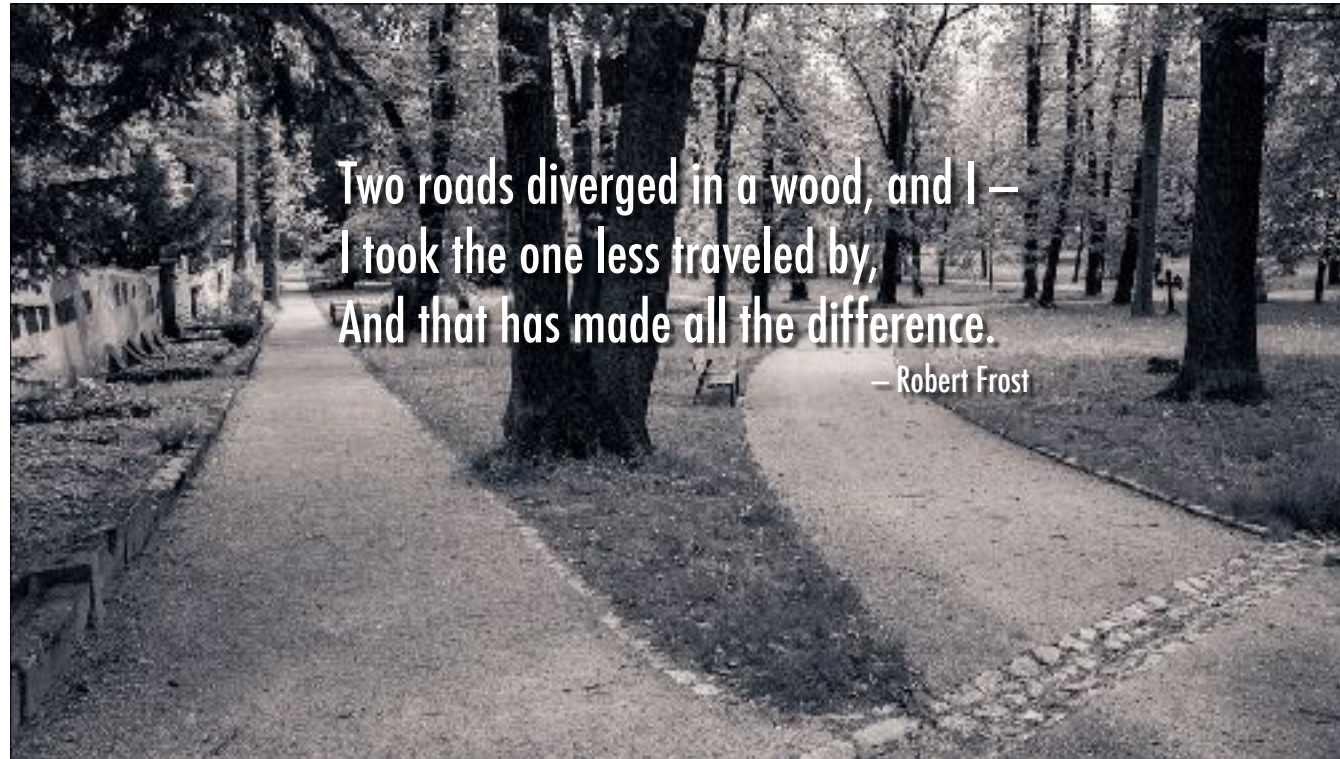


- The Road Not Taken - ROBERT FROST



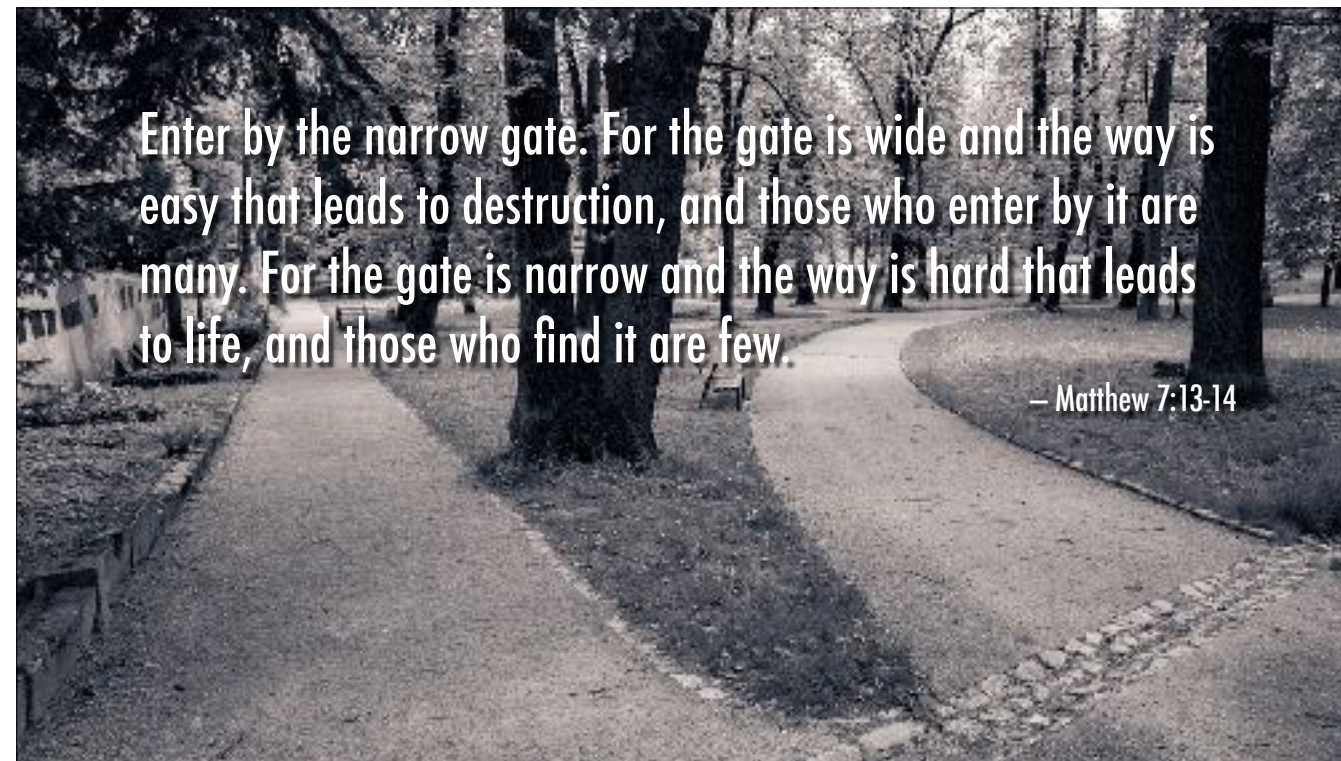
- Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, And sorry I could not travel both And be one traveler, long I stood And looked down one as far as I could To where it bent in the undergrowth;
- Then took the other, as just as fair, And having perhaps the better claim, Because it was grassy and wanted wear; Though as for that the passing there Had worn them really about the same,



Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

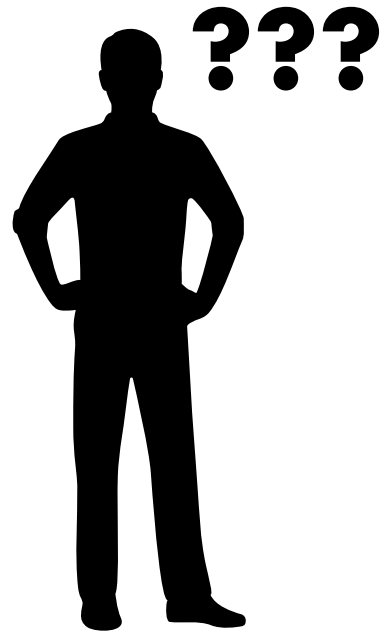
— Robert Frost

- And both that morning equally lay In leaves no step had trodden black. Oh, I kept the first for another day! Yet knowing how way leads on to way, I doubted if I should ever come back.
- I shall be telling this with a sigh Somewhere ages and ages hence: Two roads diverged in a wood, and I— I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference.



- Matthew 7:13-14 (ESV) 13 “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

**Choosing the Path of
True Righteousness**
Matthew 7:13-27

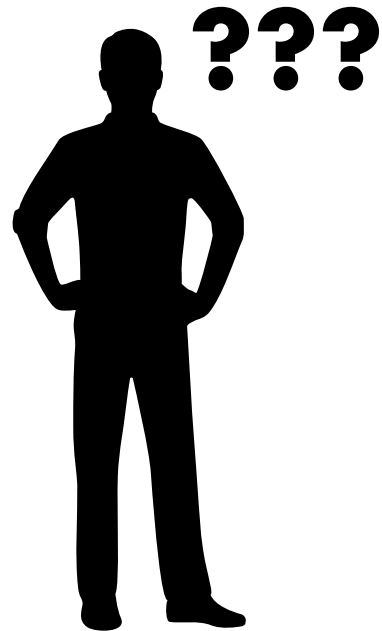


{ The Scribes and the Pharisees
sit on Moses' seat

{ the crowds were astonished
at his teaching

- Matthew 23:2 “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat,
- Matthew 7:28-29 And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, 29 for he was teaching them as one who had **authority**, and **not as their scribes**.
- They aren't teaching exactly the same thing about God and righteousness.

**Choosing the Path of
True Righteousness**
Matthew 7:13-27



{ The Scribes and the Pharisees
sit on Moses' seat

{ the crowds were astonished
at his teaching

- Who do I listen to? Who's teaching the truth?
- How do we deal with such a dilemma in our lives?
 - Some may just stick with what they know.
 - Some may eagerly accept what is new (sometimes just because it is new).
 - Some may decide it's too difficult to decide
- All of us have a very similar dilemma.

**Choosing the Path of
True Righteousness**
Matthew 7:13-27



choose this day whom you will serve

- Joshua 24:14-15 (ESV Strong's) 14 “Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. 15 And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

**Choosing the Path of
True Righteousness**
Matthew 7:13-27



choose this day whom you will serve

I have set before you
life and death ...
therefore choose life
Deuteronomy 30:19

- Deuteronomy 30:19-20 (ESV Strong's) 19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, 20 loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”

**Choosing the Path of
True Righteousness**
Matthew 7:13-27



choose this day whom you will serve

How long will you go
limping between two
different opinions?
1 Kings 18:21

- 1 Kings 18:21 (ESV) 21 And Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.” And the people did not answer him a word.

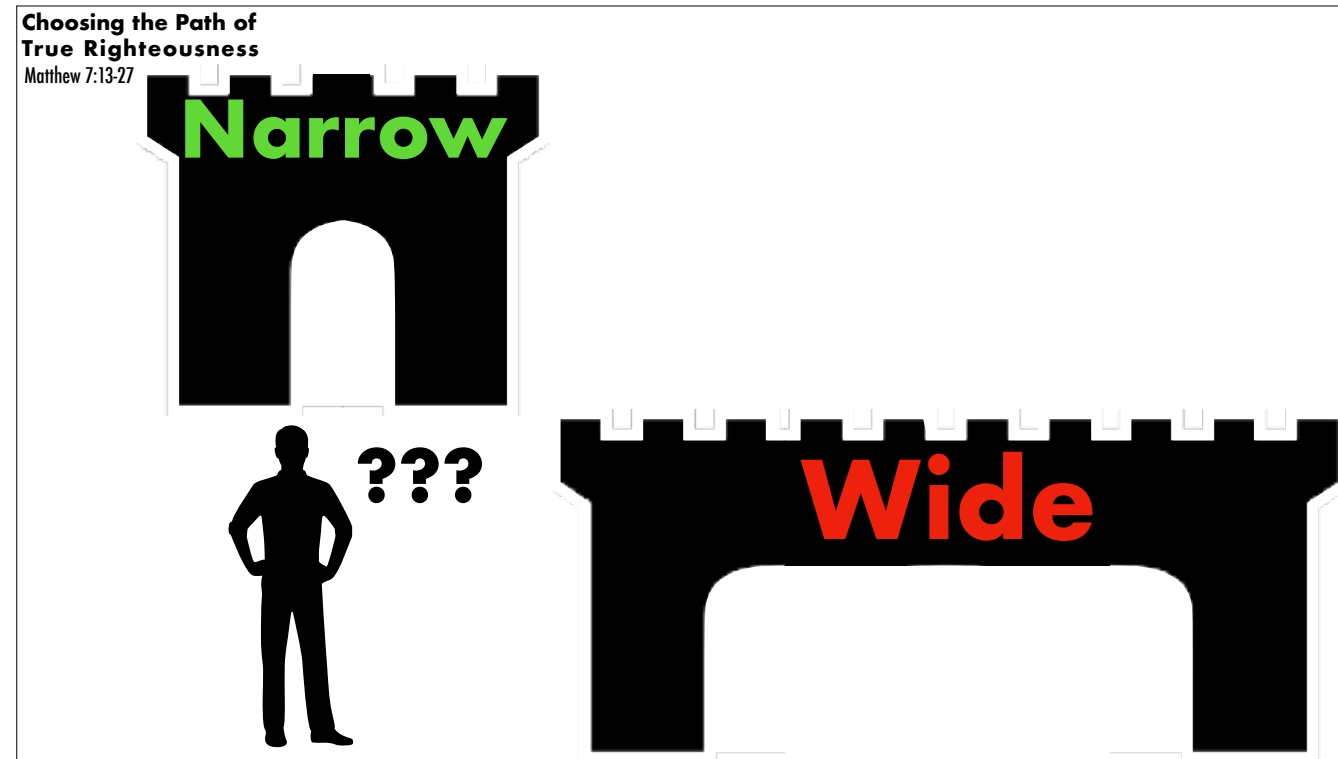
**Choosing the Path of
True Righteousness**
Matthew 7:13-27



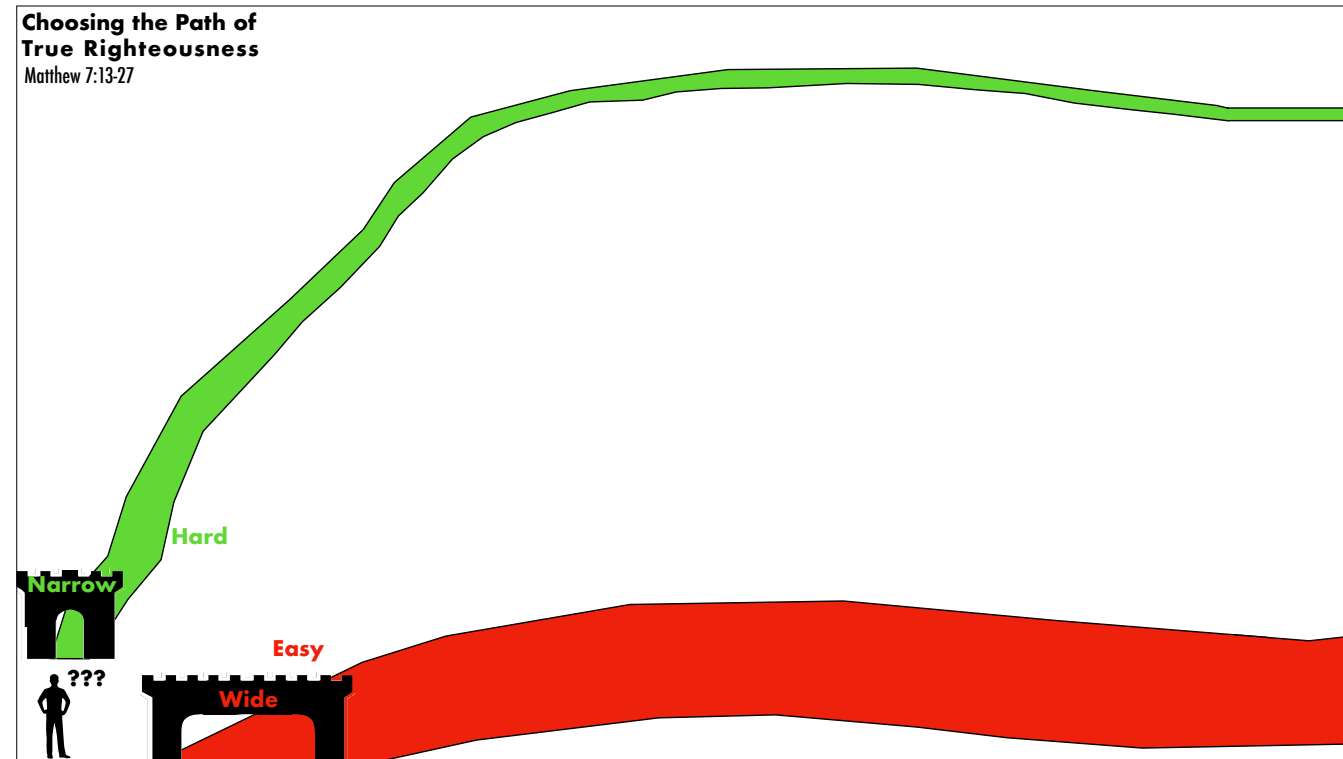
choose this day whom you will serve

How long will you go
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1 Kings 18:21

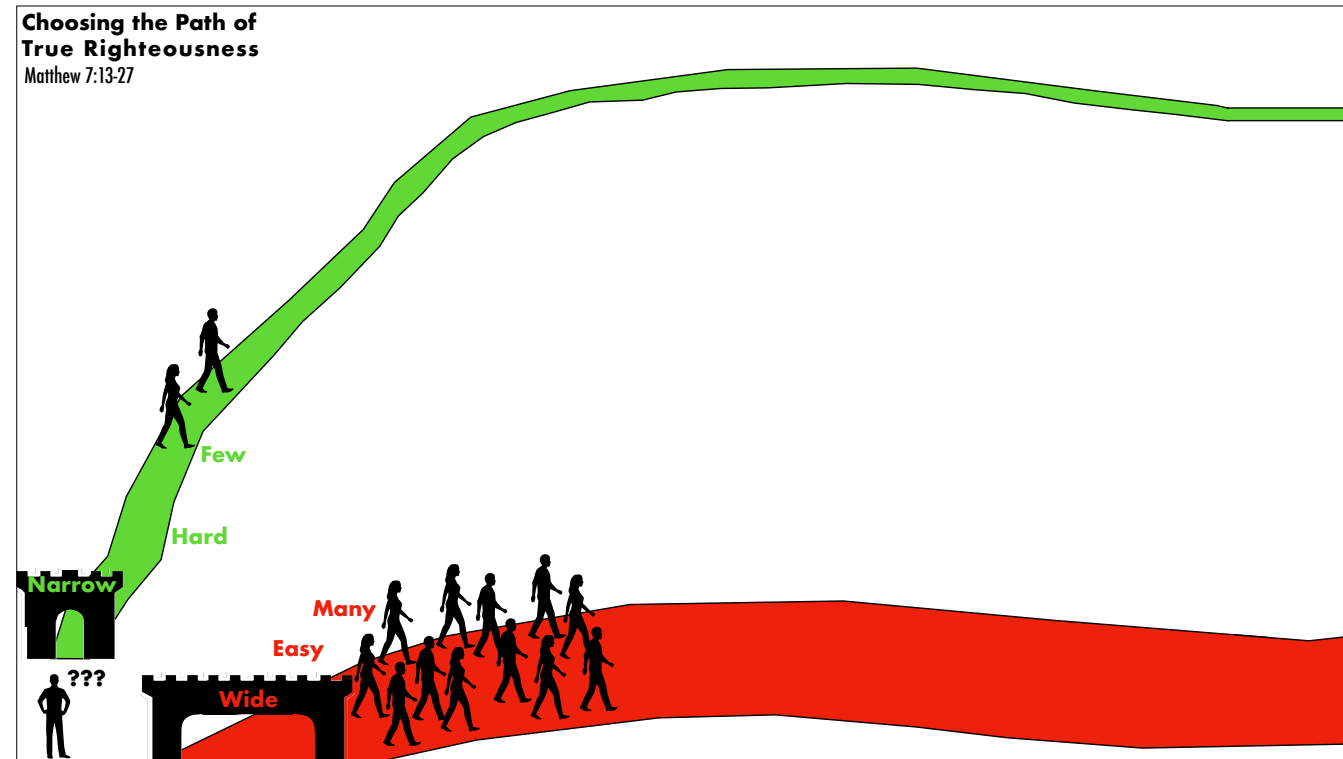
- Jesus is going to help us make this choice... just like God did for Israel.



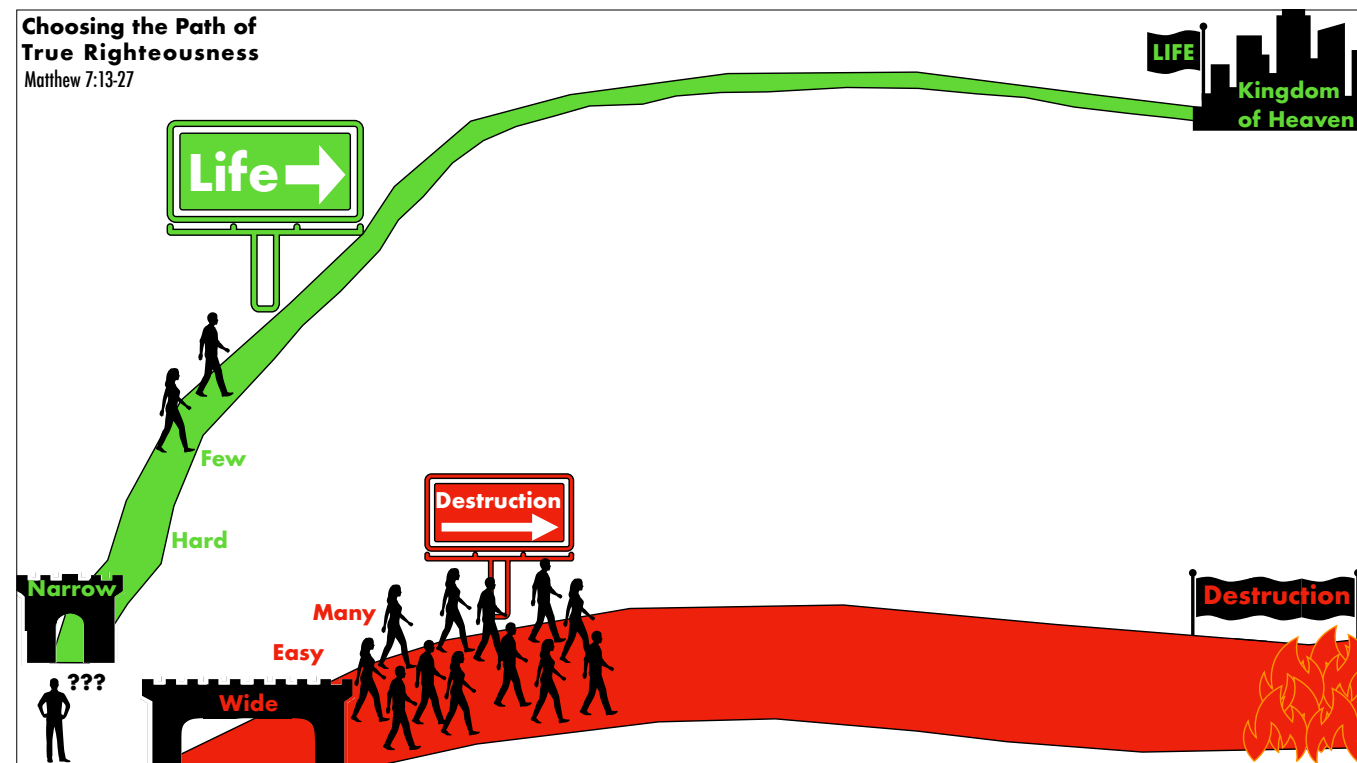
- 13: Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide
 - Wide is more inviting, seems like it's welcoming and right
- 14 For the gate is narrow
 - Narrow may seem forbidding, scary, different



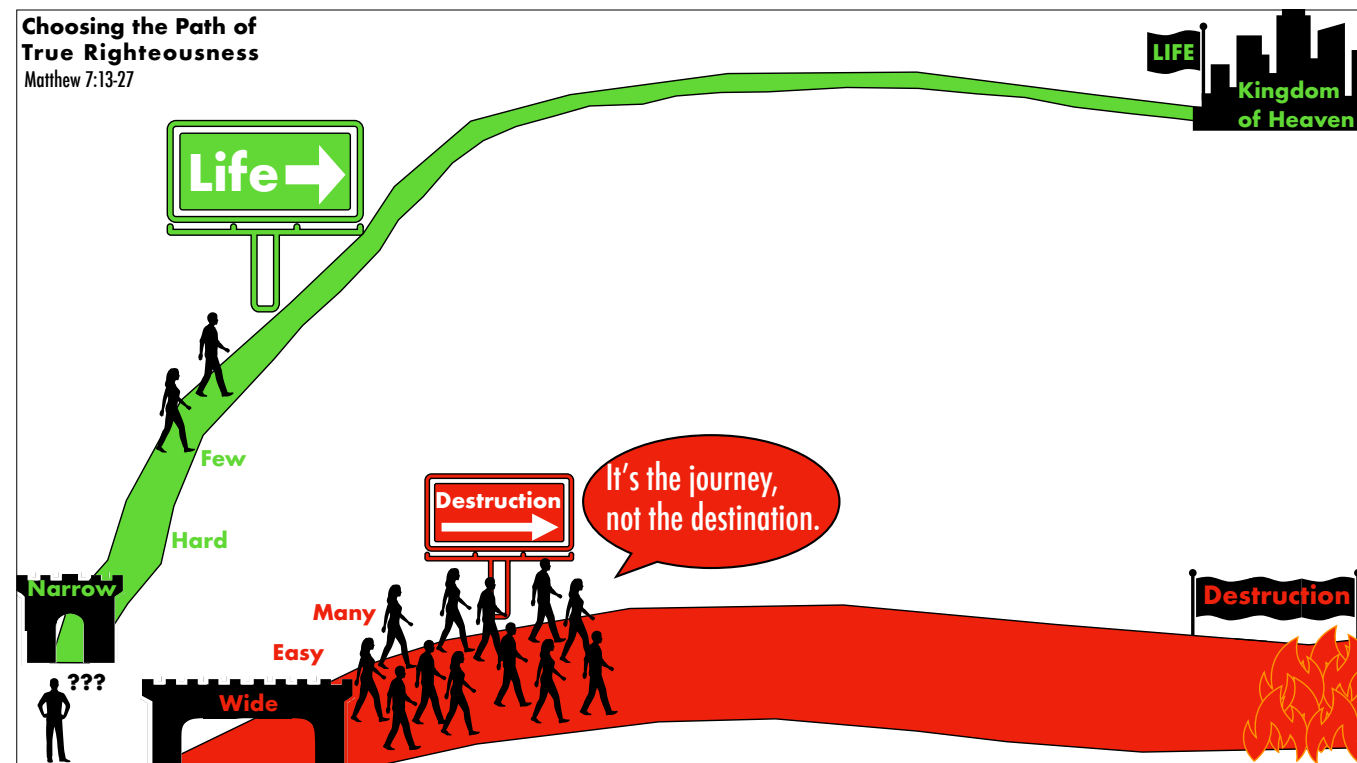
- 13 For the gate is wide and the way is easy
- 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard
- Given the choice, most of us will choose an easy way, not a hard way. Why?
 - It's easy.



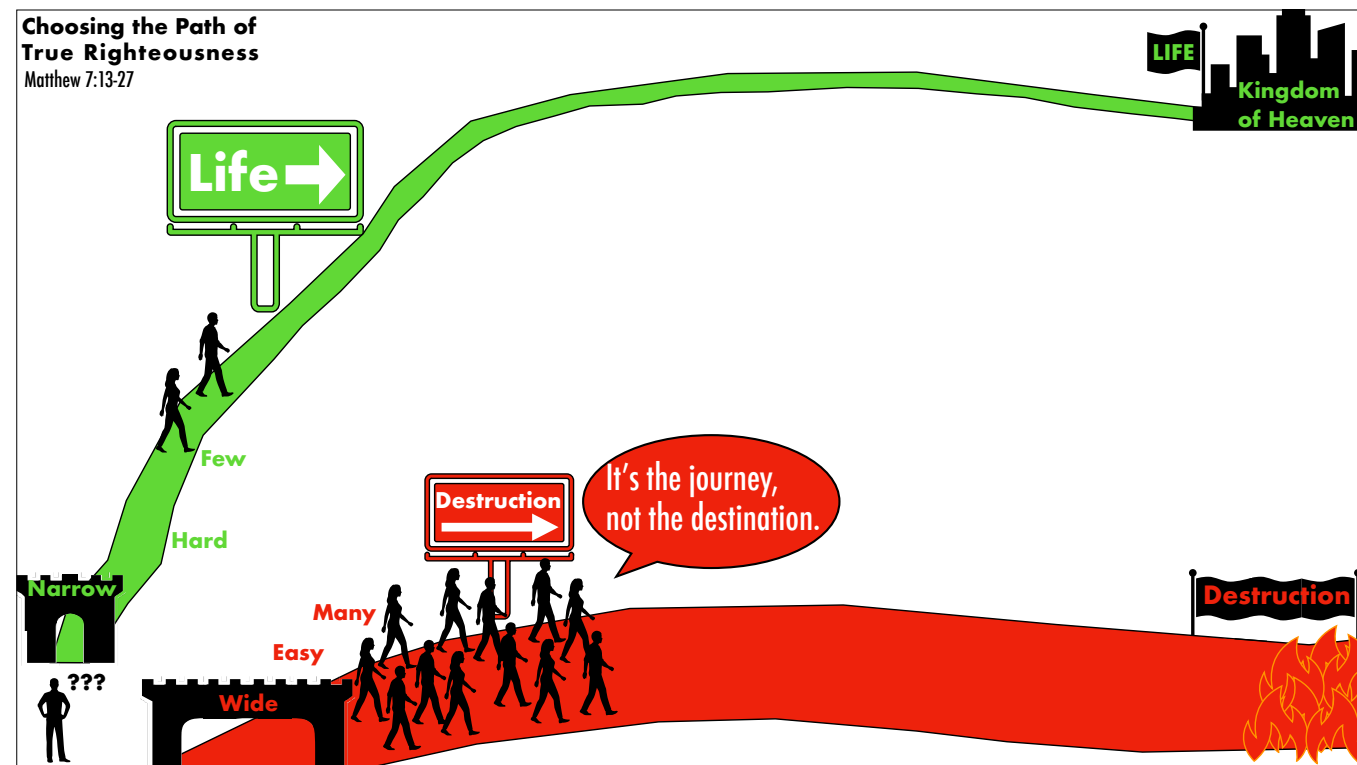
- 13: those who enter by it are many.
- 14: those who find it are few.
- We tend to follow a crowd, assuming that the majority are right.
- Often when there are only a few, we assume they are wrong, or misguided, etc.



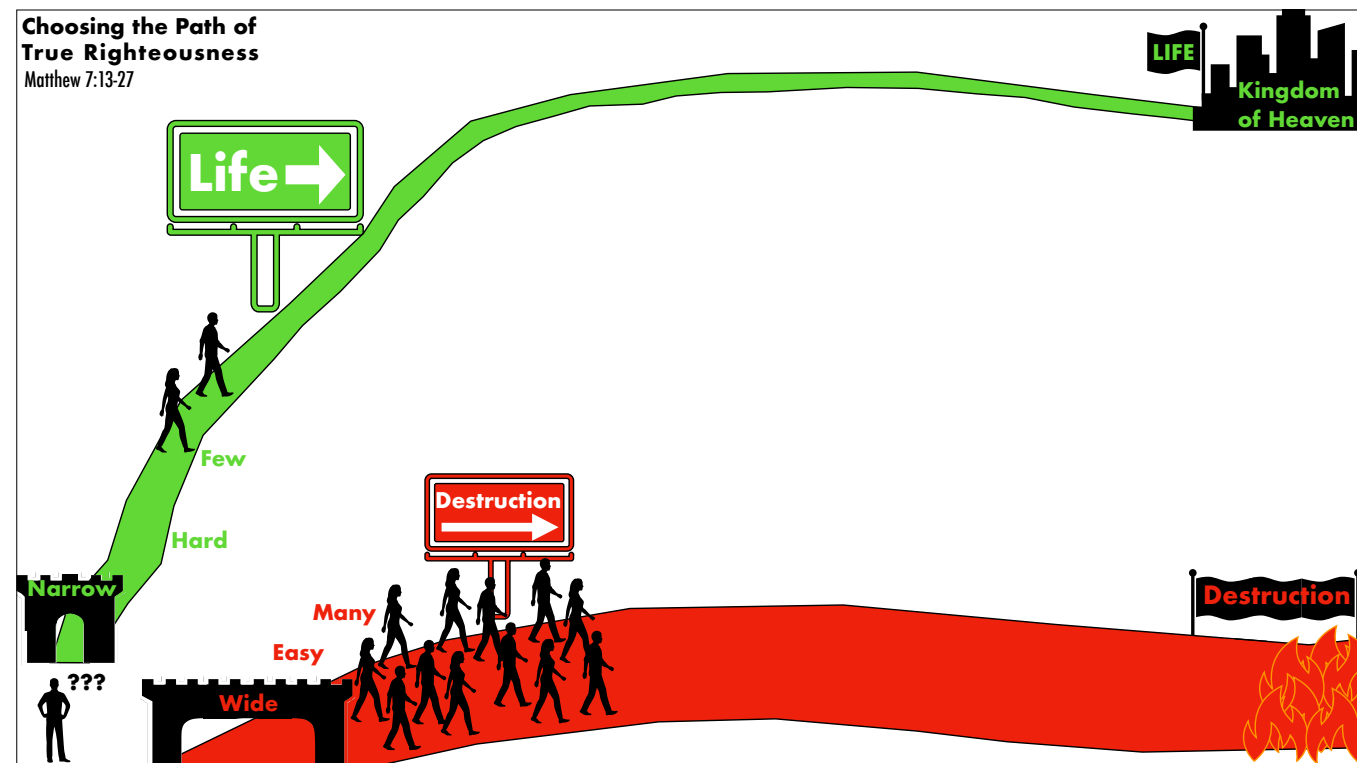
- 13 leads to destruction
- 14 leads to life
- Does this help you choose a path?
- Reminds us that this is serious! (life and death)
- This is not about picking a philosophy of life; how to have a better life; nice ideas; being a good person
- Consequences - eternal



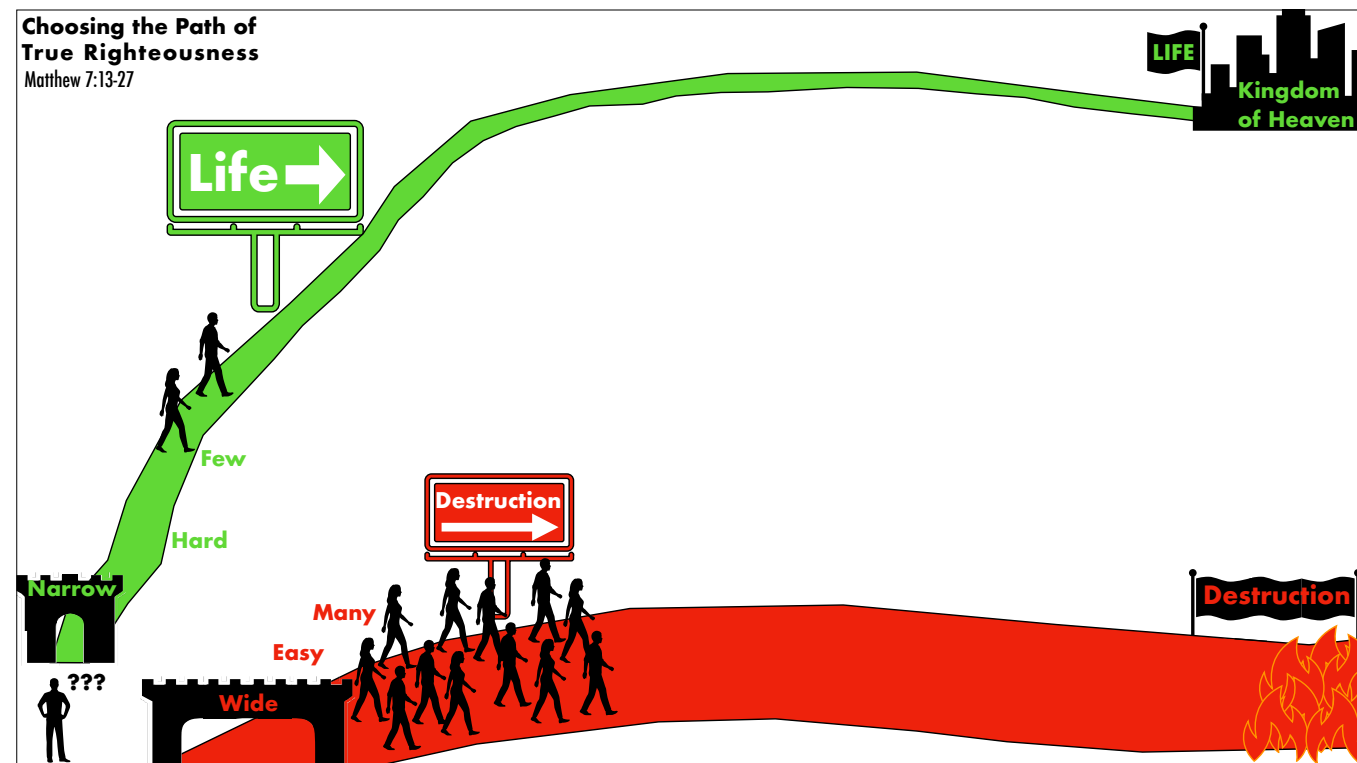
- World: “It’s the journey, not the destination.”
 - enjoying what one is doing at the moment, live in the now.
 - don’t be so focused on what is ahead that we miss the current moment
 - That philosophy would land one squarely on the wide, easy path
 - destination: destruction doesn’t really matter?



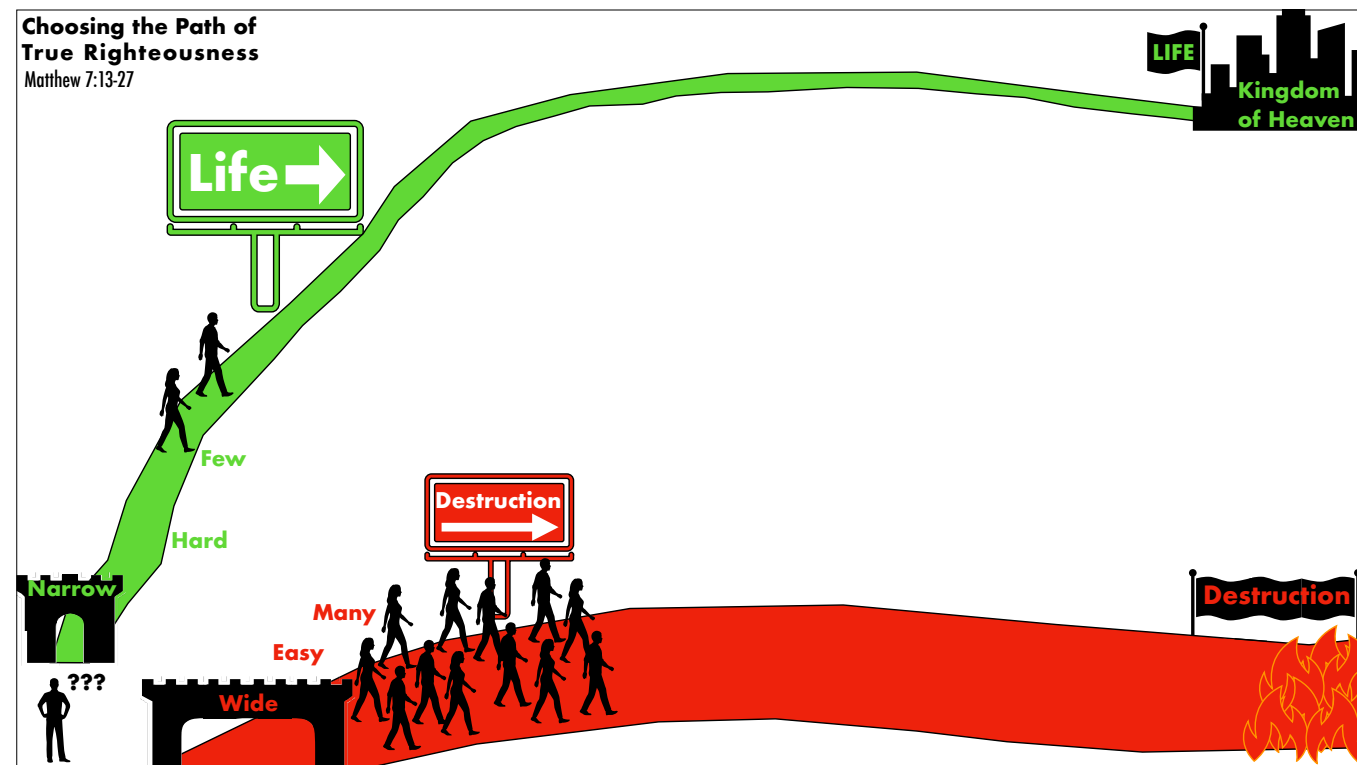
- paths are not ends in themselves
 - have eternal significance beyond themselves
 - the paths destination is of ultimate significance.
- Must look beyond the path itself.



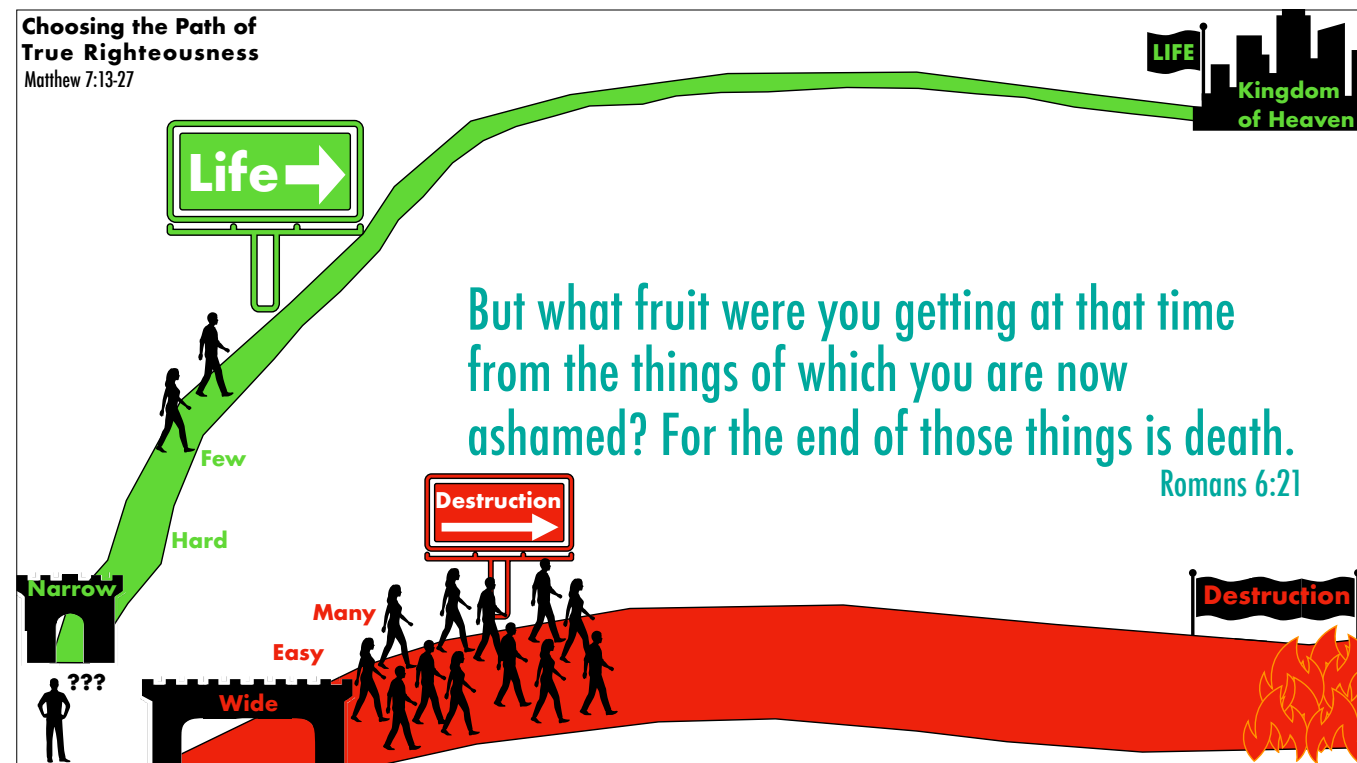
- wide, broad -- leads to destruction
 - wide path is deceptive
 - best, fastest, easiest, most welcome way to go
 - continually, gently, imperceptibly, slopping downward
 - Not enough that you would notice
 - But there's not straining, no striving, no difficulty



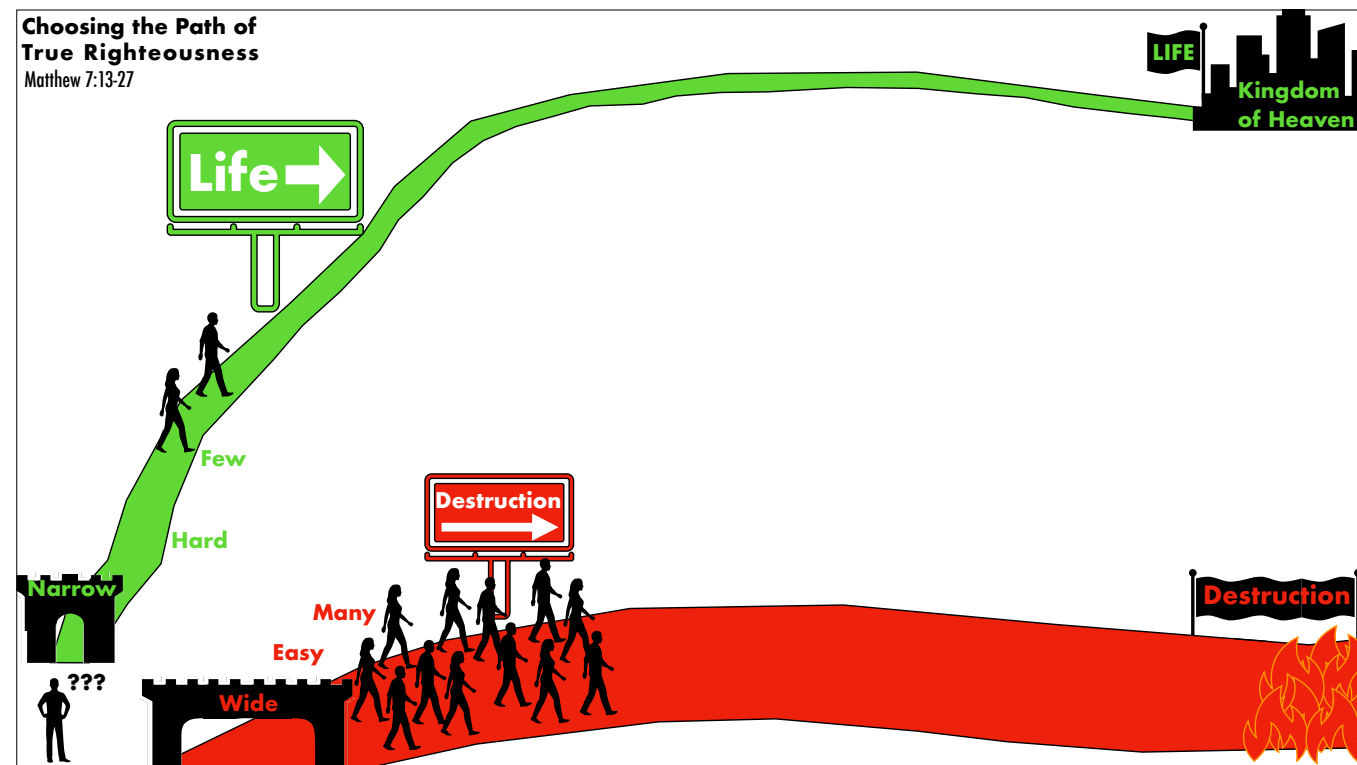
- Plenty to go along with you
- Distracting
- If things are going to easy, watch out maybe you're on the wrong path.
- There is plenty of room on it for diversity of opinions and laxity of morals.
- It is the road of tolerance and permissiveness.
- It has no curbs, no boundaries of either thought or conduct.



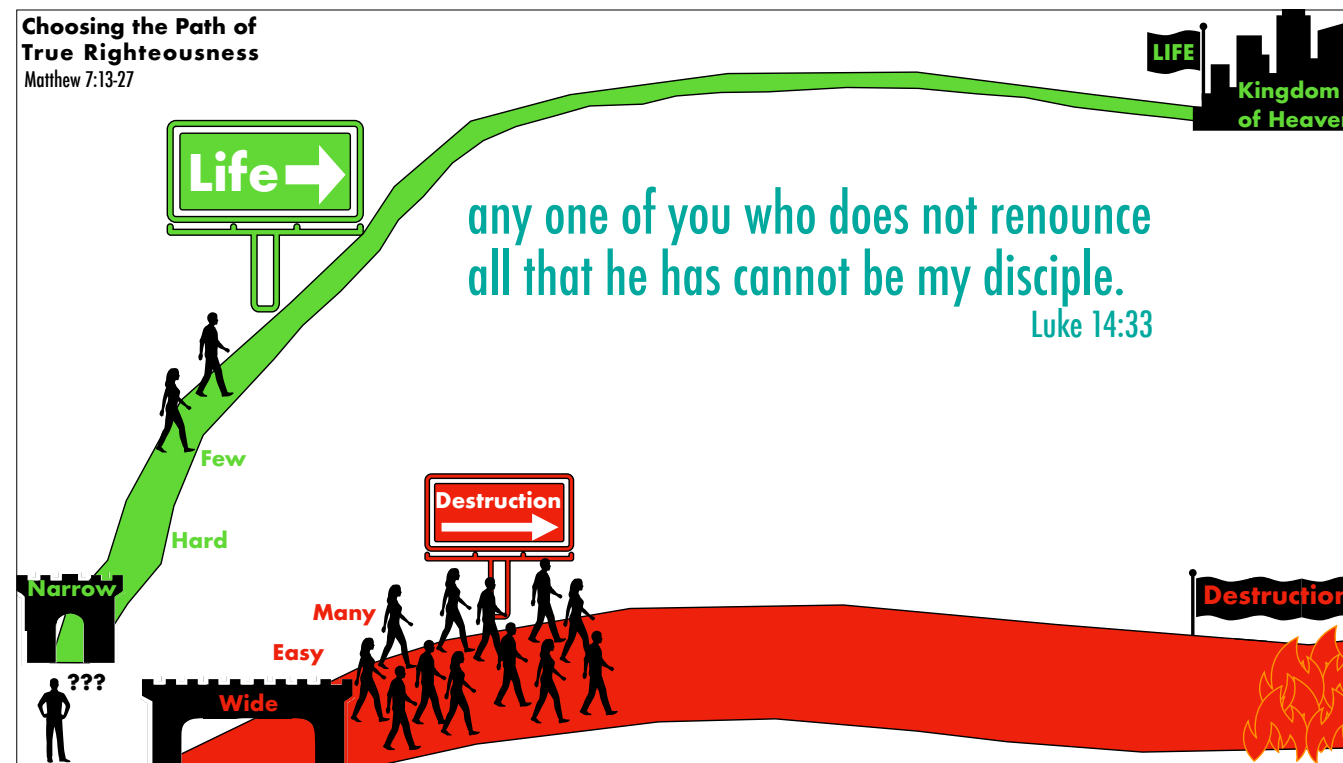
- It is a simple matter to get on the easy road.
 - no limit to the luggage we can take with us
 - We need leave nothing behind, not even our sins, self-righteousness or pride.



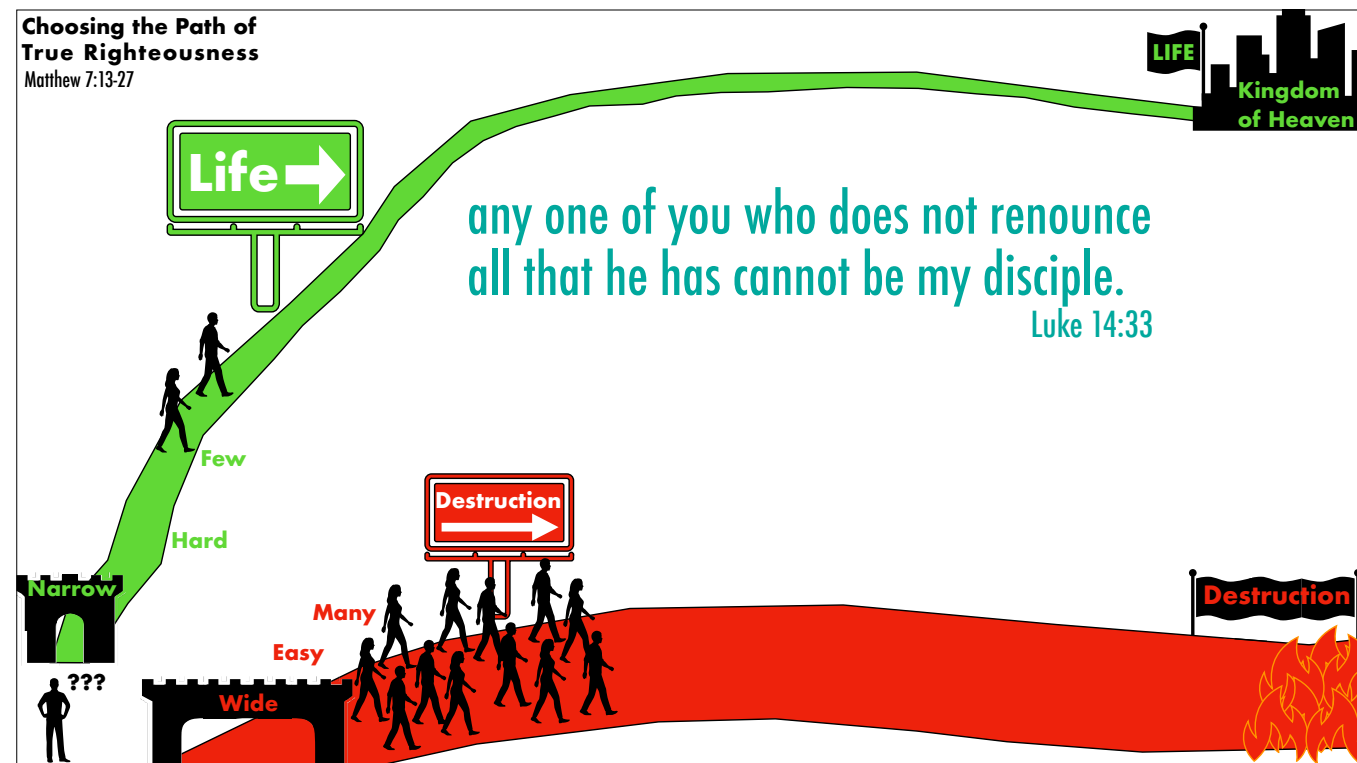
- Romans 6:21: But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.



- narrow, hard -- leads to life
 - must leave everything behind -- sin, selfishness, covetousness, family, friends. Deny self
 - Counting the Cost:
 - Luke 14:25-33



- Luke 14:25-35: Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, 26 “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. 27 Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. 28 For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? 29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ 31 Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. 33 So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.



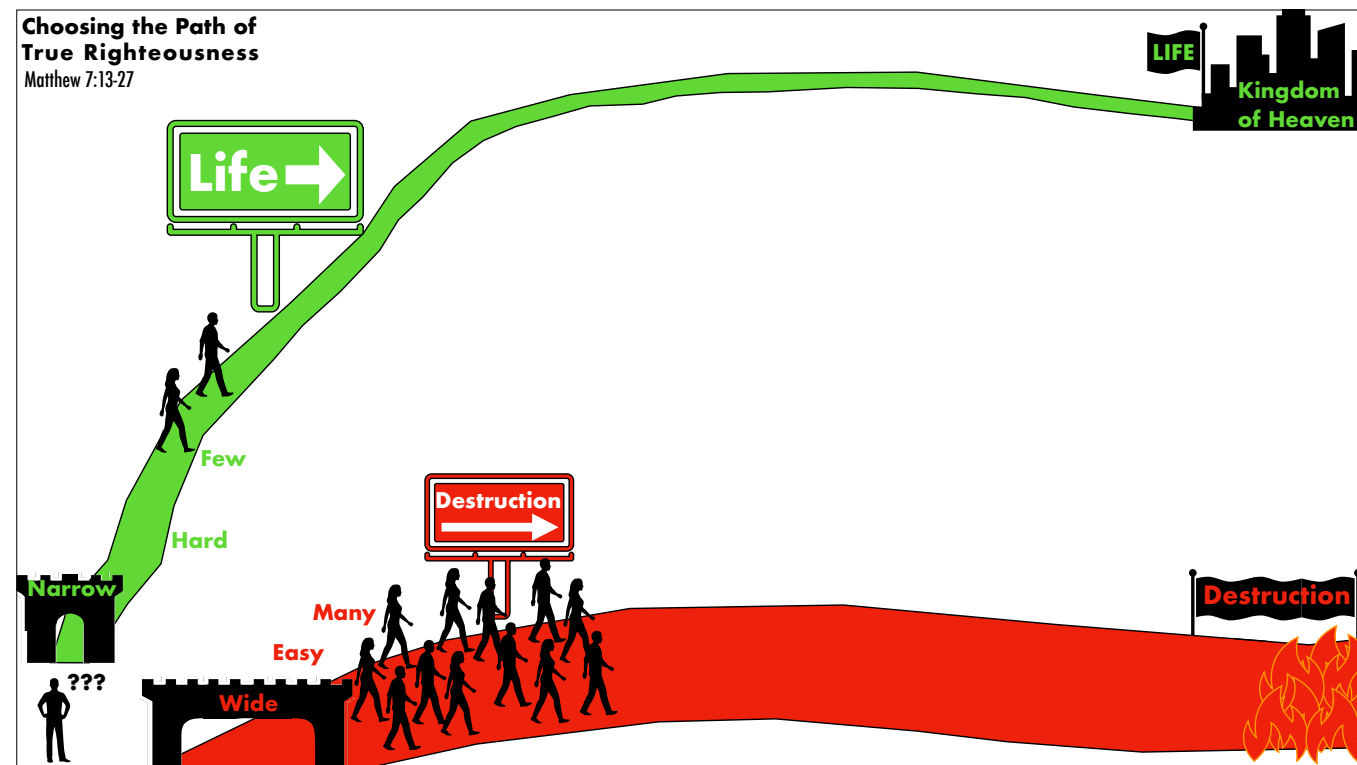
- It is the easiest way to the kingdom of heaven
 - only way to be righteous
 - only way to God's favor and grace
 - only way to salvation and life
- It is very hard



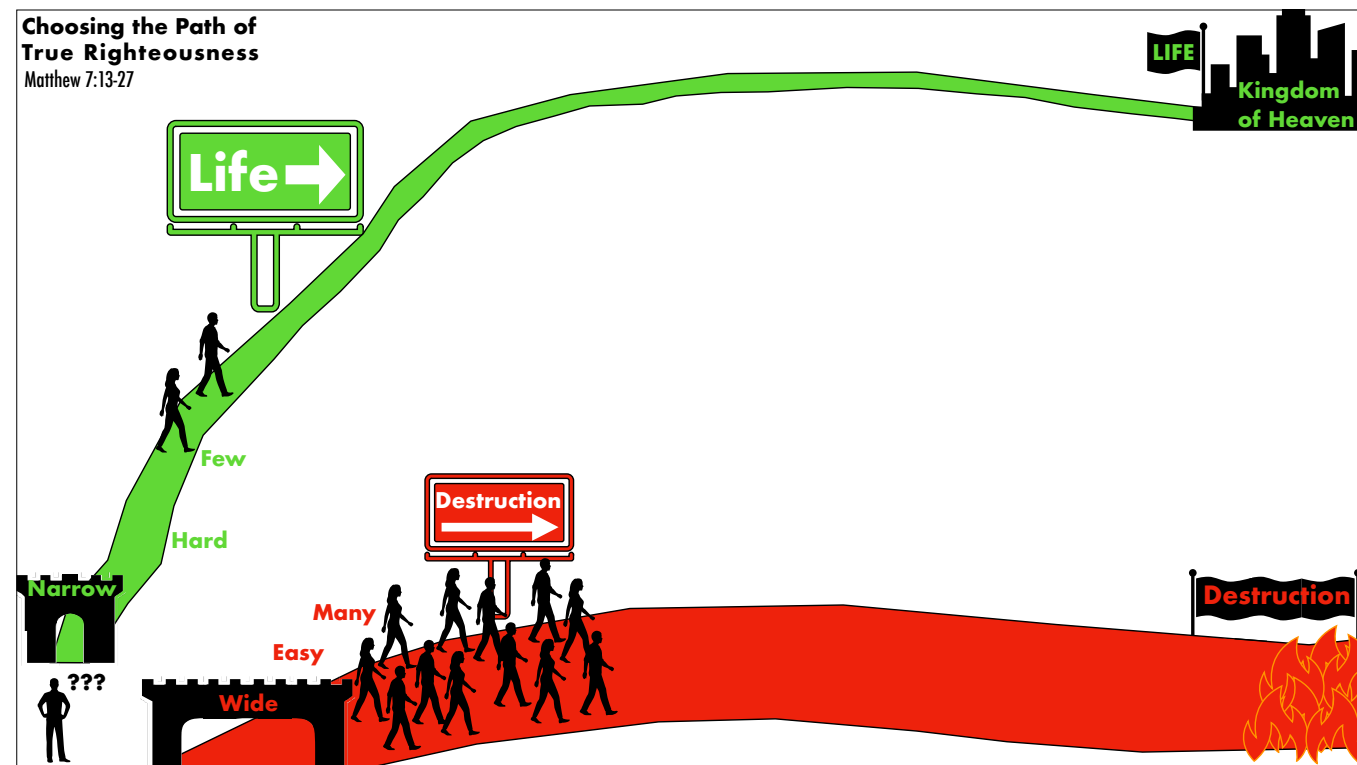
- Make us holy, purify unto himself a people - Titus 2:11-14
- Titus 2:11-14 (ESV) 11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.



- Romans 6:22-23 (ESV) 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Beatitudes reveals the fruit: Kingdom of heaven, comfort, inherit the earth, satisfied, mercy, see God, called Sons of God, Kingdom of heaven



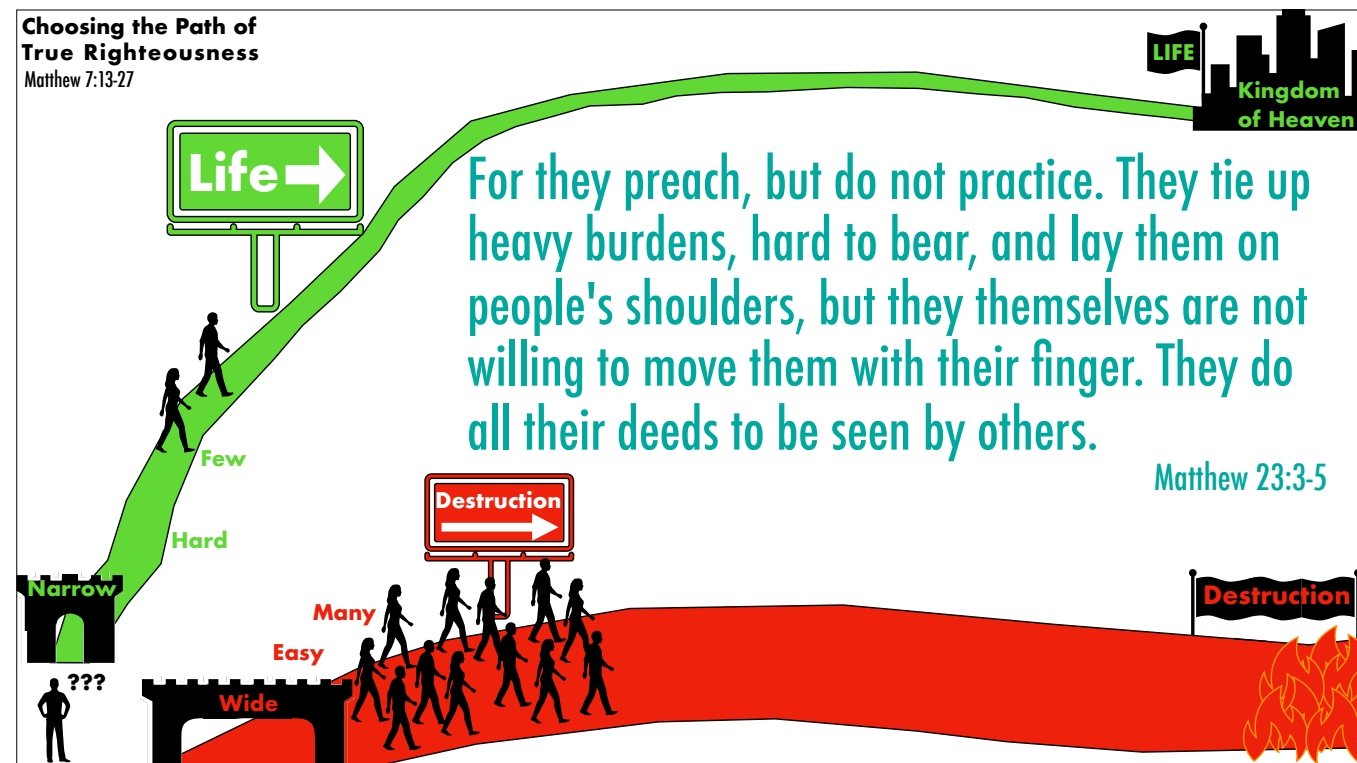
- Foolish to not consider destination
 - when journey as disciple is hard, remember destination
 - if do not enter at narrow gate, then on the broad way already
 - indecision is fatal, because it is the wrong decision



- Consider this from the perspective of Jesus' audience
- Distinguishing between these paths is not simple...



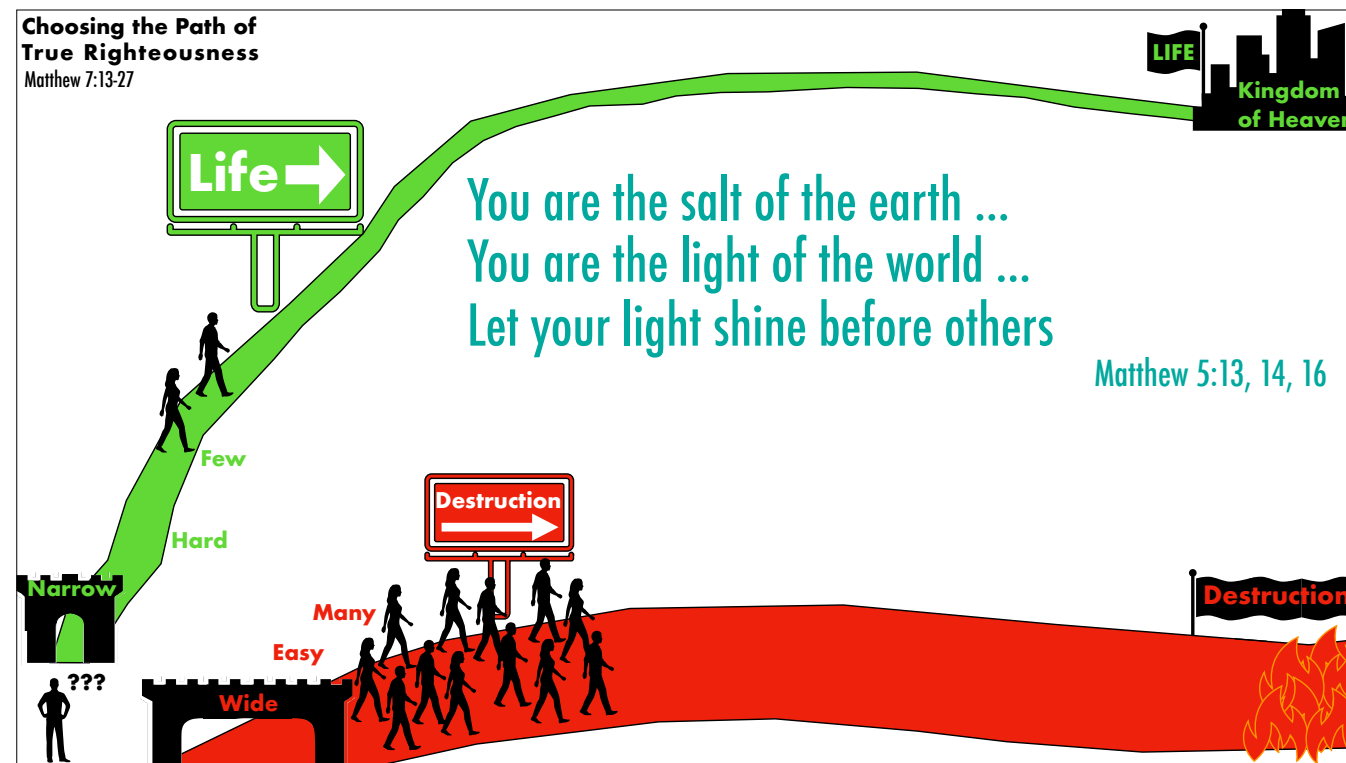
- Scribes and Pharisees were the teachers they were familiar with and respected
 - Righteousness was legendary, respected
 - Matthew 5:20: For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.
- Who is this Jesus guy? Why listen to him?



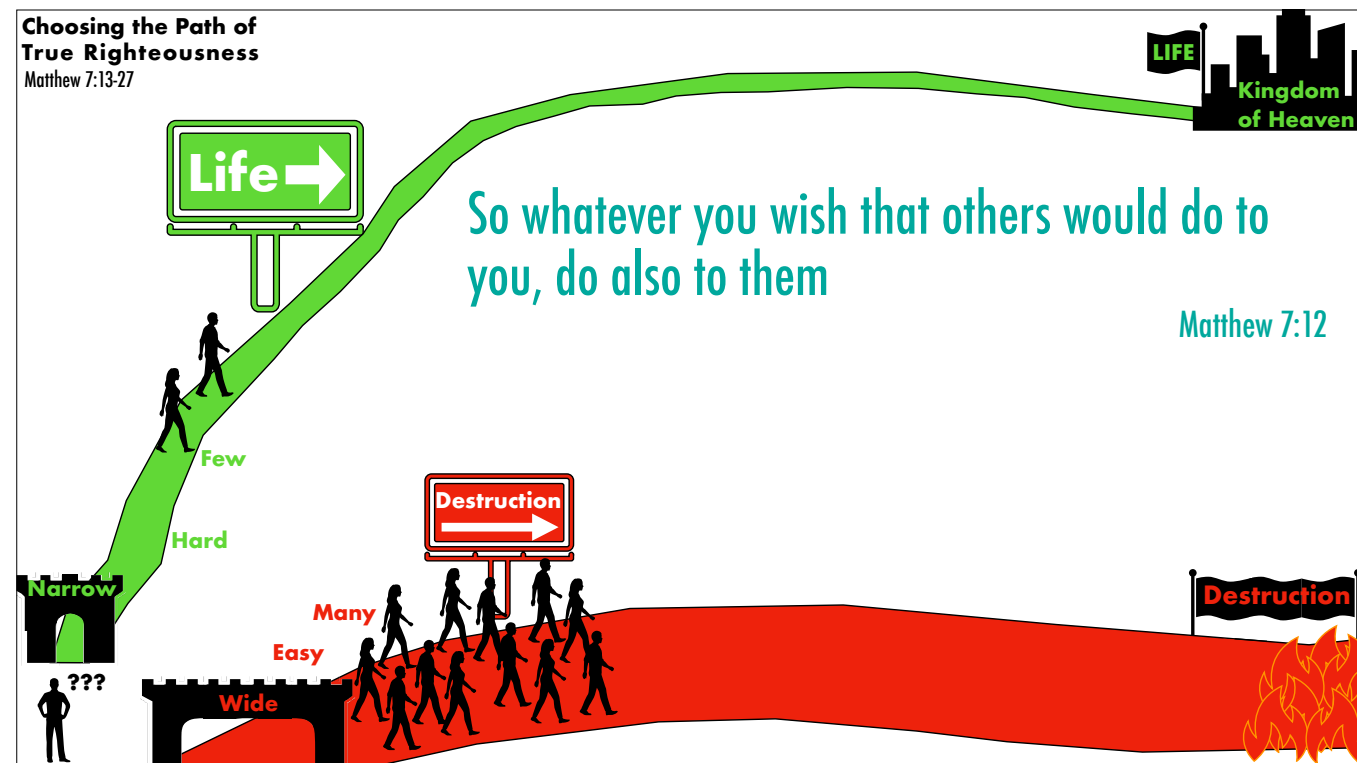
- S&P:
- Matthew 23:2-5 (ESV) 2 “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, 3 so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice. 4 They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger. 5 They do all their deeds to be seen by others.



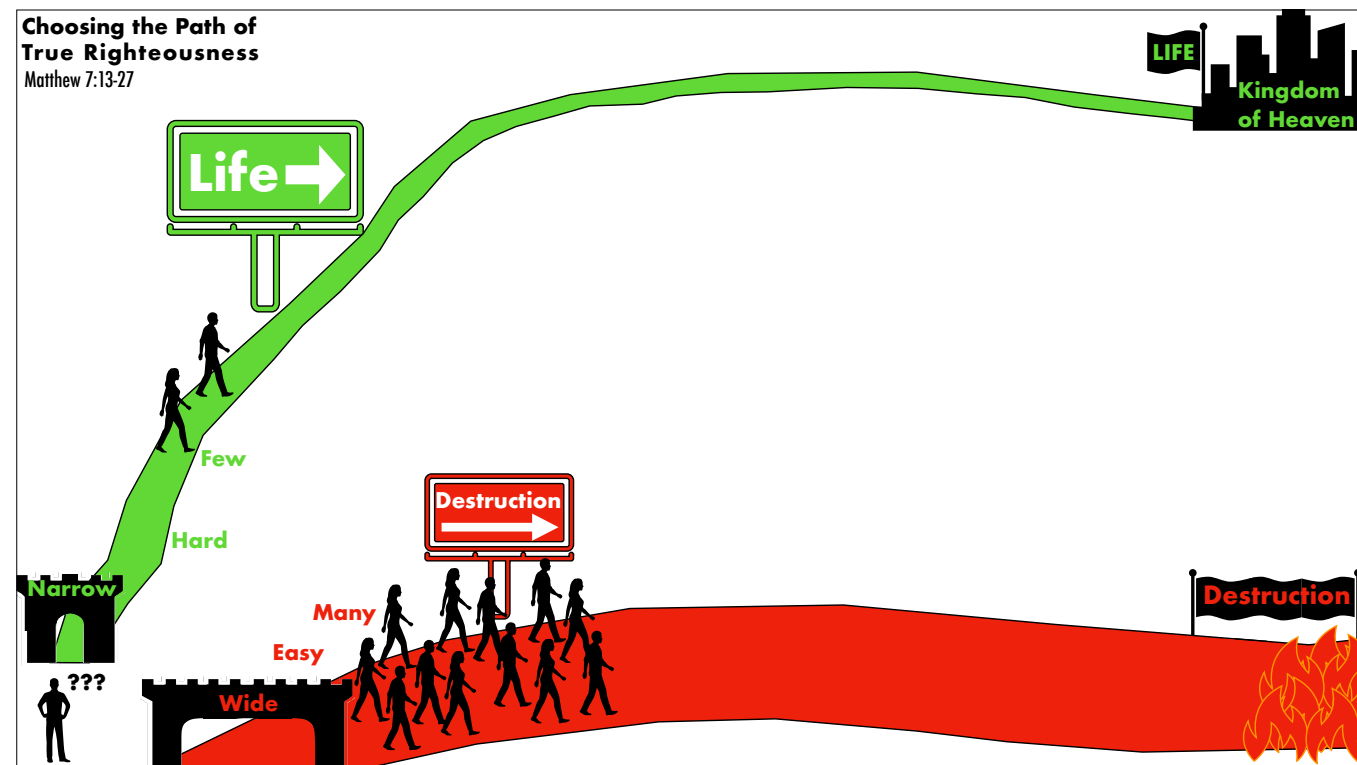
- Matthew 23:13-15 (ESV) 13 “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in. 15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.



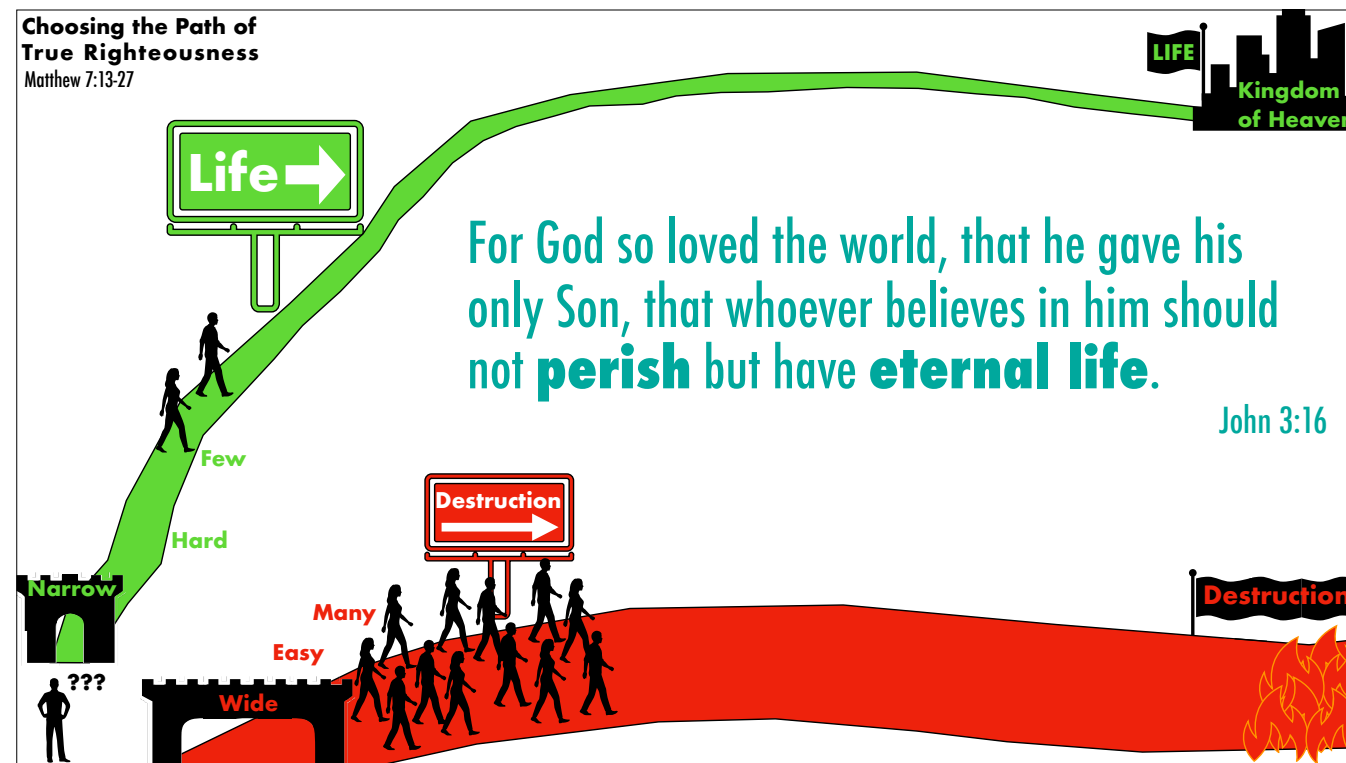
- Matthew 5:13-16 (ESV) 13 "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.



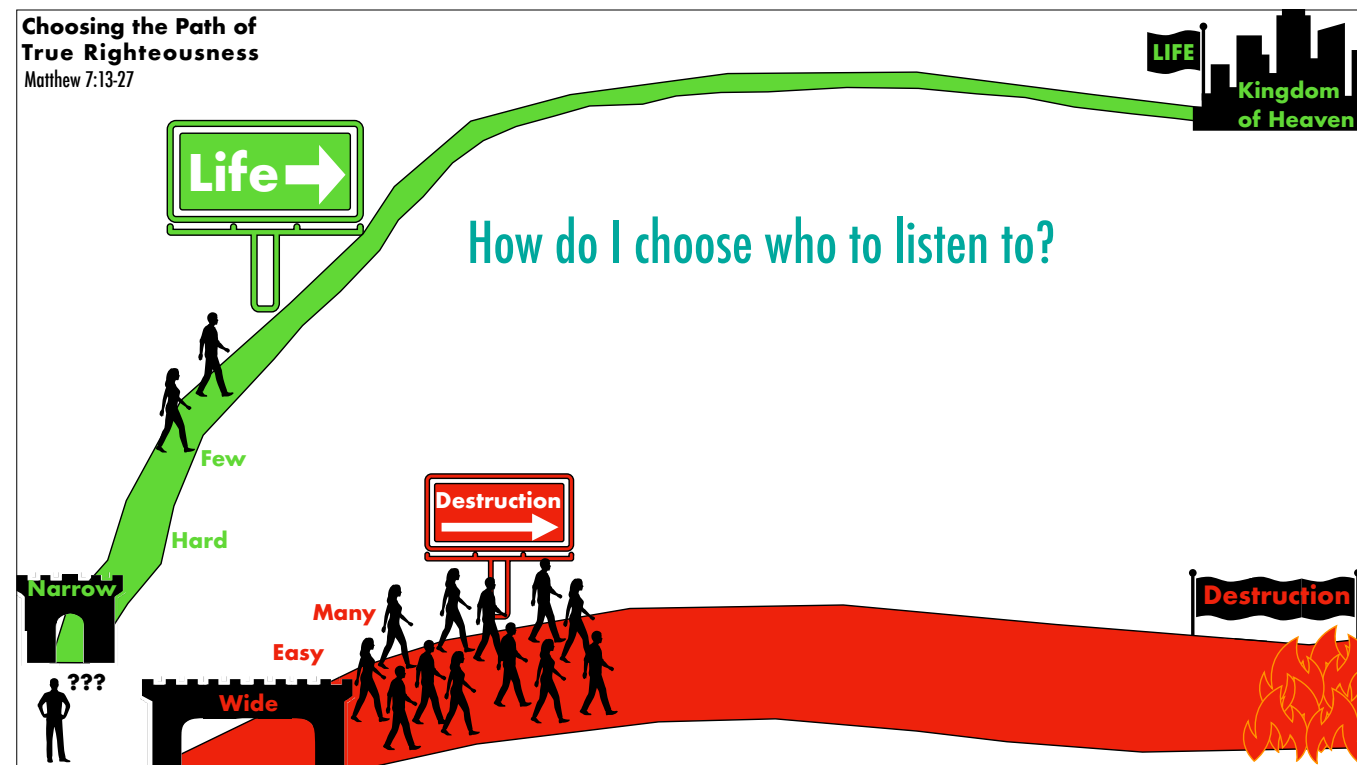
- Matthew 7:12: So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.



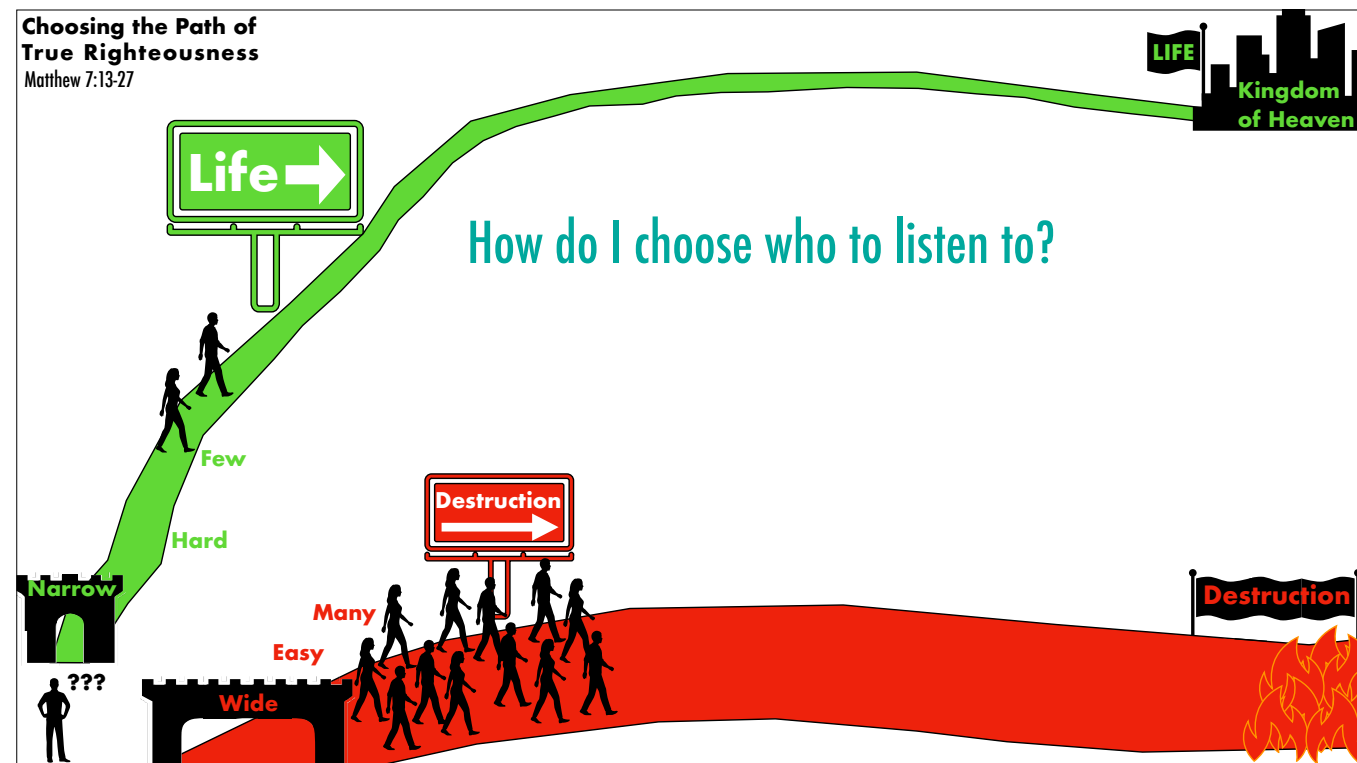
- Life And Death
 - John 3:16-21



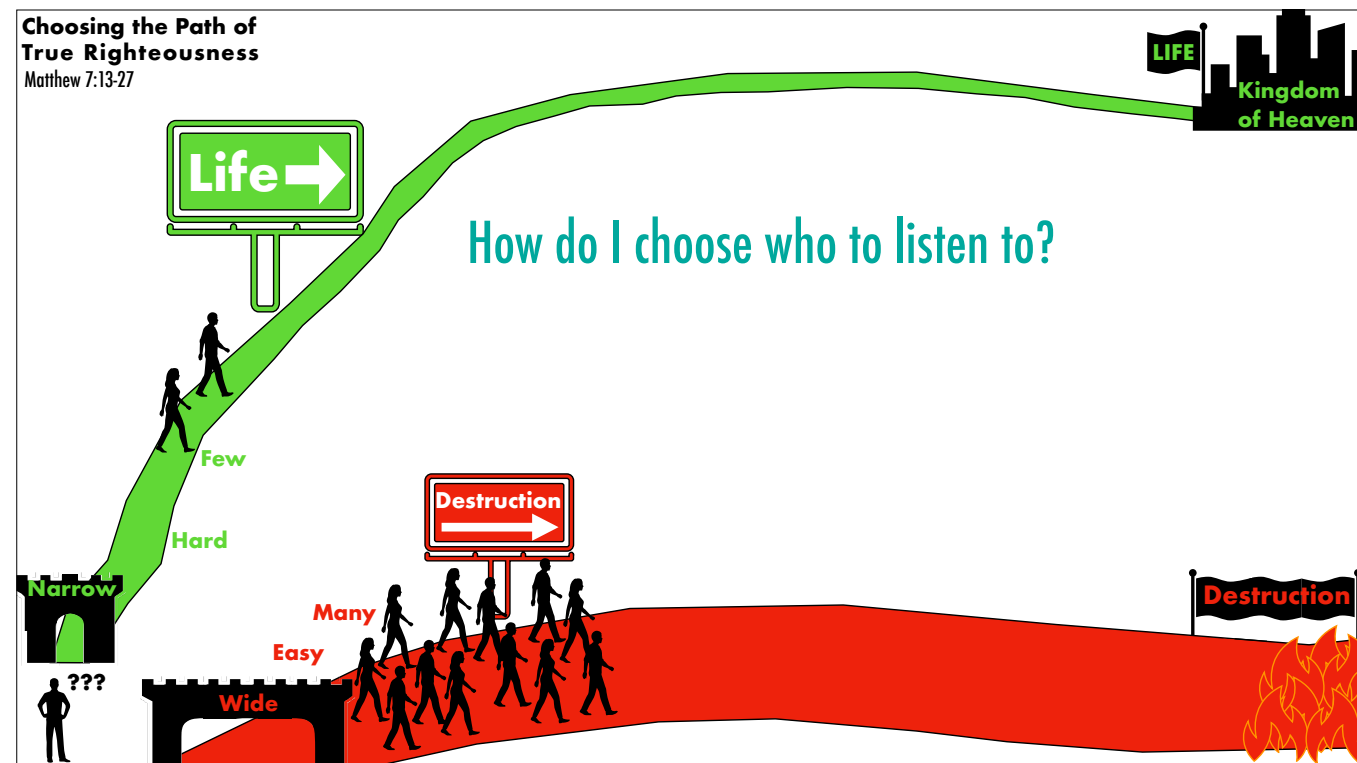
- John 3:16-21 (ESV) 16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. 19 And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. 21 But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”



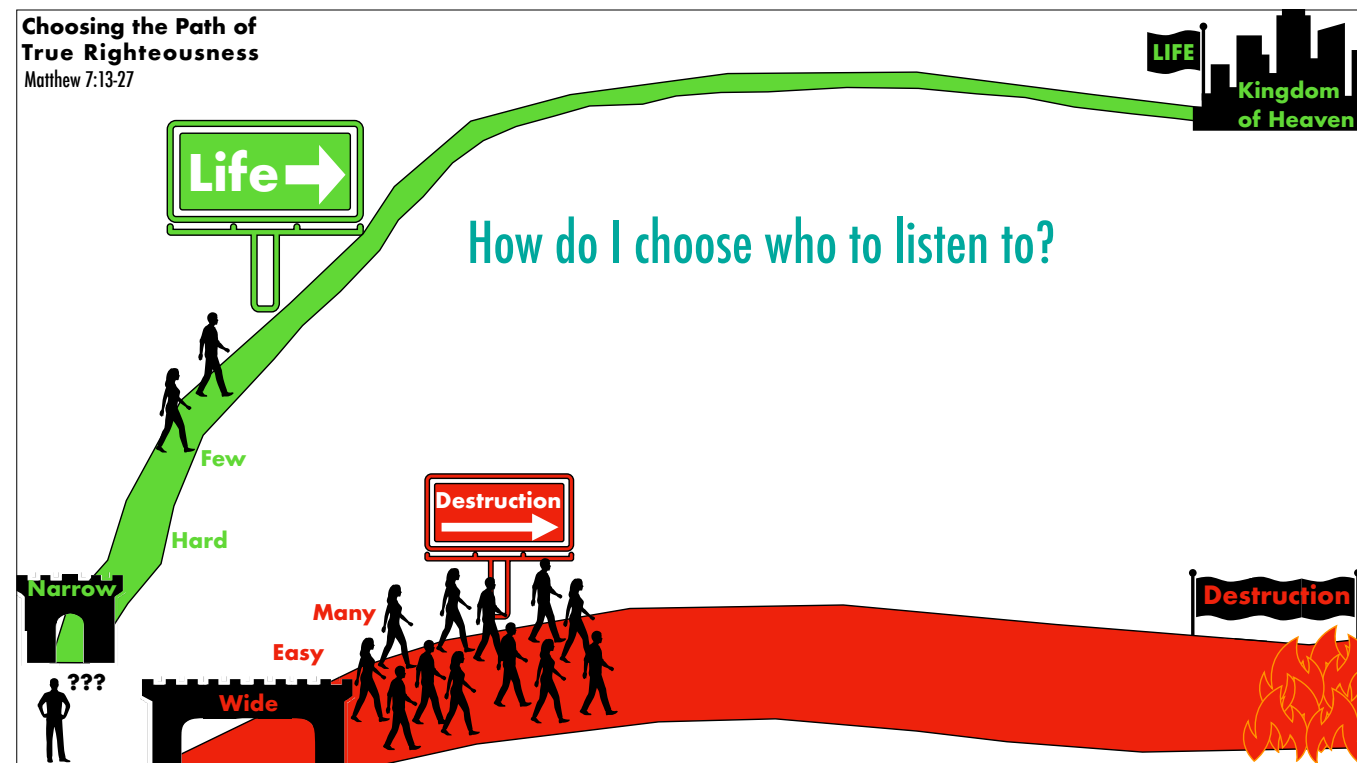
- How do I choose who I should listen to?
 - Jesus is warning us about using incorrect ways of determining the truth.



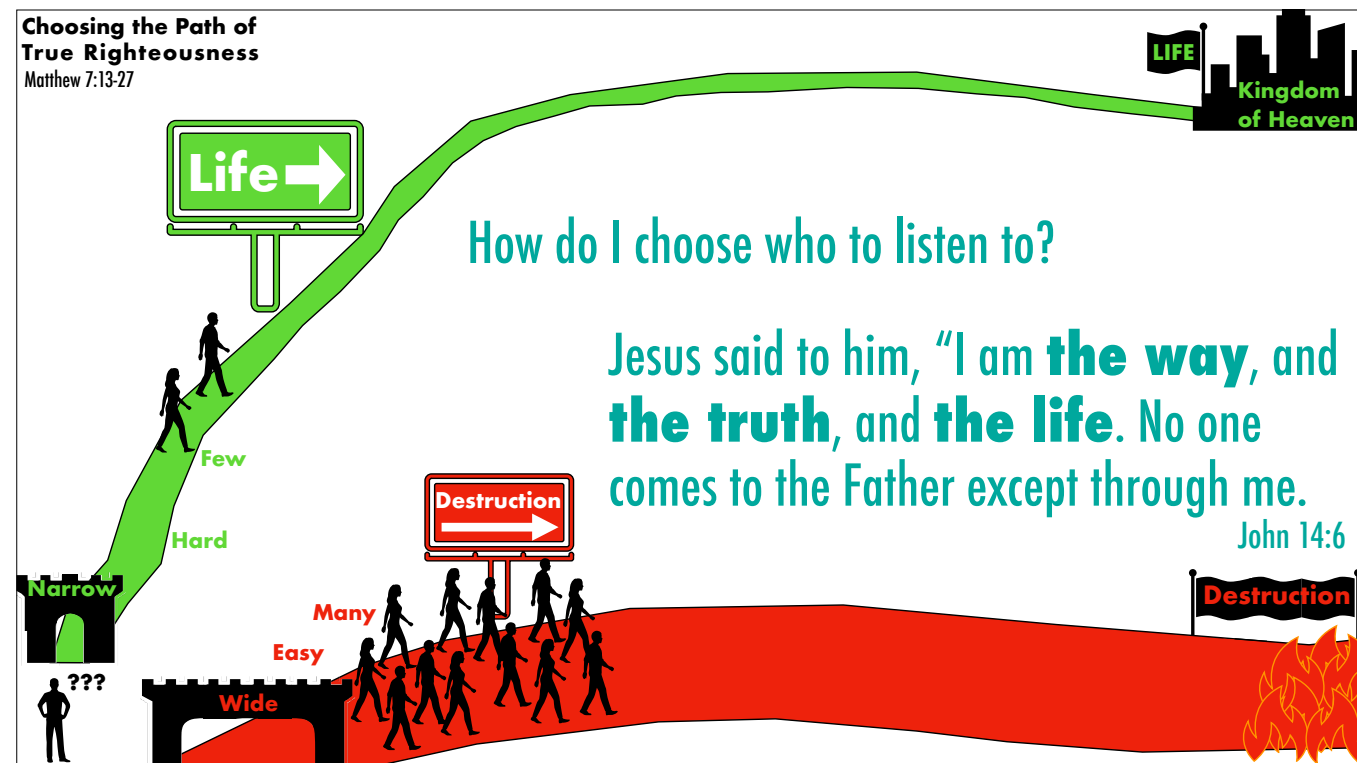
- Don't choose based on the way, whether easy or hard.
 - Some will offer tolerance of all opinions and lifestyles.
 - Some will offer asceticism, false humility, regulations not found in Jesus' new covenant



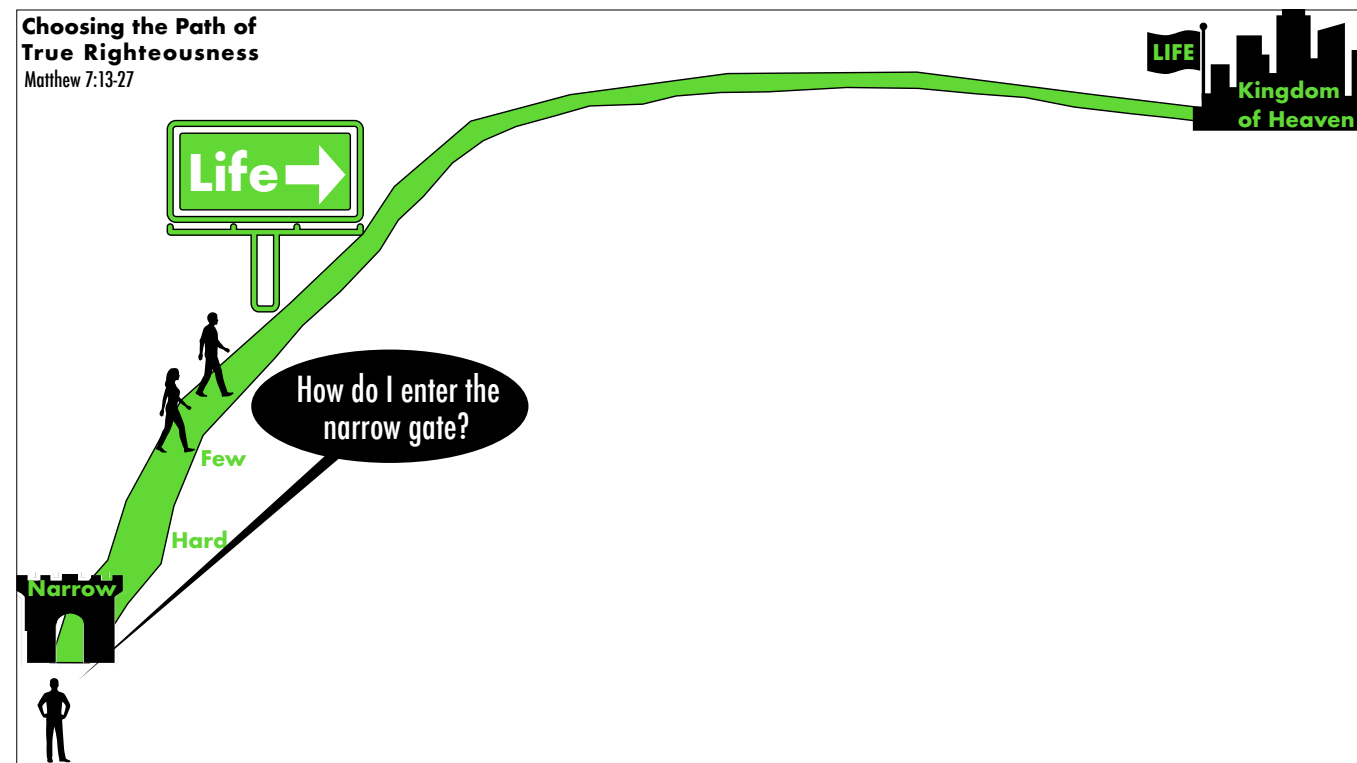
- Don't choose based on the popularity, whether many or few.
 - Some will say that so many people cannot be wrong
 - Some will say that because they are few, they must be right.



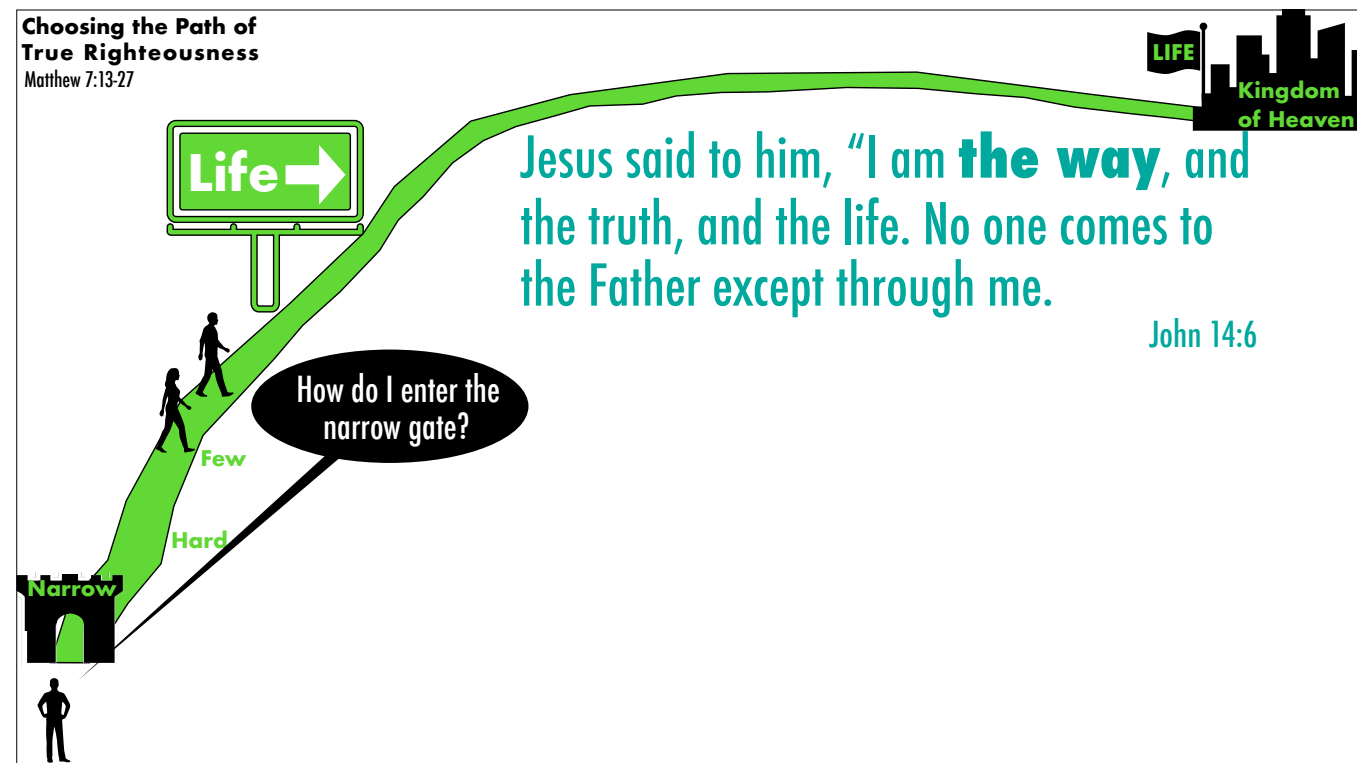
- Always look to the destination: life or destruction
 - which is not determined by making my life easier or by popularity
 - Often we are deceived by these.
 - It is determined by truth that leads to life.
 - There is only one path that leads to salvation and the kingdom.



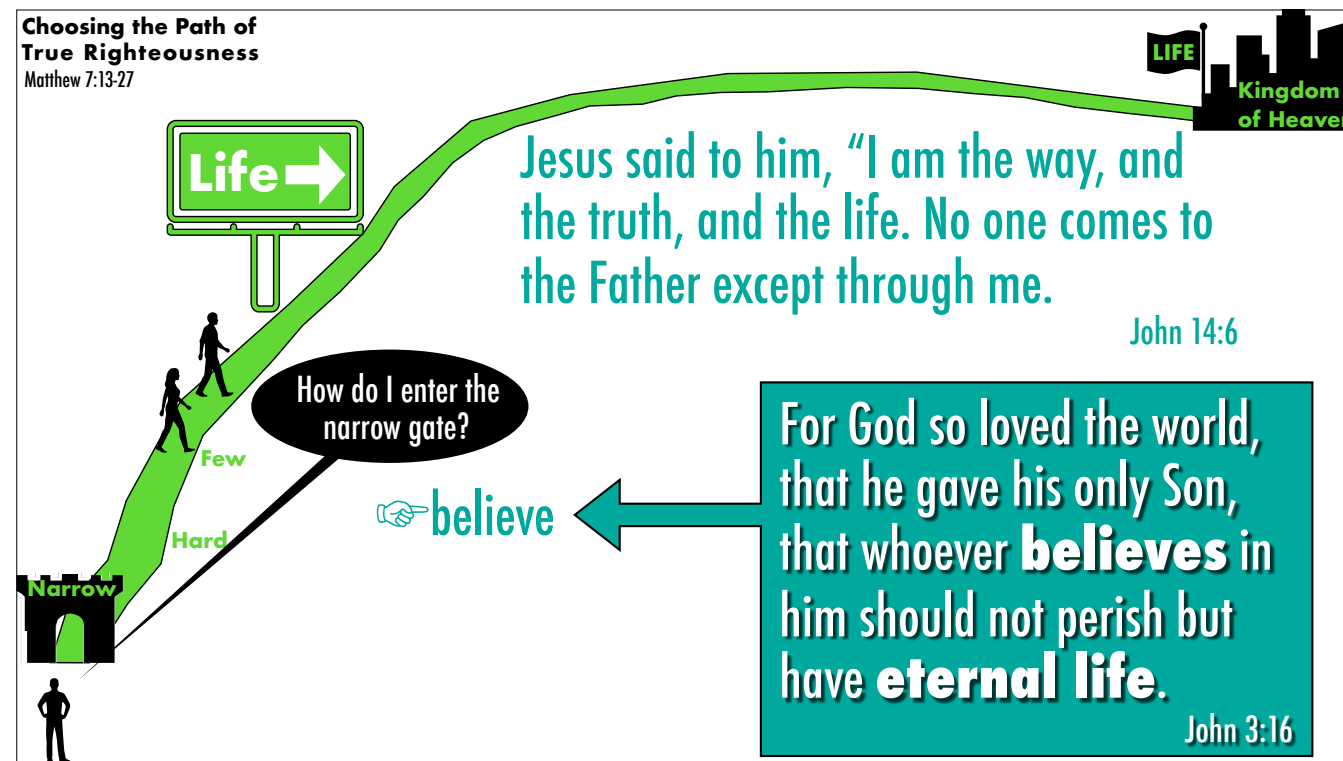
- John 14:6: Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."



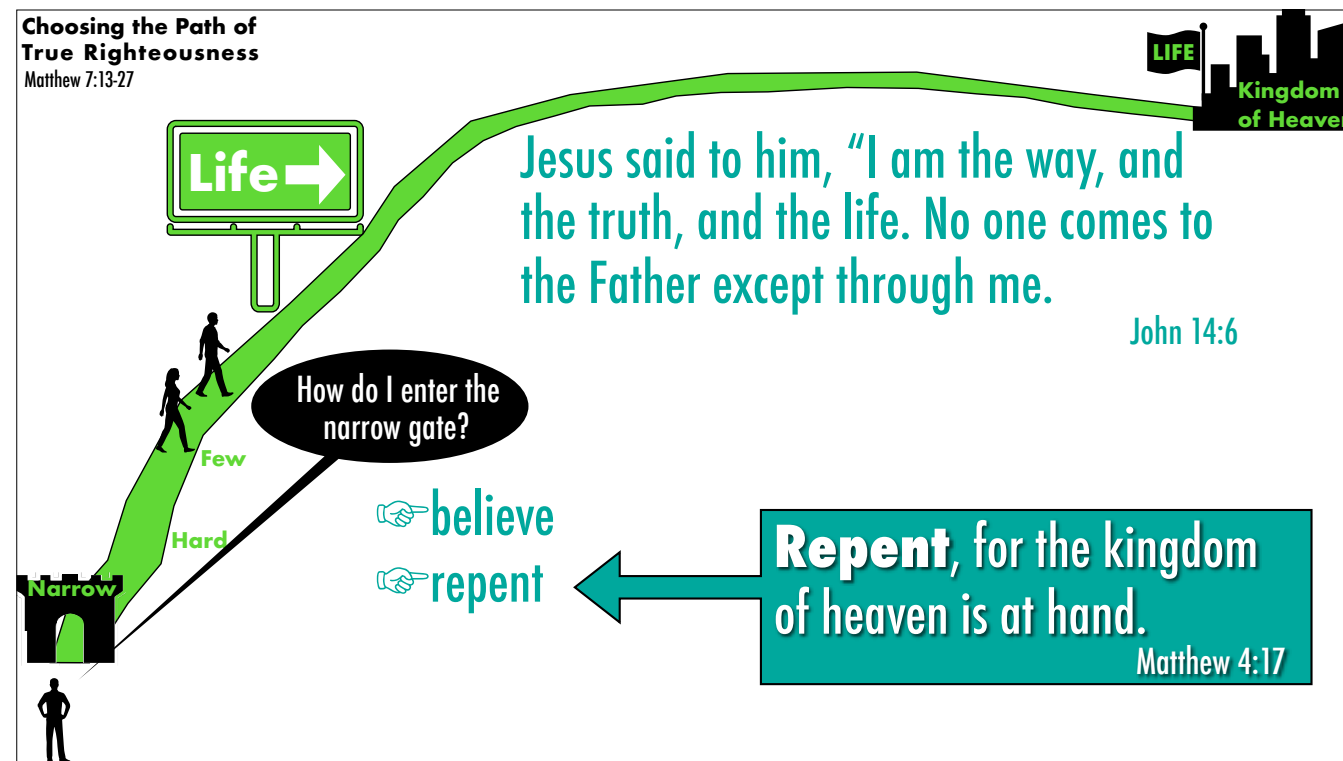
- How do I enter the narrow gate?
 -



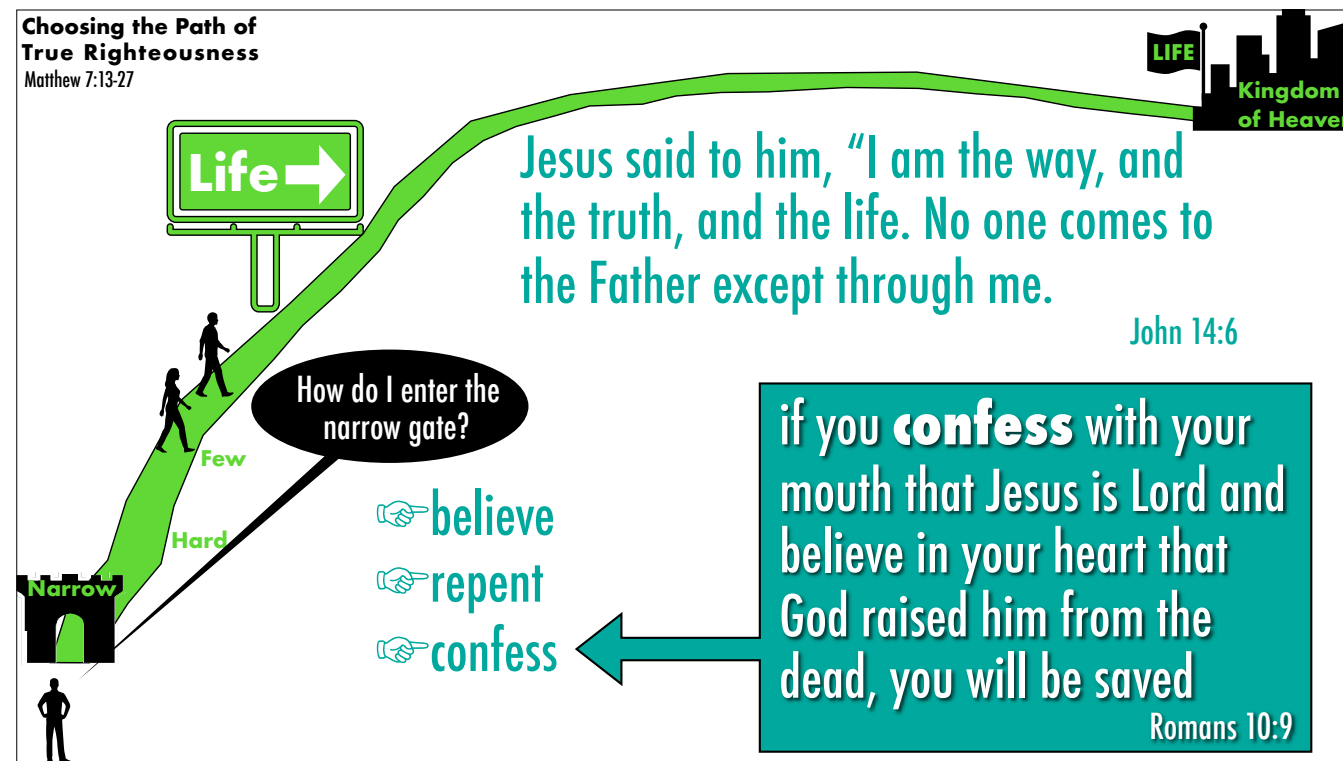
- Only Jesus!
 - John 14:6: Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
 - Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."



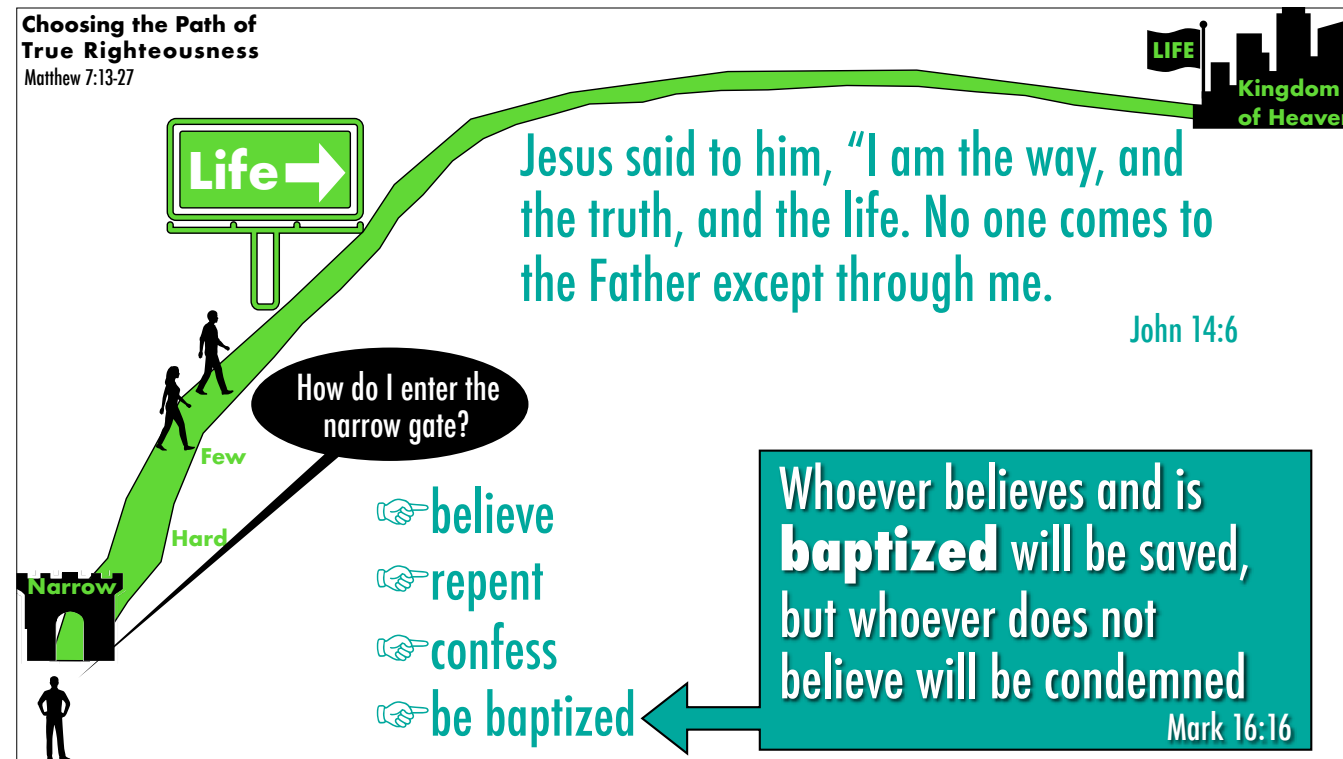
- Believe
 - John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that **whoever believes in him** should not perish but have eternal life.
 - Romans 4:3: For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."



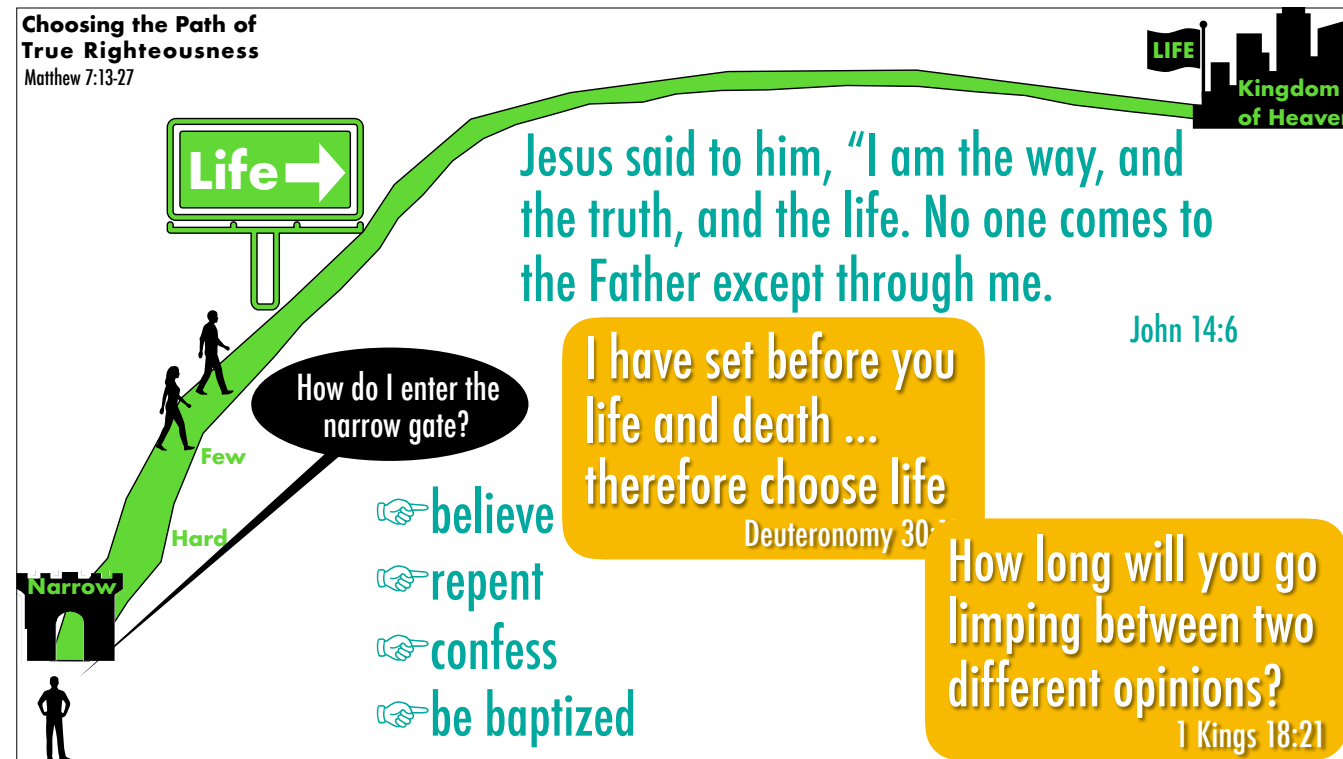
- Repent
 - Matthew 4:17: From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - Acts 3:19-20 (ESV) 19 Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, 20 that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus,



- Confess
 - Romans 10:9-10 (ESV) 9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.



- Mark 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned
- Acts 2:38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."



- Deuteronomy 30:19: I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life
- 1 Kings 18:21: How long will you go limping between two different opinions?
 - If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him."
 - And the people did not answer him a word.

**We implore you on
behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.**

2 Corinthians 5:20

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Two Ways: <https://pixabay.com/en/away-divided-two-ways-mood-dark-1802784/>

Two Ways

Matthew 7:13-14

Synopsis: Jesus' conclusion to the sermon reminds us that we must make a choice in this life. We must look to the way that leads to life, not the way that leads to destruction.

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“Let all that you do be done with love.”