

Small Group Study Guide

No Shortcuts to God

Series: God's Stump Speech

Matthew 7:13,14

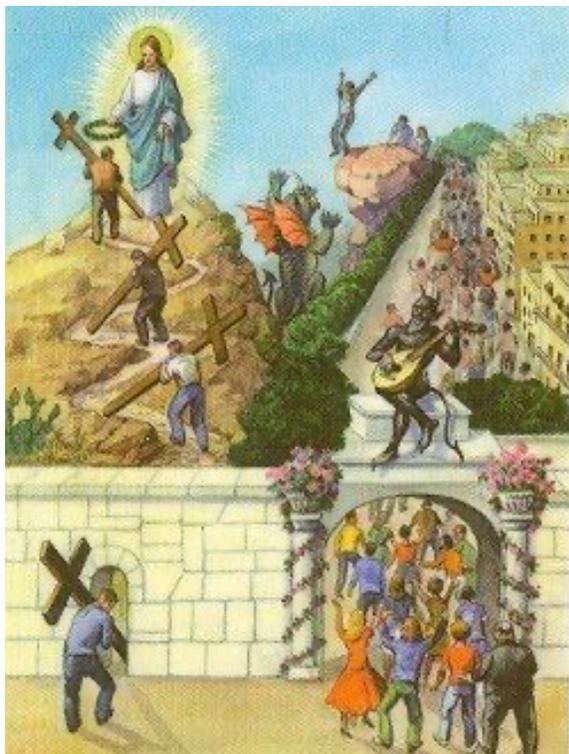
From Sunday, May 9, 2021

Take a moment to pray, and ask God to guide your thoughts and reveal things to you about His word as you go through this study.

Appetizer:

Have you ever purchased something, or tried something that you thought was going to be a shortcut but only to discover it didn't work? Share this with the group.

What are some ways that we try to take shortcuts or the "easy way" in our Christian walk?



There are many artistic impressions of the narrow and wide gates and path in historic art. Take a look at this picture.

Questions: What do you notice about it? What stands out to you? What emotion, if any, does it evoke for you, and why do you think that is?

Main Course:

Read through Matthew 7:12,13.

Place yourself as a Jew on the hillside when Jesus was preaching this sermon and picture hearing this type of teaching for the first time. How do you think you would have felt to hear Jesus turning the things you have been taught upside down? Are there things in your life that you were taught previously, but feel you have had to re-learn or you now have a completely different view? How was it to go through that process?

The narrow and wide roads are a depiction of the cost of discipleship. **Read Luke 14:26** and the quote by Dietrich Bonhoeffer from the book "The Cost of Discipleship" which is: **"When all is said and done, the life of faith is nothing, if not an unending struggle of the spirit with every available weapon against the flesh."**

Questions: What thoughts do you have about this verse or quote? Can you relate? When you think of discipleship in these ways, how does it make you feel?

Does the cost of discipleship sometimes feel unrealistic or too difficult? What are some promises in the Bible that we can stand on when we are feeling this way?

Jesus lived life alongside his disciples and this is how He disciplined them. He taught them as they went and explained things to them. He corrected them and even got frustrated with them at times. Have you had a person in your life that disciplined you in this way? How did this impact your daily walk with God? If you have not had this kind of a mentor in your life, is it something you feel would be helpful? Why or why not? What would that look like for you? Is this a way you feel you could help others? What tools or skills do you feel you might need in order to do this well?

Dessert:

It is difficult to invite others into the Jesus Way of Life if we aren't experiencing it ourselves, as in, if we aren't experiencing the "Life" part of the Jesus way. How are you experiencing that "Life" part now? What does that mean to you? What are areas where you feel are lacking in your life? How can those in your group come alongside you and help you in this area?

After going through this study, sit for a moment and listen. What do you think God might be saying to you at this moment? What is God calling you to do this week? It doesn't have to be a huge, bold step, but maybe it is a tweak to your schedule or a reminder on your phone to take a moment with God. It might be praying about finding or being a mentor. Listen, pay attention, and He will guide you down the narrow road that leads to life.