

# "The Narrow Gate"

## Matthew 7:13-14

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### Overview



"The Road Less Traveled" is a popular catch phrase taken from a poem by Robert Frost. It is arguably the most well-known poetic phrase in Western culture (at least according to the Google search engine).

The phrase is often used to symbolize a rugged individualism that insists on striking out on a less popular path that may be harder, less socially acceptable, and less desirable by the majority.

Jesus introduces a similar concept in His teaching on the Sermon on the Mount. However His understanding of the less popular path is quite different (and navigating it is not dependent on how strong and powerful we are).

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### Getting Started

*On the Road Again?*



1. What is one of your favorite roads, paths, or trails (and why)?
  2. What do you like to listen to (type of music, radio programs, etc.) as you are traveling in your car on a long trip?
  3. What is one of the toughest trips you have taken (on foot, by car, or by some other means)? What made it so tough?
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### The Text



<sup>13</sup> "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. <sup>14</sup> But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

Matthew 7:13-14 (NIV)

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**The Video (optional)** "The Narrow Gate" – Matthew 7:13-14 – by Kyle Corbin, June 6/21  
(view at [www.immanuelonline.ca](http://www.immanuelonline.ca)).



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## Understanding



1. What is the contrast that Jesus draws out in these verses? What is the metaphor Jesus uses and to what is He referring?
2. What is true of each of the two paths that Jesus talks about in these verses? How are they similar? How are they different? What is life like on each of them?
3. Who (or what) is the wide gate? Who (or what) is the narrow gate? Consider John 10:1-18.
4. What is the end destination of each of the two options that a person can choose between? How does Jesus describe these destinations and what is He actually talking about (consider also Psalm 1)?
5. What is the popularity of each of the paths? Why is one more popular than the other? How does this fit with what Jesus says in the rest of the Sermon (look at Matthew 5:10, 16, 17, 21-22, 27-28, 31-32, 38-39, 43)?
6. Read Matthew 7:12 and Matthew 7:15-20. How are verses 13-14 related to the verses that come before and after them?

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## Applying



1. Why do people prefer the wide way and the wide gate? Why do they pass by the narrow gate (and ignore the way of Jesus)? Consider Judges 21:25, Matthew 7:11, 13, 15. Given the wide road is easier, how would help someone choose to take the narrow road?
2. These verses seem to indicate a degree of exclusivity in spiritual matters (i.e. not all will walk the narrow road). Where are we OK with exercising exclusivity in life? Why are we OK with it in those situations? Why is being exclusive in spiritual matters more difficult for people to accept? How would you respond to someone who is offended by that idea?
3. Why do people choose to travel down dangerous roads? Which of the two roads depicted in this passage is dangerous (and in what way)?

4. Where (and how) do followers of Christ experience the narrowness of the road that follows Jesus? How has the “road” felt narrow to you lately?
5. Is it not unfair for God to make the path to Him narrow?? If He truly does want everyone to be saved, why would He make His path more narrow or harder?
6. Which comes first – the gate or the road?? Defend your answer (check also Luke 13:22-30, and consider Is. 53:6 (i.e. do you really have to go through a gate to get on the wide road?)). How does your answer impact the way you live your life and share your faith?
7. What part of the narrow road do you appreciate and are thankful for right now? Why?
8. What strategies help keep you on the narrow way (ex. Josh. 24:15)? How do you persevere and stay on course?

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### Memory Verse(s)



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### Extra Resources



- ❖ “*The Narrow Gate*” – *Matthew 7:13-14* – by Kyle Corbin, June 6/21 (sermon, view at [www.immanuelonline.ca](http://www.immanuelonline.ca)). Pastor Kyle leads listeners through Jesus’ reminder of the challenge of the Christian life.
- ❖ “*A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*” - by Eugene H. Peterson (InterVarsity Press, 1980). Peterson reviews selected Psalms to highlight our call to persevere as disciples in a world preferring ease and success.
- ❖ “*Follow Me*” – by Jan David Hettinga (NavPress, 1996). Pastor Hettinga addresses the roadblocks that prevent us from following Christ along the Kingdom path Jesus has chosen for us.