

PARABLES: TWO DOORS; TWO ROADS; TWO FOUNDATIONS

Matthew 7:13-14, 24-26

Key-person: Jesus

Key-location: The mountain where Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount

Key-repetitions:

- The number two: two gates (Mat 7:13-14); two roads (Mat 7:13-14); two foundations (Mat 7:24-26).

Key-attitudes:

- Jesus' seriousness when he spoke.

Initial-Situation

After John the Baptist was arrested, Jesus chose twelve disciples to be with him. (*Jesus gave the name "apostles" to the twelve he chose.*) The disciples and a crowd followed Jesus up a mountain. Jesus sat down and taught the Sermon on the Mount.

Initial-problem:

During his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught that a wide door and an easy road lead to destruction; many take the easy road. A narrow door and a difficult road lead to life. Few find it.

Final-situation:

Jesus concluded his Sermon on the Mount by teaching: The person who hears and obeys Jesus' teachings is like a wise person who built his house upon the rock. A storm did not destroy the house. The person who hears Jesus' teachings and doesn't obey them is like a foolish person who built his house on sand. A storm destroyed the house.

BIBLE STORY

Jesus was near the end of his sermon when he said, "Enter through the narrow gate. A wide gate and an easy road lead to destruction; many travel it. A narrow gate and a hard road lead to life; few find it (Mat 7:13-14).

Jesus concluded his Sermon on the Mount by saying, "Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise person who built his house upon the rock. The rain poured down, the rivers flooded, and a wind blew against that house. Yet, it did not fall, because its foundation was built upon the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish person who built his house upon sand. The rain came down, the rivers flooded, a tornado blew against that house, and it fell with a great crash" (Mat 7:24-27).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between the two types of gates and the two types of roads?
2. Why is the easiest gate and road not the best ones to take?
3. What do people who build upon the sand have in common with people who build upon the rock?
4. What is the difference between life built upon sand and the one built upon rock?
5. What kinds of storms separate people with sandy foundations from people with rocky foundations?
6. It is politically correct to believe that every religion is good and should be respected. How can Christians communicate that only two classes of people exist from God's viewpoint?
7. In this stage of our lives, is our greatest need to learn more or to practice more of what we know?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **Some beliefs permit believers to believe and do anything they desire; Christianity restricts what a person can believe and do.** The wide road permits travelers to wander and do whatever they want and go wherever they want; the narrow path requires travelers to follow God's will (Mat 7:13, 21).
2. **The sinful lifestyle is wide open to all.** The wide gate indicates that hell's gates are wide open to everybody (Mat 7:13).
3. **Only people who are willing to follow and obey Jesus can enter God's Kingdom.** The narrow gate symbolizes the exclusive nature of Christ's Kingdom. It is only open to those willing to do the will of the Father in heaven (Mat 7:14, 21).
4. **Only people who build their lives on Jesus' teachings are spiritually and morally wise.** Jesus taught that wise people will build their lives according to his teachings (Mat 7:24-27).
5. **Jesus' followers are not protected from crisis experiences. They are protected from crashing when they face crisis experiences.** Both houses experienced the storm. The house built on the rock didn't crash when it experienced the storm (Mat 7:24-27).

6. **God’s guideline for determining if a person is wise or foolish is determined by a person’s response to Jesus’ teaching.** The parable of the wise and foolish builders teaches that wise people choose to obey Jesus’ teachings (Mat 7:24-27).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. **Role-playing Drama:**

The storyteller tells the story once. Then the storyteller designates two people to stand in front of listeners and dramatize the story while he retells it.

- One dramatizes the narrow gate, hard road, and house built upon rock.
- The other dramatizes the wide gate, easy road, and house built upon sand.

2. **Chant:**

Words in **bold and underlined** are stressed. Stress words by stretching them out instead of increasing volume.

| Matthew 7:13-14 | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Group 1 | Group 2 |
| Enter through the <u>narrow</u> gate. | Enter the narrow gate. |
| For <u>wide</u> is the gate and <u>broad</u> is the road that leads to destruction. | Wide and broad – the road to <u>destruction</u> . |
| And <u>many</u> enter through it. | Many, many, many – <u>enter</u> the road to destruction. |
| But <u>small</u> is the gate and <u>narrow</u> the road that leads to life. | Small, narrow – the road to <u>life</u> . |
| And only a <u>few</u> find it. | Few, few, few, <u>find</u> the road to life. |
| Everybody | |
| “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 the road that leads to life, and only a few find it” (Mat 7:13-14 NIV). | |