

## A choice of two roads

Life is full of choices. We choose our schools, careers, universities, spouses, churches, friends, and the list goes on. Sometimes we make good choices and sometimes bad choices. Bad choices aren't always the end of the road for us but they do have consequences. Some consequences are worse than others. Adam and Eve were given a choice in the Garden of Eden – obey God and resist the devil or give in to the devil and rebel against God. They unfortunately chose the latter leading to the consequence of them and the whole world being separated from God and becoming slaves to sin. Our moral choices today are no different. A choice to follow Christ or to follow the world would lead to eternal life or eternal death; a choice to resist alcohol or drugs or to drink alcohol or take drugs could lead to a life of freedom or bondage to being an alcoholic or a drug addict. We always have a choice which road we want to take.

Matthew 7:13-23 “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. <sup>14</sup> But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

<sup>15</sup> “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. <sup>16</sup> By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup> A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup> Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

<sup>21</sup> “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>22</sup> Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ <sup>23</sup> Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

### 1) The narrow and broad roads

- Jesus uses the imperative form of the verb when He says, “Enter through the narrow gate”.
  - Imperative means giving an authoritative command
- He then merely explains the wide gate and broad road as that which leads to destruction.
  - The reason for this is that we are born through the wide gate and are naturally on the broad road that leads to destruction.
  - We don't have to consciously enter it.
  - On the contrary many people on the broad road of destruction consider themselves to be good moral people.
  - It's not about how moral you are. It's about which road you're on.
- If you want to catch a bus to Polokwane but inadvertently get on a bus to Cape Town you will be disappointed when you get off at the wrong destination regardless of how many people you might have helped on the journey.
  - You might have bought someone food who didn't have food for the journey.
  - You might have helped an elderly person to the toilets at the stops.
  - You might have encouraged someone who was going through a depression.
  - However, when you get off the bus you are the one who would be disappointed when you find that you were on the wrong road leading to a destination that you didn't want to go to.
- The consequences of being on the wrong road are dire
  - The broad road where the world, self-centeredness, sin, religion, and all vices reign lead to eternal destruction
  - Revelation 20:11-15 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. <sup>13</sup> The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. <sup>14</sup> Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. <sup>15</sup> Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

- The cross of Christ is the small gate that leads to the narrow road that leads to life
  - John 10:7-9 Therefore Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture.
  - Colossians 1:13-14 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

## 2) Good and bad fruit

- Jesus doesn’t focus on all the sinfulness of the broad road, but on the godless religiosity thereon.
- The broad road is full of deceivers who are wolves in sheep’s clothing
  - Matthew 7:15 Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.
  - At first glance they look like true authoritative religious leaders who preach the truth and are godly leaders
  - Under closer scrutiny against the word of God we can recognize their true natures
- Marks of the bad fruit of wolves in sheep’s clothing
  - They want to be served rather than to serve. They enjoy the power of leadership.
    - Matthew 20:25-27 Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. <sup>26</sup> Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>27</sup> and whoever wants to be first must be your slave.
  - They are too proud to admit being wrong. They have no regard for truth
    - 2 Timothy 3:4-5 Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— <sup>5</sup> having a form of godliness but denying its power.
  - They manipulate people into getting what they want. They aren’t concerned about people. They use people for their own purposes and desires
    - 2 Timothy 3:6 They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over gullible women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires.
  - They don’t display the fruit of the Holy Spirit
    - Galatians 5:19-23 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; <sup>20</sup> idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions <sup>21</sup> and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.
  - They do works to their own glory rather than to the glory of God
    - Matthew 7:21-23 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>22</sup> Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ <sup>23</sup> Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

## 3) What then should we do?

- Check yourself to see if you’re on the narrow road to life
  - 2 Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you —unless, of course, you fail the test?
- Are you a true sheep on the narrow road to life, or a wolf in sheep’s clothing on the broad road to destruction?
  - Do you genuinely serve others or do you always want to be served?
  - Do you have a love for truth and admit it when you’re wrong?
  - Do you have a genuine love and concern for people or do you manipulate and use people to get what you want?
  - Do you display the fruit of the Spirit, or at least recognize your failings and repent therefrom when you don’t?
  - Is your life lived to the glory of God or for self-glory?