

## **Life or Destruction: Choose Your Path**

### **Matthew 7:7-12**

We are continuing through the book of Matthew, the first book of the New Testament. We are in chapter 7, and I just want to remind you that chapter 7 is a continuation of the teachings of Jesus that began back in chapter 5. All the lessons that we have been learning for the past 14 weeks have come from this single powerful sermon that Jesus gave when he went up into a mountain to be able to teach a great multitude of people that followed him. That's why chapters 5 – 7 are commonly known as the Sermon on the Mount. Imagine being up in a mountain looking down at all the people and preaching boldly to them. That's what Jesus did.

Just as Jesus went up into a high place to be able to see all the people and teach them, sometimes it's good to take a step back so you can see the big picture of where you've been and where you're going, both when you're reading the Bible, and in life. When you're traveling with a GPS, sometimes you want to zoom out to see what lies ahead on your journey. I want you to think about the Bible as the ultimate road map or GPS for your life. This book has all the instructions and all the answers we need to live a successful life and more importantly how to get to Heaven. I want to take a minute to zoom out and see what we've been learning so far from this powerful sermon on the mount that Jesus taught, and also what's coming up on the road ahead.

This is a complete view of the sermon on the mount. It consists of three chapters, starting at Chapter 5 all the way to the end of Chapter 7. We started studying chapter 5 on March 23. So it has been over 3 months that we have been learning from this sermon. That shows you how deep God's Word is.

So far we have studied 92 out of the 107 verses, so we have 15 verses left. I want to do a quick recap of all the lessons we have learned so far from Jesus' sermon. Starting in Matthew 5, we had 8 Sunday School lessons. The verses are on the left in blue, and the title of the lesson that goes along with those verses are on the right.

#### **Verses 1-12 | The Blessed Life: Becoming Who Jesus Wants You To Be**

We talked about 8 attributes that Jesus wants us to have to live a blessed life. Those are spiritual attributes that a true follower of Christ should have.

#### **Verses 13-16 | Salt and Light: Living an Impactful Christian Life**

We learned how we need to be the salt that preserves truth and adds Godly flavor to this world. Letting our lives shine brightly pointing others to Jesus Christ and glorifying God.

#### **Verses 17-18 | The Law Fulfilled – Not Forgotten**

Jesus did not come to tear down or abolish the law. He came to perfectly fulfill it for us so He could be the payment for our sins.

**Verses 19-20 | Zero Righteousness: Why the Pharisees are Burning**

Jesus said your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Some people think that's hard, but they actually have zero righteousness. That's why we need the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

**Verses 21-26 | Murder in the Heart – The Spirit of the Law**

We learned that the law of God is deeper than it appears on the surface. Murder is not just an outward physical act. We need to purge the anger and hatred that causes us to murder in our hearts and minds.

**Verses 27-32 | Till Death Do Us Part: Lust, Divorce, and Eternal Consequences**

Jesus taught us that just like murder—lust, adultery, and divorce begin in the heart. We are called to fight temptation fiercely, honor marriage, and stay committed for life.

**Verses 38-48 | The Mark of a True Son**

Jesus shows us what it really looks like to be a child of God—not someone who just claims the name, but someone who wears the mark of their Father.

**Matthew 6 – 4 lessons**

**Verses 1-8 | They Have Their Reward**

Jesus warns against sounding a trumpet when we serve God. If you do things to be seen of men, then the only reward that you will receive is that praise from man. You're going to lose out on rewards from your Father in Heaven.

**Verses 9-13 | The Prayer That God Always Answers**

Jesus warns against praying with vain repetitions. And shows us the right way to pray to our Father in Heaven. Asking for His will to be done.

**Verses 14-18 | Forgiveness That Doesn't Save**

Jesus teaches that we must forgive others to be forgiven by God. Not to earn salvation, but to maintain a good relationship with our Father in Heaven.

**Verses 19-34 | Seek To Survive or Seek To Thrive**

We must seek the kingdom of God first in our lives, laying up treasures in heaven where moth and rust does not corrupt and where thieves do not break in and steal. God will provide for all our needs when we seek Him first.

### **Matthew 7 – 5 Lessons**

#### **Verses 1-6 | Don't Judge Me**

Jesus warns against unrighteous judgement. We must examine ourselves and remove sin from our own life before we try to point out sin in other people's lives. We must judge righteously using God's Word and not our own opinion.

#### **Verses 7-12 | Asking For The Right Things**

God wants us to ask for things in our life, but not for physical possessions that satisfy our flesh. We are to ask for spiritual things that bring glory and honor to God.

#### **Verses 13-14 | Life or Destruction: Choose Your Path**

#### **Verses 15-23 | The Fruit of the Wicked**

#### **Verses 24-29 | In One Ear, Out the Other**

I'm doing this recap not only to remind you of what we've already learned, but to also show you that every verse and chapter of the Bible is filled with specific instructions for us.

Just like a map or GPS instructs you on which direction to go, the Bible gives you very clear instructions on how to live your life, how to please God, and how to find everlasting life.

If someone had a book that they claimed would show you how to become a billionaire in one week, and they were selling it for \$10, I guarantee you that book would sell millions of copies and people would be lining up for it. Meanwhile the Bible guarantees you a way to obtain everlasting life and great treasures in heaven, it's like the greatest treasure map ever made and its 100% free, yet nobody even wants to touch it.

Think about that for a second, when people have questions in life, we are quick to turn to our phones, quick to turn to google, or ChatGPT, AI, we are quick to look for answers in all the wrong places. When all the answers we need are found right here in this book.

Every single day you have to make decisions and choices on which direction you are going to go in life.

You can choose to stay in bed, and get nothing done all day long, or you can choose to get up and go to work.

You can choose to eat healthy food or unhealthy food. You can choose to keep company with wicked people, or to keep company with good people.

You have all these different choices that you can make, and those choices are going to dictate what path you are on and what direction you are headed in.

""**Matthew 7:13-14** Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: **14** Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.""

There are two different paths you can take in life. There is a broad way, and a narrow way.

One leads to destruction, and one leads to life. You might say "That's easy, I'm just going to choose the path that leads to life". And it is easy to say that, but the truth is that the majority of people choose the broad way.

Why do people choose the broad way? Jesus tells us in John 3.

""**John 3:19-20** And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. **20** For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. ""

The reason that people choose the broad way is because men love darkness more than they love light.

People love the pleasures of sin, they love the feelings they have in their flesh. They love to satisfy their senses. They love to stay in the dark so they are not seen. They do not want to be reprov'd or told what they are doing is wrong.

The truth is that sin is fun, sin feels good. Sin satisfies you in the moment.

""**Hebrews 11:24-25** By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; **25** Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;""

So even the Bible states that sin is pleasurable. You will enjoy the pleasures of sin, but only for a season. Only for a short time...

The world has a YOLO mindset. You Only Live Once. This YOLO mentality says, "Do what feels good in this moment", "Follow your heart's desires", "Get all that YOU can get right now", "Live it Up", "Party", "Take risks", "Have all the fun you can have!"

Everything is focused on yourself, and gratifying YOUR flesh.

This is the broad way. This is the road that the large crowd is taking. They think that fun and pleasures are ahead of them. It looks intriguing. It's tempting to walk with the rest of the crowd. That's the direction the majority is taking so it must be the right way. Right?

""**James 1:14-15** But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. **15** Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.""

So that YOLO mentality, that broad way that everyone is taking, it leads to death and destruction every single time. You might think to yourself, "Things are going pretty good for me right now. I'm enjoying the drugs, I'm enjoying the alcohol, I'm enjoying the sex outside of marriage. I'm enjoying these things right now. I don't see any need to stop what I'm doing."

I promise you death is coming, and it will come swiftly when you least expect it.

""**Proverbs 14:12** There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.""

There are millions upon millions of examples of sin bringing death and destructions into people's lives.

All you have to do is open your eyes and take a look around you. Why do you think this city is the way it is? Why do you think there is poverty, why do you think there is suffering, murders, thefts, assaults, drunkards on the streets, homelessness. Why do you think these things are going on around you?

"Because sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." People love sin and they don't want to stop.

As long as you love sin, the liquor stores will stay open, the drugs will keep flowing, the teenagers will keep shooting each other, the physical and mental abuse will continue, families will continue to be broken and shattered.

The death and destruction will not stop until people choose to get on the strait and narrow way that leads to life.

You have to make that choice for yourself. You can follow the crowd. You can stay on that path that looks fun but will lead to your demise, or you can jump off that path right now and walk the path that leads to blessings and everlasting life.

""**John 3:20-21** For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. **21** But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.""

The crowd hates the light, that's why they gather in the darkness to sin together, but if you love truth and life, then you will let the light expose your deeds.

Let God's Word reveal the sin in you, so that your deeds will be made known that they are worked in God and not in your flesh.

**""Ephesians 2:1-6** And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; **2** Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: **3** Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. **4** But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, **5** Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) **6** And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus:""

All of us were on that road to destruction at one point in our lives. We were dead in our sins, our body and our soul was on the wide path to hell...

But God, who is rich in mercy loved us and made us alive through faith in Jesus Christ.

Your new man is now on that strait and narrow path that is leading to everlasting life, and the good news is that your soul will never leave that path.

So the question the question I have for you this morning is...

Now that've chosen the strait and narrow, are you trying to get back to the other side?

*(Picture of Man trying to get back to the wide path)*

Your soul is saved if you believe, but your flesh will be destroyed if you try to walk in the middle.

Don't sit on the fence, because when you lean too far into sin, you will fall on the other side into death.

You cannot serve both God and your flesh. Your body will be destroyed; it's a promise from God...

**""1 Corinthians 5:1** It is reported commonly *that there is* fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife..."

**""1 Corinthians 5:2-5** And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. **3** For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath so done this deed, **4** In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my

spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, **5** To deliver such an one unto Satan for the **destruction of the flesh**, that the spirit **may be saved** in the day of the Lord Jesus.""

The church was told to not fellowship with this man, because he was living in sin and had no desire to change at the time. Paul told them, through the Holy Spirit, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the **destruction of the flesh**, that the spirit **may be saved** in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Sin is very serious and God hates it. He does not want members in the church to be influenced by the sin of other church members. God can and will take the life of a believer if they are going to hurt other people in the church. Sin spreads like an uncontrollable wildfire.

""**1 Corinthians 3:15-17** If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. **16** Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? **17** If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.""

When you believe in Jesus Christ, you become the temple of the Living God. His Holy Spirit is inside of you right now. Understand what that means. God is so holy, the eyes of man cannot look at God without being consumed by His glory.

That perfect Spirit of God is inside of you. How do you think God feels when you defile His temple with sin? He's not going to be happy...

""**Colossians 3:5-6** Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: **6** For which things' sake the **wrath of God** cometh on the **children of disobedience**:""

God has more patience and longsuffering than you can ever imagine.  
But eventually He says that's enough.

So don't let yourself get to that point. Now that your soul is saved, it's time to walk in newness of life.

Keep your flesh on the strait and narrow path by crucifying it daily.

""**Galatians 2:20** I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.""

""**Romans 6:6** Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.""

## Closing Thoughts

In Matthew 7:13-14, Jesus is commanding us to enter in at the strait gate. The way is narrow and it leads to life. Or you can follow the crowd, (it's a very large crowd). It's easy to blend in with the world and just go along with what everyone else is doing. They are on a broad and wide path that is leading straight for death and destruction. Make your choice today.

**""Deuteronomy 30:19** I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: ""

Who here wants to live a long, blessed, and fulfilling life?

God has set before you two options. Which one will you choose?

**""Proverbs 8:32** Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed *are they that keep my ways.* ""

**""Psalm 119:1-3.** Blessed *are* the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. **2** Blessed *are* they that keep his testimonies, *and that* seek him with the whole heart. **3** They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways. ""

Ask God to teach you His paths—He will help you stay on that strait and narrow way.

**""Psalm 25:4-5** Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. **5** Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day. ""

Maybe you're thinking, "But the pleasures of sin are too good to let go." Just remember those pleasures are very short lived, and they will lead to death.

God has given us a way to fulfil every desire we have through his perfect design. Your cravings and desires will never be satisfied when you try to fulfil them yourself...

But when you do things God's way, your flesh and soul will be satisfied more than you can ever imagine.

I promise you. Who do you think is better at fulfilling your flesh. Do you think you are better at it, or do you think God who created you to have desires is better?

**""Psalm 16:11** Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore. ""

Do you want pleasures that last for a moment and lead to destruction, or do you want pleasures that last for evermore? I promise you, you are missing out big time when you try to do things your way. It's not even close to what God gives you.



# **TRUE WORDS**

## **Baptist Church**

Revelation 21:5 

Sunday School

6 July 2025

So as you go from here today, remember what you have in your possession. You have a perfect GPS that will never steer you in the wrong direction. You have the ultimate treasure map, an uncorrupted instruction manual, that is leading you to true happiness, blessings, and everlasting life. Follow the instructions in here diligently and you will not be disappointed. Stay with us and follow our example as we follow the Bible. We're going to do our best to teach you the ways of God.

Believe on Jesus Christ, and stay on that strait and narrow way that leads to life. Let's Pray.