

ENTERING GOD'S KINGDOM

CITYWEST CHURCH

10AM JULY 27 2025

13 "You can enter God's Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. 14 But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.

15 "Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. 16 You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. 18 A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. 19 So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. 20 Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.

21 "Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. 22 On judgment day many will say to me, 'Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.' 23 But I will reply, 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God's laws.'

24 "Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. 25 Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. 26 But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. 27 When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash."

Matthew 7:13-27 NLT

1 Choice with 2 options to make. Narrow road or highway. True prophet with good fruit or false prophet with bad fruit. A personal relationship with Jesus or mimicing him from afar. A house built on obedience to the teachings of jesus or not.

The kingdom of God is a theme that Jesus has preached about from the beginning of his ministry. Israelites had a very specific view of the kingdom of God returning. Rome overthrown. Return to full ownership of promised land. A king to lead the nation. Jesus shows us a different view what the kingdom of God is like.

How then do we enter the kingdom of God?

POINT 1. CHOOSE THE RIGHT GUIDE

Jesus says that only few ever find it the narrow road, to the gate to the kingdom of God. We need a guide.

Prophets were the guide that helps people come into the kingdom. Isaiah called Judah back. Jonah called Niniveh back. Prophets in the old testament were false if their message didn't come true. Jesus adds to the picture of false prophets that their actions must be good actions.

Jesus then is showing that he is the true prophet. The true guide for people. He demonstrates not just with words but with actions too that the kingdom of God is present and a reality.

2 John the Baptist, who was in prison, heard about all the things the Messiah was doing. So he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, 3 "Are you the Messiah we've been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?"

4 Jesus told them, "Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen— 5 the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor." 6 And he added, "God blesses those who do not fall away because of me."

Matthew 11:2-6

What voices are you listening to? Firstly do they lead to the kingdom of God? Is the person that's speaking got good fruit / actions in their life.

Who has influence over your life?

Jesus is asking us to choose him as the true prophet.

POINT 2. CHOOSE THE RIGHT RELATIONSHIP

We've got the guide that will lead us on the right path. Now we've got to get through the gate. Here Jesus makes a very excluding claim - he is the gate keeper. Similar to how Jesus talks about being the gate to the sheep pen in John 10. The gate that leads the sheep to abundant life is how Jesus describes it there.

Whilst actions are important, good actions won't get you into the kingdom of God. Only a personal relationship with Jesus will. We can't choose to have a relationship with Jesus that just looks at his actions and mimics them. We need to have a deep relationship that helps us understand the will of God for our lives personally.

40 For it is my Father's will that all who see his Son and believe in him should have eternal life. I will raise them up at the last day.

John 6:40 NLT

"Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."

How do we enjoy a relationship with God? We spend unrushed time with him. Earlier in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spoke about ways we can be with God, giving, prayer, fasting - these Jesus says to do in secret with the Father. That's how we enjoy God.

POINT 3. CHOOSE TO FOLLOW JESUS

We've got the right guide. We've got our personal relationship with Jesus. Now we're still on the narrow, difficult road.

The storms are often what Jesus refers to as the difficulties of life. Jesus never says the highway to hell is the easy life. He just says it's broad to get on to.

The challenge for us is that we've got to not look to the highway for the solutions to our problems but to Jesus. His teaching and our obedience to that teaching will help us along the narrow road.

We're not trying to conjure up some will power to get Jesus to act in our circumstances. We're having faith in the promises and teachings of Jesus and being obedient to that. That's what faith is.

Do I know Jesus' life and words? Do I know his teaching? Am I living in faith of his life.

It's all good for us to be reminded of this. But the mission of God is that all people would come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. That they would choose him to be their guide. They would choose to have a personal relationship with Him.

We act like physical prophets for people to see. Our actions are the first experience of the kingdom of God. We need to ask Jesus to help us show good fruit by making us into good trees.

We need to practice pointing people to Jesus as they grow in their relationship with Jesus. It takes time. But our goal for mature believers is that they have their own relationship with Jesus.

One way we can show the kingdom of God is that through life, people will have challenges and we can come in and help.

4 He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

2 Corinthians 1:4 NLT

The city of Corinth is all about temporary salvation from the problems of life now. How do I fix this now. How do I fix that now. This is an inconvenience so I need something to solve this problem. Money was the answer.

That's what people do today too. But the message Paul writes is that we can comfort others with the same comfort as Jesus comforts us. We can help people through their storms, pointing them to the Kingdom of God.

CONNECT GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What voices, influences, or “teachers” in your life (media, culture, even Christian circles) might be leading you? How can you discern their fruit more carefully?
2. If someone looked at the “fruit” of your life right now (attitudes, words, decisions), what would they conclude about who or what you are following?
3. Jesus says not everyone who calls Him ‘Lord’ actually knows Him. How do you personally cultivate a genuine relationship with Him beyond outward religious activity?
4. Think of a recent or current storm in your life. How has it revealed what your life is built on? What do you sense Jesus calling you to do as a result?