

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

September 2013

The Sermon on the Mount

Lesson #10: God's Character

INTRODUCTION

Why do so many people think that God is miserly, tight-fisted and stingy?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read Matt 7:7-12

Note: Bread was the most common food in Galilee. In a round loaf it looked like a stone. Snake may be referring to an eel (which Jews didn't eat) Lev 11:12 A long (legal) fish may have looked like an eel.

1. Why does God want us to ask if He already knows our needs? Vv 7-8 1 Jn 5:14; Matt 6:8 Why are people hesitant to ask? 1 Jn 3:22; Ja 4:3
2. Why do these verses (promises) only apply to believers? How can the verses be abused? Matt 6:33; 6:24
3. If sinful (human) parents can give reasonable gifts, what kind of gifts should God give? Lk 11:13; Ja 1:5
4. Do you think that verse 12 applies to how we *expect* people to treat us or how we *want* people to treat us? What difference does it make? Rom 13:8; 10; Gal 5:14; Lev 19:18

Read Matt 7:13-14; 7:24-27

Note: Most Jews thought they were all going to be in God's kingdom my "racial salvation" signified by circumcision.

5. What is the contrast between entering the kingdom of God and following the secular world?
6. How many can go through the narrow gate? How do they enter?
7. Why does Jesus restrict the choices to just two? How would a person thinking, "There are many roads to heaven" take this verse?
8. If the narrow path leads to more fulfillment with man and God, why do so few choose it?
9. What would Jesus say about "marketing strategies" to make the church more appealing and less difficult? Rom 10:3; Act 4:12; 1 Tim 2:5
10. How are these verses balanced with Matt 24:14?

APPLICATION

- Have you entered the right gate? Jn 14:6 How is your spiritual foundation?

A letter written to a Melbourne, Australia, daily newspaper expresses clearly the attitude of a person on the broad road to destruction.

After hearing Dr. Billy Graham on the air, viewing him on television and reading reports and letters concerning him and his mission, I am heartily sick of the type of religion that insists my soul (and everyone else's) needs saving-whatever that means. I have never felt that I was lost. Nor do I feel that I daily wallow in the mire of sin, although repetitive preaching insists that I do.

Give me a practical religion that teaches gentleness and tolerance, that acknowledges no barriers of color or creed, that remembers the aged and teaches children of goodness and not sin.

If in order to save my soul I must accept such a philosophy as I have recently heard preached, I prefer to remain forever damned.¹

¹ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (458). Chicago: Moody Press.