

## APPLICATION

- Jesus describes the wide gate as easy yet it leads to destruction. In your life, what are the things that seem easy, comfortable, or even good, but you know would become a hindrance to following Jesus? What are you willing to do about this?
- What are you ready to give up or surrender to continue walking the narrow path that leads to life? Ask God to reveal these things to you and give you the grace to follow Him fully.
- What are the things you can do this week to encourage people around you to follow Jesus and experience life in Him although it may seem counterintuitive?

## PRAYER

- Thank God for the new life you have in Christ and the grace that enables you to choose and follow Him every day.
- Ask God for the grace to surrender the things in your life that hinder you from completely following Jesus.
- Pray for two or three people you know to seek God's will in their lives and receive grace to follow Jesus. Ask God for opportunities to present the gospel to them this week.

## Cost of the Cross    Entering the Narrow Gate

WEEK 1

## WARM-UP

- Why do you think people often choose the easier paths or popular options in life?
- Recall a time when choosing the harder option led to a better outcome. What happened?
- Share a time when delaying a decision led to missed opportunities or regrets. What lessons did you learn?

**WORD** *<sup>13</sup>Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. <sup>14</sup>For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."*

**MATTHEW 7:13-14**

Jesus contrasts two gates and two paths: one is wide and easy which leads to destruction, and the other narrow and hard which leads to life. The *life* Jesus refers to encompasses the fullness of joy, peace, and purpose that comes from living in alignment with God's will. This life is not merely about our eternal destiny, but also about experiencing the richness of God's kingdom here and now. Choosing the narrow gate means following Christ, which leads to a deeper, more abundant relationship with God, even amidst challenges and trials. Today, we will look at the cost of the cross and what following Christ looks like.



## 1 | Following Christ is urgent.

*“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.”*

**MATTHEW 7:13**

In its original language, this passage carries a strong sense of urgency and emphasizes the need for immediate action. Jesus is not merely suggesting a path but giving a decisive call to act without delay. The wide gate, which represents the path of ease, compromise, and worldly living, may seem attractive at first but ultimately leads to destruction. Jesus reminds us that the decision to follow Him cannot be postponed. What does 2 Corinthians 6:2 say about God’s salvation?

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## 2 | Following Christ is difficult.

*“For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”* **MATTHEW 7:14**

The narrow path is challenging. Many who have decided to live for Christ endured hardships, persecution, imprisonment, and even death. For believers, walking the narrow path can feel like swimming against the current. In a culture that prioritizes convenience and comfort, Christians may feel out of place. The temptation to give up or follow the wide path,

which offers ease and acceptance, is strong. However, Jesus teaches that the narrow path, though difficult and chosen by few, is the one that leads to life. Think of a time when following Christ entailed a difficult choice. What did you learn from that experience?

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## 3 | Following Christ is rewarding and life-giving.

*“For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”* **MATTHEW 7:14**

When Jesus declared that He came so that we *may have life and have it abundantly* (John 10:10), He was not only speaking about a future in heaven but a kind of meaningful life we can experience with Him here on earth. Although this life would mean denying ourselves and taking up our cross to follow Jesus every day, it is characterized by peace, joy, purpose, and fulfillment that is beyond worldly achievements. Those who find this life discover that it is worth every sacrifice. Share a time when you experienced fulfillment in your walk with Jesus.

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