

Tonight, is it... our last normal night of the school year and our last night in the Sermon on the Mount...

You can sum up this entire study in a few words... Jesus cares for our hearts. Isn't that what Jesus' entire sermon has been about? - It's not about your actions... it's not about your words... it's about your heart!

And tonight, we get real... Jesus challenges where we are at... where our hearts are at...

So, tonight my challenge for us all is to be honest with ourselves... God knows where we are at...

we need to be honest with ourselves so we can take the next step... (Real goal - Next step!)

THE POINT: Our lives prove our faith.

READ: Matthew 7:13-14

FOLLOWING JESUS ISN'T EASY BUT IT'S WORTH IT. (13-14)

The first thing we see in our passage is that there are two ways... two roads... that end up at two places...

- One is the wide gate... it's easy to walk through, but it leads to destruction... a ton of people take this path...
- The other is the narrow gate... it is hard to walk through, but it leads to life... only a few people take this path...

We know what we are talking about right?

The wide gate leads to hell and the narrow gate leads to heaven... being with God...

So, what is Jesus saying? Jesus is saying following me will be hard... not a ton of people do it... but if you follow me, you will find life... real life...

If you don't follow me, you'll fit in... life may seemingly be easier but you won't find life... even more... you'll find death... !

Sometimes it seems we take the easier way...

Shortcuts... we don't study like we should, we cram... we act like we are married before we are actually married... we stick chicken nuggets in the microwave instead of the oven... you get it... None of these things turn out well... why? Because things that are worth having are worth giving all that we for...

It's the same with our walk with Jesus... he says it won't be easy but it will be worth it... the question is... are you willing to give it all that you are... embrace the difficulty knowing that life with Jesus now and in the life to come is worth it...

Jesus is life... he brings purpose to our lives but even greater he is our eternal life...

Which way are you walking? The wide gate or the narrow gate? The one that leads to life or destruction?

So, following Jesus isn't easy... but it's worth it.

We need to help people see that.

ACTIONS PROVE OUR HEARTS. (15-23)

Then we get Jesus helping us do two things... he is helping us identify people lying about God... and helping us figure out where we are...

(15) People look innocent, but they are deadly... but he points to this idea of fruit...

(16-20) fruit helps its understand people's heart... Jesus is saying if you watch the way someone lives... you can see where their heart is...

Super simple right? Ehh...

Your life points to what you actually believe - your words... your actions... prove where your heart truly is..

But... we can say one thing and not actually believe it...

We've all done this... (Mom says, how's dinner? Or worse... how is your grade in math class... fine....)

To help us understand... Jesus says... (21-23)

Here is where it gets pretty sticky...

Jesus is saying you can call me Lord... you can say I did a whole bunch of stuff calling myself a Christian and what will he say to some people... *I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness...*

This section is really simple... Jesus is saying there are people walking around saying they are Christians, and they just aren't... they put on a good show but they really have no connection to Jesus...

Result - thrown into the fire... they are useless... *Man.*

Is that you? Are you just a Christian in name only? If so, the straight up truth is... Jesus will tell you depart from him...

It's a scary thing... but it goes back to the whole narrow and wide gate... one is worth it now and you suffer later... the other is you suffer now, and it will be worth it later (and now...)

Jesus proved his heart with his actions... his heart is for you and I... he loves us and proved it by giving it up for us... for forgiving us when we fall...

So, where are you at? What does your life say about you? What fruit are you bearing? What will Jesus' answer be to you?

Don't get me wrong... none of us deserve God's acceptance of us... it's only because of Jesus... his work on the cross that we find hope... forgiveness... life...

DECIDE WHAT YOU FOLLOW. (24-27)

Part of this entire conversation is about the religious leaders and the disciples... remember how we said that Jesus is challenging the religious leader's talk of *do this... do that... or God wont love you...*

- Jesus is saying look you are either going to have to choose to follow me or them...

To follow them is to build your house on the sand... it will hit the floor...

But to follow him is to build your house on the rock... it will stand... it will last...

We have to make our faith our own

- How does it connect to our life...?

What are you going to build your house on... what or who are you going to follow?

The loudest voice? The most comfortable place? The people you have known forever?

The one who cares for you more than anything? What everybody else believes

Jesus is calling you to follow him...

TAKEAWAY:

- **Be authentic** - be real with who you are... where you are... where your going...

- **Live your faith!** This whole conversation points to how you lead people... What do others see when they look at your life? Do you make it easier for people to follow Jesus? what are you following daily? What does your fruit point to?

Challenge - READ SOM!