

Application Guide: “The Wide and Narrow Gates” (Mt. 7:13-14)

April 10th, 2005: Ligon Duncan, senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Jackson, Mississippi, finished the PCRT “One Way” conference with a message on the exclusive claims of Jesus Christ. He emphasized that there are only two ways of life we can choose – the broad road that leads to destruction or the narrow road that leads to life. He also stressed that when Christ calls us to walk the narrow road, it is not simply a free ride to heaven but is a call to discipleship. In short, to enter into the Kingdom of God is to enter into the sphere of his lordship.

1. What, if any, ridicule or objections have you received from co-workers, family members, or friends in regards to the claim that Jesus Christ is the only way to eternal life?
 - a. What is the best way to respond to ridicule (cf. Mt. 5:10-12; Rom 12:17-21)?
 - b. What is the right response when people at work make negative comments about Evangelicals or Christianity? When is it right to speak up, and when is it better to remain silent?
 - c. How can we make the Gospel message attractive without compromising the Truth claims of Christ?
2. In Paul E. Little’s book, *How to Give Away Your Faith*, he likens evangelism to “one beggar going to another beggar to show them where the bread is.”
 - a. How can we as Christians, while holding to an exclusive message, have a deep love for unbelievers like Christ did, share common interests, and keep from having an “us verses them” mentality?
 - b. What is the balance between “preaching the Gospel” by your actions (i.e. “lifestyle evangelism”) and being proactive in sharing your faith in words?
 - i. Is there such thing as “lifestyle evangelism”?
 - ii. Is it possible for someone to come to faith in Christ by simply watching your example?
 - iii. If someone were to out of the blue ask you what you believe, what would you say? Would you be able to articulate your faith?
3. As Pastor Duncan noted, in regards to Jesus, there is no neutral ground. We are all worshipping something, and it is impossible to have two masters. Choosing to follow Christ is like going through a metal detector at the airport – The narrow path demands that we remove what hinders us (cf. Heb. 12:1-2) and leave the baggage behind.
 - a. If someone were to take an inventory of your priorities and how you spend your time, energy, money, etc, what would it reveal about who your true master is?
 - b. What “baggage” from the wide road are you trying to take with you on the narrow road?
 - i. Are there aspects from the road to destruction that you think aren’t that bad or are enjoyable?
 - ii. How can we change our mindset so that we believe that God’s path – with all its sacrifices and self-denial – is really the better way to go than the pleasure our culture offers?
4. What does it mean that we make God the Lord of every aspect of our lives? What would it look like if you lived your life the way Jesus would if he were in your shoes?
 - a. Do you believe that salvation ought to produce a changed life (Eph 2:10)?
 - b. Do you believe that God can help you to not only do what is right but give you a heart that desires and wants to imitate Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29)?