



**Loving Jesus, Loving People, Plowing a Counter-Culture**

**SERMON TEXT:** Matthew 7:13-29

**KEY POINT(S):** Disciples of Jesus walk on the narrow road and bear fruit in their lives consistent with the declaration of their mouths that Jesus is Lord.

**FOR LEADERS**

- **Last Week of Communities!** – *It’s our final week of the Winter Communities Season (for real this time)! Thank you all for serving as leaders this past season! We pray that this season has both encouraged you in your walk with Christ and challenged you to grow as a leader!*
- **Spring Communities Season!** – *Our Spring 2019 Season will begin the week of Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup> and run for a total of 7 weeks!*
- **Communities Feedback!** – *As always, our hope at Emergence is that we would always be growing in our walks with Jesus, as well as in how we function together as a unified body! One way in which we continue to grow and continue to improve is from feedback and input from our leaders! Please take some time this week to fill out a feedback survey and let us know how we’re doing! The survey will be sent out to all Community Leaders this week via e-mail.*

**GETTING STARTED**

- [1] Icebreaker** – “What is one thing that you wish everyone in your group would know about you?”
- [2] Communities Video** - Watch this week’s Communities video!
- [3]** What were some things that stood out to you from the sermon this week? Was there anything you found particularly impactful or eye-opening?

**THE NARROW GATE**

**Ask for a volunteer to read Matthew 7:13-14**

In the sermon this week, Ryan mentioned that this text is the ultimate culmination of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, and in many ways it’s Jesus “drawing a line in the sand.” He went on to explain that a lot of times, these truths from Jesus can be hard to hear for some and are often among the first parts of Christianity that people may choose to ignore.

- [1]** Why do you think that the key ideas found in these verses tend to be so offensive to people?
- [2]** It is often claimed today that “all religions are essentially saying the same thing, and all roads lead to the same place.” Do you agree with this sentiment? Why or why not?
- [3]** What do you think the “narrow gate” is that Jesus is describing here, and what is the “hard way?”
- [4]** Jesus describes his way as “hard” in these verses, but in Matthew 11:28-30, he offers “rest” to all who come to him, and says His yoke is easy and light. What do you think Jesus means with these statements?

*Leaders: These verses are always going to be “offensive” to people because it’s the Bible being absolutely clear that there is only one way to eternal life, and it’s Christ alone. This is an absolute truth which, by nature, excludes all other non-truths like “All religions are saying the same thing,” and as such it will usually offend people who want to believe their variation of truth. In the sermon, Ryan mentioned a popular philosophical analogy where “God” is explained with three blind men trying to determine the identity of an elephant and come up with differing descriptions based off of their specific position or perspective. The truth to this analogy, however, is that there is an*

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*inherent fallacy contained within it in that the narrator has an all-seeing knowledge of God. By nature, the narrator is describing God, and so is claiming to have revealed knowledge about the character and nature of God. The truth is that we actually do have revealed knowledge of God – the Bible – where God Himself is born a man, teaches His people about the Kingdom, and records it for us all to know and understand.*

*The Narrow Gate is Jesus (See John 14), and the narrow path is the one that few ever choose to follow, where they live not by their own will, but by the will of the Father, in submission to Christ as Lord not just of their “salvation” but Lord over every area of their lives. Jesus describes His way as “hard” because the world in which we live is broken by sin. Our sin nature leads us not toward Christ, but inward toward ourselves – to our own comfort, our own desires and pleasure and will for our lives. In contrast to this, our sin will ultimately lead us to pleasure that cannot truly satisfy, and many ultimately find that they are inwardly longing for something real – something eternal – and cannot stand the burdens they’re carrying through life. To these who find this, Jesus says, “Come, and I will give you rest.” Jesus “burden,” or what He “requires of us” in other words, is nothing except faith in Him as Lord.*

**GOOD FRUIT, BAD FRUIT**

In the sermon, Ryan warned us to be discerning about whom we listen to. He went on to explain that false teachers will be exposed by their teaching and their lives. Jesus’ point in the passage is that those who falsely presume to speak in God’s name can be identified by the fruit their lives produce.

**Ask for a volunteer to read Matthew 7:15-20**

- [5]** What are some examples of teaching that might identify someone as a false prophet?
- [6]** In what way might a spiritual leader be shown to be false through the way they live their lives?
- [7]** How do you personally guard yourself to avoid being influenced by the cunning words of false teachers?

*Leaders: Everything – EVERYTHING – should be tested by Scripture. It doesn’t matter what Ryan says on Sundays, it doesn’t matter what Doug writes on a blog, or what Alex writes in blue ink on a piece of paper...everything should be weighed against the one source of truth that we can put our full assurance on, which is Scripture. And that goes for everything, not just sermons – what is our culture teaching us? We should be careful what we allow ourselves to take in as truth.*

**LORD, LORD**

**Ask for a volunteer to read Matthew 7:21-23**

- [8]** How would you explain the difference between someone who merely says, “Lord, Lord” to Jesus, and someone who truly knows Him and is known by Him?
- [9]** What would be your advice to someone who calls Jesus Lord, but seems like they might be exactly the kind of person that Jesus is describing in these verses?
- [10]** According to what Jesus describes in these passages, how can we really know whether or not we are a Christian?

**PRAYER**

- [1]** Pray that God would help us to be bold in affirming Jesus as the only way, and for the strength to walk the narrow path. Take some time to thank God for the truth of His Word, and for the bravery to sincerely stop, consider our lives, and truly evaluate whether Jesus is truly Lord of my entire life, or simply “Lord, Lord.”