provide for your needs as well. Yet, our faith in His provision is often so small that we fall into the trap of fear and worry. Jesus commanded all of His followers not to be worried about the future, specifically about God’s provision for our needs. This is what the unsaved world around us does, but they do not have a heavenly Father watching out for them like you do. Your mind should not be worried and consumed with your daily provision, but instead should be focused on the things of God. God’s followers are to seek Him first and His desires above their own, trusting Him to take care of their physical needs. Instead of worrying about tomorrow, we need to focus on what His will and plan is for us today (vs 30-34).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you often worry about the future? Jesus is not teaching to forget about planning and saving for the future. He is not telling men that they don’t have to work and provide for their families. Proverbs 6:6-8 describes how an ant is diligent to work in the summer and save for the winter. In II Thessalonians 3:8-10 Paul described how he worked to provide for daily needs and how those who are unwilling to work should not be able to eat. I Timothy 5:8 declares that those who do not provide for the needs of their family are worse than an infidel. Jesus is by no means promoting laziness, there are many Scripture references that declare the opposite. He is challenging you in this passage to trust God for your needs. He wants you to focus on serving Him and following Him in the tasks He has called you to today, trusting that He will provide your needs for tomorrow. Instead of giving yourself over to worry about the future, He wants you to put your energy and focus into serving Him today. This often includes our daily work, but not for the purpose of getting rich or for the goal of luxury. Ephesians 4:28 says, “Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.” Don’t let the finances of this world consume your mind. Trust that God will take care of your needs and choose to focus on serving Him today, letting Him take care of all the logistics in how that will get done.

What can worry not do (vs 27)?

****As mentioned in the commentary, this is translated a few different ways. Whichever way you want to take it, the meaning is still the same.*

Why is this such a profound and challenging statement (vs 27)?

What are things that you find yourself anxious about?

Why is it great to remind yourself that there is very little you can do about the things that you worry about?

What is an item that Jesus said was easy to be anxious about (vs 28)?

****Clothing in those days was not as cheap and prevalent as it is today in our society. I don't know if we can give an exact comparison today but perhaps something like having a vehicle to drive would be a better comparison today.*

What illustration did Jesus use in verse 28?

What did Jesus declare about the beauty of the flowers (vs 29)?

What point was Jesus making?

What did Jesus say happened to flowers (vs 30)?

How did Jesus compare flowers to people (vs 30)?

What did Jesus say God would do for you (vs 30)?

What role does faith play in this (vs 30)?

What are you not to be anxious about (vs 31)?

What does God know (vs 32)?

What are you to do instead of worrying (vs 33)?

What profound statement did Jesus make in verse 34?

“Judge Not”

Study: Matthew 7:1-6

Reading: Ezekiel 16:44-58

Memory: Psalm 51:19

There was an elderly lady in our community who called me up under the pretense that she wanted me to help her make things right with another believer. As I went to talk with her, I found that she had no intention of humbling herself and admitting any wrong she had done, but she was only concerned that the other party “pay the price” for the perceived wrong they had done. When I even suggested that maybe she was partly to blame for the conflict she was having, she responded by saying, “I can’t see where I could have done anything wrong.” After a conversation with her, I could see where she was completely wrong, but she was totally blinded to her own faults and could only see the faults of the other party.

Today, we are going to see how Jesus rebuked those who judged others when they themselves had serious problems that should have been taken care of first.

What Does the Bible Say?

One of the struggles that we all battle with is comparing ourselves with each other. This is done by judging others for what they do or don’t do. This was a constant problem among the religious leaders while Jesus was ministering and He addressed the hypocrisy of it. He declared that we shouldn’t judge others and in turn we will not feel the judgment of others ourselves. When spirituality is based on outward actions, there is constant pressure to always act and look a certain way, often leading to a completely false religion. Meanwhile, those who want to live however they want will often use this verse as an excuse for their actions and how they should not be rebuked for their sin. Yet, we are called in the New Testament to be subject to one another and be accountable to each other (vs 1).

So what was Jesus teaching in verse 1? To answer that question, we need to continue reading. Jesus was challenging others not to judge based on their own set of religious criteria. When we judge others, we are setting the standard in which we ourselves are going to have to live up to. The standards that we set for others are often much higher than the ones we

choose to abide by in our own lives. Jesus wants His followers to focus their attention on their own problems first, rather than the problems of others. He illustrated it by describing a person who attempts to get a tiny speck of dust out of another person's eye when they themselves have a log sticking out of their own eye. The type of judging that Jesus warns against is the judging that is focused on the problems of others instead of spending that time removing their own problems. Before you can help another person, you yourself have to be on the right track. This was a direct rebuke to the Pharisees who were always looking down on others and judging them while they themselves struggled to live righteously (vs 2-5).

Jesus was not against accountability or reaching out to help others. He was against the hypocrisy that caused many to be turned away from God. We should hold others accountable before God and submit ourselves to each other but this submitting should be done in a humble way for the good of others and the cause of Christ.

Jesus then made a very interesting comment. To understand verse 6, you must first realize that dogs and pigs were looked down on in those days. They were the "unclean" things of society. Jesus used this statement to rebuke the Pharisees because they were the ones who were responsible for the law, yet they themselves lived unclean lives full of hypocrisy. When you give a dirty animal clean things, the things won't make the animal clean, but the animal will make those things dirty. The religious leaders should have been doing what they could to help make others clean, but, since they themselves were dirty, they made those who they ministered to dirty as well (vs 6).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you judgmental of others? Do you tend to look down on others and exalt yourself? This is a trap that every person falls into at different times of their lives, but you must remember that you are not better than anyone else. You are a sinner who would not make it to heaven except for the mercy and grace of God. It is only because of Him that you are where you are and have what you have. Instead of looking down on others and rebuking them for not living up to your standards, you would be far better off humbling yourself and reaching out with great love to the person you want to criticize. This is what Jesus did as He humbled Himself to become a man and submit to the plan and will of God. When others sin, your attitude should be one of help and humility rather than one of judgement and condemnation.

What are we told not to do (vs 1)?

What happens when you are judgmental towards others?

What are areas of your life where you tend to find yourself judging others?

Why do you think you do this?

What standard do you have to live up to (vs 2)?

****It is very easy to want people to be merciful towards you, but for you not to be merciful towards others.*

What is easy to see (vs 3)?

What is hard to notice (vs 3)?

Why is it not good to attempt to help others when you yourself have very big problems of your own (vs 4)?

How have you seen yourself or others do this?

What does Jesus call those who try to help others without helping themselves first (vs 5)?

What does Jesus say you need to do before you attempt to help others (vs 5)?

How can you know if you have a "log" in your own eye?

What two animals are mentioned in verse 6? Why are they mentioned?

What will these animals do if you give them nice things?

What do you think verse 6 means?

****When you try to help someone who doesn't want to be helped, you are simply wasting your time and effort. When you attempt to help others but have your own issues, your attempt will turn on you.*

“Overflowing Blessings”

Study: Luke 6:37-42

Reading: Romans 12:10-21, Acts 9:23-31

Memory: Psalm 51:19

I have attempted to counsel with many people who have a deep rooted anger and bitterness in their hearts. Often, these people can't see this because they think they are full of forgiveness. Yet, their actions clearly reveal otherwise. I had a man tell me once, “I have forgiven him, but I will not speak to him.” Comments like this are all too common among people who claim to be followers of Christ because we don't understand the full teaching of Jesus.

Today, we are going to see what Jesus taught about really loving others.

What Does the Bible Say?

Yesterday we looked at Matthew's account of the teaching of Jesus about not judging others. Today we will look at it from the book of Luke, which adds a great deal of information. Matthew declared that when we judge others, we will have to be held to the same standard by which we judge. Luke further expounded on this by describing how we not only should not judge, but we should forgive. This is not the only time that Jesus mentioned that we will be forgiven based on the way that we choose to forgive others. It is so much easier to excuse ourselves when we mess up but to condemn others when they do the same. One of the best ways to fight off the temptation to judge others is to be generous towards that person. It is very difficult to be angry and bitter to people you are reaching out to in love. This completely obliterates the idea that you can forgive another person and still not choose to give them the time of day. Many people say, “I have forgiven them, but you aren't going to find me talking to them or attempting to be friends with them.” This is not the teaching that Jesus presented. He declared that we should avoid judging, and instead, shower others with blessings. When we choose to do so we will be blessed greatly in return. Verse 38 gives the picture of an abundant harvest. The first step in preparing the grain to be used for food was to crush the head, breaking it apart. It was then shaken and tossed in the air (winnowed) so that the chaff blows away, leaving only the grain. The harvest described here produces in abundance, so much that it overflows.

This great harvest will be in “your lap” (ESV) meaning that it will be all yours and would overflow what your garment could hold (vs 37-38).

In a direct rebuke to the Pharisees, Jesus told them that a blind person is not a good guide for another blind person. Neither one will know where they are going and they will do great harm to themselves. The religious leaders were the blind who were attempting to lead the people, but they were just bringing greater spiritual harm to everyone. The people needed to follow those who could see spiritual truth so they could be led in the light. The people were limited in their knowledge of right and wrong because they relied on their teachers. The problem was that most of the teachers were corrupt and therefore the people would have a corrupt understanding of what God really desired (vs 39-40).

The main point was not to be like the religious leaders who based everything on outward actions. They constantly judged others, instead of showing love. The way to truly help others came after the helper first took care of their own problems (vs 41-42).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you give others great room to fail and learn from their failures, or do you make others feel guilty and worthless when they mess up? It is easy to expect too much out of others when you don't even expect the same from yourself. This leads to outside religion and an unrealness that creates hypocrisy. Instead, you need to choose to follow the way of Jesus and be merciful and patient with others. Instead of condemning them for a mistake, you need to reach out and help them. You need to encourage them and put time and effort into loving them to growth. Love is not the natural way, but if you fail to make the choice to love, you often fall into the natural way which is condemnation.

Suggestions for Prayer

* Thank God for those who have showed you mercy.

* Ask God to help you show mercy to others.

Thought for the day

What two things are you told not to do (vs 37)?

- 1.
- 2.

What is the difference between these two things?

What are you told will happen when you don't do these things?

What are you to do instead of judging others (vs 38)?

What will happen when you are generous (vs 38)?

****The picture that is given here is one of great abundance. When you are generous, God will pour out His abundance on you and be extremely generous with you in return.*

What powerful statement did Jesus make at the end of verse 38?

How have you seen this to be true in your life?

Describe how you live a life of generosity?

What question did Jesus ask (vs 39)? What answer did He give (vs 39)?

What was the purpose of training a disciple (vs 40)?

What point do you think Jesus was making?

What is it easy for people to see (vs 41)?

Why do you think this is?

How do you know if you have a "log" in your own eye (vs 42)?

How can you make sure you are seeing clearly so that you can help others?

What do you think are things that may interfere with you seeing clearly?

How does generosity keep you from being judgemental?

“Ask, Seek and Knock”

Study: Matthew 7:7-11

Reading: Colossians 1:3-14, Luke 11:1-12

Memory: Psalm 51:19

I remember a few times as a young teenager when I would hear the announcer on the radio say, “Whoever is the 13th caller will receive two free tickets to a sports game of your choice” (or something like that). If I was by a phone when I would hear this, I would keep calling until they had a winner. Most of the time, I would just get a busy signal, but I would keep trying because I knew someone had to win. I never won something as a child, but my wife did win some tickets for our family to a local event by calling into the Christian radio station.

Today, we are going to see how we should call out to God, just like you would to win a contest. The difference with God is that you will always win. He will “pick up the phone” and will answer you just as He promised that He would.

What Does the Bible Say?

Each of the verbs given in verse seven are in the present tense which indicates a continual action. Jesus challenged His followers to keep on asking, seeking and knocking. Jesus is not presenting the idea of becoming an annoying, whining child, but is encouraging us not to give up in prayer. You ask until you get an answer. You seek until you find what you were looking for. You knock until God opens the door. The natural understanding of this command also requires your patience in waiting for an answer, taking time to find the answer, and not attempting to break open the door yourself. Many times, when people ask for something in prayer, they simply move on without truly seeking for an answer or for the Lord to reveal His desire. Prayer is more than a one way conversation, but should be an interaction between you and God. When God does give an answer, the wise man realizes it and does not continue to beg for the situation to be changed. God will hear. God will be found. God will answer the door and show you great and mighty things abundantly above all that you could imagine (vs 7-8).

Jesus related the example of an earthly father to that of our Heavenly Father. When a child asks for bread to eat, His father is not going to give

him a stone to satisfy his hunger. When he asks for fish, his father will not give him a serpent that could harm him instead. We as sinful people know how to give good gifts for our children and give them what they need and what they ask for. If we as sinful people can do this, how much more will God, the perfect and all-knowing One, give us what we need, when we need it. He will also go above and beyond meeting our needs just as an earthly father often does. The challenge that Jesus is issuing is simple and straight forward. Take time to ask. God is waiting and often desiring to pour out His blessings upon your life if you would simply choose to trust Him and ask for what you need and desire (vs 9-11).

How Does this Apply to Me?

How would you describe your prayer life? Is it powerful and vibrant or dull and boring? Do you go to God, knowing that He is listening and that He will answer or do you just “throw up a prayer?” It is interesting as you read that quote about “throwing up a prayer” how our society has reduced prayer to wishful thinking and puts it in the category of “good luck.” This is not the type of prayer life you should have because you are told that you can approach the throne of God, who is your heavenly Father, with boldness. You are not to be demanding of God, but in humility, recognize that you need Him for every area of your life. You can’t make it spiritually on your own and will fall without His power and strength. You need to be in conversation with Him throughout each day and continually in fellowship with Him, freely asking Him for the things that you need or desire. Make it a point and purpose in your life to continually go to God, asking Him for your needs and desires and seeking Him for the answer He knows is best for you.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Thank God for continually answering prayer in your life.
- * Ask God to help you trust Him to do what is best for you.
- * Praise God because He has the power to answer all prayer.

Thought for the day

What three things did Jesus say you should do (vs 7)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are things you should ask God for?

What do you think it means to seek for an answer (vs 7)?

How do you think God allows you to find what you are seeking for?

What do you think it means to knock (vs 7)?

What are we told that God will do when we follow the commands that are given in verse 7 (vs 8)?

What will a father do if a son asks him for some bread (vs 9)?

What will a father do if a son asks him for a fish (vs 10)?

Why do you think God describes men as evil (vs 11)?

****This is in contrast of a holy God. Compared to our heavenly Father, even the best earthly father is still evil.*

What do earthly fathers do (vs 11)?

What will God as our heavenly Father do for His children (vs 11)?

What do we need to do if we want to be showered with gifts from God (vs 11)?

Why do you think it is sometimes hard to ask God for things?

Does this mean that you will always get everything you ask for the way that you want it?

****The illustration of a father and child gives a great understanding of this passage. Sometimes children ask for things their father knows is not good for them or something they need to wait for.*

“The Narrow Gate”

Study: Matthew 7:13-20, Luke 6:43-45

Reading: Galatians 5:16-26, Ephesians 5:3-11

Memory: Psalm 51:19

Several years ago, some friends and I were traveling back to Wisconsin from a wedding that took place in Pennsylvania. On the way back we hit a snowstorm that dumped about 20 inches of snow on the Chicago area. One of my buddies was driving and it was becoming increasingly difficult to see the roadway. There was a point when visibility was so low that the car in front of us drove straight into the center median ditch. My buddy, who was just following the lights of the car in front of him, almost did the same thing, until I said something which caused him to turn back onto the road at the last moment.

Today, we are going to see how humans normally take the easy way out. That easy way often involves just following the flow, but sadly, the flow of natural man leads to destruction. We will be challenged to follow the narrow and hard way, understanding that the benefits far outweigh the sacrifice.

What Does the Bible Say?

City walls had a variety of entrances. The ones that were the main entrances were quite wide, allowing a great deal of traffic to flow in and out of the city. Others were quite narrow, allowing much less traffic and they were used by much fewer people, normally because of the terrain surrounding the gate or where the gate led to. Jesus compared salvation to the narrow gate which was often the more difficult way. Choosing the natural path in life was much easier, just as using the wide gate was often much easier. The truth that Jesus was revealing is that many people will not be saved because the way of salvation involves self-surrender and trust. This does not mean that salvation is miserable. Jesus presented contradictory evidence to that elsewhere. It simply means that it is much easier to follow what everyone else is doing rather than doing the hard thing that reaps great rewards (Matthew 7:13-14).

Jesus also warned His followers to beware of false prophets who appear to be like them, but inside they have a desire to destroy those who follow Christ. The way to tell the difference was not by the outward appearance.

This is why Jesus described them as wolves that looked like sheep. The way to tell the difference was by the fruit they produced in their lives. Jesus used a simple illustration to explain this by describing how grapes are picked from grapevines and not thorn bushes. He also described how trees that had a solid root system and were healthy trees would bear healthy fruit. In the same way, the person who chooses to live for God out of their heart, will produce the fruit that displays the character of God. This fruit is described in many different places in Scripture (see the supplemental reading) and is produced by a person who yields themselves to God. This does not mean that we are to go around judging others (looking down on them in pride), but we are to evaluate who to pattern our lives after (Philippians 3:17) and who to listen to. One of the best ways fruit is revealed is by what a person says. People will say what is truly in their hearts. This observation does not always come right away, people often cover up well for a while, but after hanging around a person for a period of time, you begin to find out who they really are (Matthew 7:15-20, Luke 6:43-45).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do others find the fruit of your life enjoyable and come back to you to eat more of it? Do they eat a little of the fruit of your life and find that it is bitter or rotten? Simply put, if all other believers worshiped, studied, talked, gave and served like you do, what would your church look like? I am not at all encouraging the practice of “judging” others in the form of condemnation based on their outward appearances. I am challenging you to live a life that allows God to produce abundantly through you. I am challenging to you to find those around you who are producing the fruit of the Spirit in their lives and learn from them. Not everyone who goes to church or looks good on the outside is producing fruit. Simply compare their lives to the Word of God, just as you should your life.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for producing fruit in your life.*
- * *Ask God to help you let Him produce fruit through you,*
- * *Praise God because He has the power to do wonders in your life.*

Thought for the day

What gate did Jesus say you should enter in (vs 13)?

How is the wide gate described (vs 13)?

What does the wide gate lead to (vs 13)?

Why do you think many people take the wide gate?

****As with most things in life, following the path of least resistance in life seems the easiest way to go. Yet, most everyone will attest to the great value of doing things that are hard and difficult often bring the most satisfaction and fulfillment in life.*

What gate leads to eternal life (vs 14)?

Why do you think few people use this gate?

Why do you think Jesus mentioned that salvation was hard?

Who are you to beware of (vs 15)?

What illustration did Jesus use to describe the false prophets (vs 15)? What do you think He meant by this illustration?

How will you know the difference between a real and false prophet (vs 16)?

What is the good fruit you are looking for in a real prophet (vs 17)?

What can a healthy tree not do (vs 18)?

What did Jesus say needed to be done to trees that did not bear fruit (vs 19)?

What do you think you should do when you recognize someone is a false prophet?

What did Jesus emphasize about knowing whether a person is a good person to follow?

Psalm 51:1-19

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! 3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. 4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. 6 Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. 9 Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. 11 Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. 14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness. 15 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. 16 For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. 18 Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; build up the walls of Jerusalem; 19 then will you delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.