

## LIVING UPRIGHT IN AN UPSIDE-DOWN WORLD

### #20 – AVOID THE HIGHWAY TO HELL

**Intro:** Too many today are living a life of misery, a personal hell. Too many also are not aware of what will happen to them after they die. Jesus is the Way to avoid hell in our lives.

*(Jesus said) Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow is the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.*  
Matthew 7:13-14

#### **I. Choose The Right Road In Your Life**

**Avoid.....**

- **The Wide Gate** – An invitation to the lifestyle of the ways of the world, \_\_\_\_\_ of God. It's easy to see and easy to enter, just follow the crowds.
- **The Wide Road** – Living the journey of life in the ways of the \_\_\_\_\_, independent of God. It's where the action is. Everybody's doing it. Party like there's no tomorrow. Do your own thing. No one is going to tell you what to do.
- **The Wide Road's Ultimate Destination:** \_\_\_\_\_! Often destruction in this life. Also, ultimate destruction after death in Hell. Avoid this Highway to Hell.

**Instead Jesus says enter.....**

- **The Small Gate** – Jesus' invitation to connect to God and live in His kingdom through accepting Jesus Christ as the Son of God, your \_\_\_\_\_ and your Lord. It's hard to find because the crowd's not there. It's hard to enter because you have to give up control of your life and commit to God.
- **The Narrow Road** – Living and growing as a \_\_\_\_\_ in the Journey of Life. It's narrow and difficult because you're following God's will, rather than meandering through life doing what you "feel" like doing.
- **The Narrow Road's Ultimate Destination:** \_\_\_\_\_! In this life, it's the spiritual joy and blessings of Jesus' abundant life when we're living in God's will. In death, it's the unbelievably spectacular eternal life with God in Heaven – The Highway to Heaven.

*(Jesus said) Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus by their fruits will you recognize them.*  
Matthew 7:15-20

#### **II. Be a "Fruit" Inspector of Key Influencing People**

- **Warning: Watch Out For False** \_\_\_\_\_ – We need to be on our guard for the false prophets and teachers in our lives. A prophet is anyone who has influence in our life. Outside the Church, they can be friends, teachers, and culture. Within the Church they are

pseudo-Christians who do not teach or live biblical, Christian truth. Anyone who influences you is a potential false prophet.

- **How You Can Spot a False Prophet - \_\_\_\_\_!** Fruit is the result of “a prophet’s” life, teaching and influence. Is their fruit consistent with the life of Christ and the teaching of the whole counsel of the written word of God (the Bible)? Do their actions produce good, positive results over the long-term? If so, it’s good fruit. If not, it’s obviously bad fruit. Don’t mistake fruit you don’t like for “bad fruit.” You cannot tell through initial impressions. They seem great – sheep’s clothing.
- **Be a Fruit Inspector!** – Evaluate their \_\_\_\_\_ life and the results of their work and influences. Is it positive, good and Christian, or is it negative, destructive, and unchristian? Some “prophets” will initially look and sound Christian, but aren’t.

*(Jesus said) Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of My Father Who is in heaven. 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 perform many miracles?” Then I will tell them plainly, “I never knew you. Away from Me, you evildoers!”* Matthew 7:21-23

### **III. Look For the Fake Christian Within Yourself**

**Analyze yourself. Are you.....**

- **A False Professor** – You say you profess Christ as Savior and Lord, but it’s really not true. You have even fooled yourself. There are two types of false professors:
  - 1) Those who say the right words, may even attend church, but haven’t \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus as Savior and Lord.
  - 2) Those who say the right words, and do works for God, but they are trying to earn their way into Heaven by goodness and works, rather than God’s forgiveness through Jesus Christ’s death on the cross. (vs.22) (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- **A True Possessor** – You possess God’s forgiveness through accepting Jesus Christ as the Son of God and \_\_\_\_\_ (dying on the cross for your sins), and following Him (Lord). You still do works for God, not to win His favor but out of the love we have for Jesus, and gratitude for how He has sacrificed Himself for us.
- You may have fooled yourself and others, but Jesus knows the truth. We need to analyze ourselves to know. If we are “fakes”, we can accept Jesus today.

<p><b>Answers:</b> I. Independent; world; destruction; Savior; Christian; life. II. Prophets; fruit; whole. III. Trusted; Savior.</p>
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