

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Angels We Have Heard On High, Joy to the World, For All You've Done, Beautiful Savior,
Living Hope, Amazing Grace

WELCOME

What things in life do you want to be absolutely sure of? Share one that you want to be confident about. What consequence might result if you were wrong about your certainty? (ex.: a soon-to-be bride would want to be absolutely sure that her future husband is not married to anyone else because their marriage will be void and she'll be heartbroken).

WORD

MATTHEW 7:13-23

"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it." (v. 13)

THE MOST IMPORTANT DECISION OF YOUR LIFE

We regularly and routinely make many choices in life. Some decisions are trivial and have short-term consequences such as what variety of water to buy — sparkling, distilled, or filtered. Other decisions we make are crucial to our well-being, and have long-term consequences for us like whom to marry, whether or not to undergo surgery, etc. But there is one *crucial* decision that has an eternal consequence for our life. Jesus talks about this choice in **Matthew 7:13-14** and it has to do with our response to his command to "enter through the narrow gate" that leads to life.

CHOOSE BETWEEN LIFE OR DESTRUCTION FOR ETERNITY

The Bible tell us that death is not the end to our existence. Life goes on after death. The question is what kind of life awaits us for eternity. The answer to that question will depend on whether one chooses the narrow gate (that is difficult to find but leads to life) or the wide and easy one (which ultimately leads to eternal destruction, **1 Thessalonians 1:9**), to being away from the Lord's presence, and to a place of unending torment (**Luke 16:23-26**). But choosing the narrow gate is not only crucial, it is also *urgent*. We can only make this choice while here on earth. After we die, our destiny is sealed. No more second chances.

THE NARROW WAY

What makes the way to God narrow and difficult that only a few find it (**Matthew 7:14**)?

Firstly, there is only one way to enter heaven. Jesus claimed that he is *the* way to the heavenly Father (**John 14:6**). This means that salvation is found in no one else but Jesus Christ (**Acts 4:12**). Truth is always exclusive, it is narrow. We all know that four times four is always and can only be sixteen (16), not fifteen (15) or sixteen-point-five (16.5). So, when Jesus narrowed down the options only to Himself, there cannot be another way.

Secondly, God's way requires repentance from us. Though salvation is by God's grace through faith (**Ephesians 2:8-9**), this grace comes with the humility to repent of our sins, to repent of following our own way and will, and humbly turning to God's offer of forgiveness, to His way and His will (**Ephesians 5:5-6; Acts 20:21**). The grace of God gives us a new desire and the power to trust him (**Titus 2:11-12**). Charles Spurgeon once said, "You and your sins must separate or you and your God will never come together." True repentance means that we choose to be with God instead of staying in our sins.

Thirdly, the way to God involves a change of lifestyle (**Luke 9:23**). A change in lifestyle means we do not make and follow our own gods and idols (**Judges 21:25**). Instead, we worship and follow the one true God (**Luke 10:27**). This is what we would learn from the story of the rich young man and Zacchaeus. The rich young man asked Jesus how he can have eternal life (**Luke 18:18-23**). He has followed all the other commandments but one—to love God wholeheartedly. Sadly, when challenged to sell everything he had and follow Jesus, his love for

WORD (cont'd)

money prevented him from doing so. Zacchaeus, on the other hand, who was a tax collector and a rich man himself, did not allow anything or anyone to stop him from following Jesus (**Matthew 19:3-9** and **Luke 19:6**). He was not asked to sell everything he had, yet on his own, Zacchaeus offered to give half of his riches to the poor, and to return over and above the amount of money to anyone he might have defrauded in the past.

ARE YOU SAVED?

Be warned: not everyone who claims to be Christian, even if serving the Lord, will be accepted in heaven.

Only those whose lives are characterized by obedience to Jesus Christ will (**Matthew 7:21-23**).

2 Corinthians 13:5 reminds us, “Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you -unless indeed you fail the test?” Jesus gives us the proof of salvation: “You will know them by their fruits” (**Matthew 7:16-20**). Good fruit in our lives is a result of our obedience to Jesus (**1 John 2:3**) which is seen when we practice righteousness (**1 John 3:10**).

Jesus offers you a choice to enter God’s presence through Him: “I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.” (**John 10:9**). If you hear His voice today, make the best decision of your life that will determine the course of your eternal destiny (**John 10:27-28**). Choose to follow Jesus!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Have you made the decision to follow Jesus? What evidence do you see in your life that you are truly saved (repentance from your sins, lifestyle change, obedience to God’s commands)?
2. Is there anything or anyone that you have allowed to prevent you from following Jesus? Is there something or someone that God wants you to give up so you can be a true follower of Christ?
3. How sure are you that you are going to heaven when you die? If you are not yet sure, make the best decision you can ever make in your life today---receive the gift of salvation through Jesus! Open your heart and accept Jesus gladly, be a Christ-committed follower by God’s grace from this day on!

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

This Christmas, bear fruit for Jesus by obedience to his command to “make disciples”!

- Praying for at least three people (family members, friends and co-workers) that you want to introduce to Christ this holiday season.
- Do something special for them—perhaps give a Christmas gift, and use that as an opportunity to share that God offers us the free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, his Son.
- We celebrate the birth of Jesus this season, and it is a great opportunity to tell others about the gift of eternal life through Christ alone. Invite these three people you are praying for to our Christmas worship service where the gospel will be shared.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends