

Two Rules for Living

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[0 : 00] The scripture this morning is taken from two passages, Psalm chapter 1 and then Matthew 7, 12-14.

! Starting with Psalm 1. The way of the righteous and the wicked.

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither.

In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like shaft that the wind drives away.

[1 : 09] Therefore, the wicked will not stand in judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. Matthew 7, beginning at verse 12.

So whatever you wish that others do to you, do also to them. For this is the law and the prophets. Enter by the narrow gate.

For the gate is wide, and the way is easy that leads to destruction. And those who enter in it, those who enter by it, are many.

For the gate is narrow, and the way is hard that leads to life. And those who find it are few.

[2 : 13] Thank you very much, Faye. Well, this morning we are continuing our sermon series in the Sermon on the Mount.

And the three verses that we have come to this morning that have just been read contain two important rules for living.

And although these two rules were uttered by Jesus some 2,000 years ago, they're very relevant to us this morning. And I pray that we would all open our hearts and we would closely hear what the Lord is saying to us.

This is one of the beauties of God's Word, that God's Word is both timeless and is also timely. And so we need to hear what he's saying because it's timeless.

And I think we need to trust the Lord that he's causing us to hear what we're hearing in this moment, in this season of our lives. Because he knows exactly where we are, and he knows exactly what we need.

[3 : 21] So let's bow our hearts and pray. Father, we're so grateful that we are able to gather this morning. Thank you, Lord, that you have saved us and you have joined us to a local church.

And Lord, you have not left us to ourselves. You've told us that we are to live by every word that proceeds out of your mouth.

Lord, your Word is our necessary food. And so would you feed us from your Word this morning? Would you cause us to hear in our individual and corporate contexts?

Lord, speak to our hearts and give us grace both to hear and to obey all that you say to us.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. If I were to summarize the Sermon on the Mount, here's how I'd summarize it.

[4 : 32] In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches us what being a disciple looks like. That, in a nutshell, is what the Sermon on the Mount is about.

Jesus teaches us what being one who follows him looks like. First, he teaches us how true disciples relate to God.

That's what we may call this vertical dimension. And then he teaches us how true disciples relate to others.

That's on the horizontal dimension. When you study the Sermon on the Mount, every aspect of the Sermon on the Mount will fit one of these two categories. Our relationship with God or our relationship with others.

And you may be noticing that we are marching to the end of the Sermon on the Mount. And where we come to this morning is a signal.

[5 : 38] It is a point at which Jesus signals that he is concluding. And we see the signal in verse 12 with that word, so, that conjunction, so.

Actually, it's the second, it is the first time that so is used in the whole Sermon on the Mount. It's used one other time, but not in the same way that it is here. And so Jesus is concluding and he is saying so.

And he's going to say some things to us in light of what he has said before. And when he says so, he gives us two rules for living.

And these two rules for living, they reflect upon all that he has said up to this point. And so in our remaining time this morning, I want us to consider these two rules of living and how they apply to us.

So let's begin with the first one. The first rule that Jesus gives us to live by is this. Live by the golden rule.

[6 : 46] You see this in verse 12. Look again at what Jesus said. So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the law and the prophets.

These words of Jesus in verse 12 are perhaps the most well-known words that Jesus spoke in all of his earthly ministry, certainly in the Sermon on the Mount.

These words are commonly referred to as the golden rule, do unto others as you would have them do unto you. And I think most of us, if not all of us, learn them as young children. So why does Jesus issue this rule?

Why does Jesus say that you are to do to others whatever you wish others to do to you, you should also do to them?

Why does Jesus issue this rule? Again, I think he does because it's a powerful summary of what he's been teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. In large part because the Sermon on the Mount, when you look at it, it deals with human relationships.

[7 : 59] It instructs us in how we are to relate to people in all kinds of different situations. Some of you remember, two weeks ago we considered the first five verses of Matthew 7, just as an example.

And Jesus deals with the issue of harshly judging others. And how we should not be as concerned with sin in another person's life as we are with sin in our own life.

And Jesus gives us this because this is one of the ongoing temptations that we have as we live life. We tend to be more concerned and harder with sin in other people's lives than we are with sin in our own life.

And so for this first rule for living, Jesus is essentially saying, here's the bottom line of all that I've been teaching about being merciful, being pure in your motives, being a peacemaker, forgiving others, restraining anger, settling disputes, refusing to retaliate, doing good to those who mistreat you, and not judging harshly the sins of others.

Jesus says, treat others in the exact same way you want them to treat you. I think that's a summary of all that Jesus has been saying.

[9 : 24] Treat others the exact same way that you wish them to treat you. My brothers and sisters, this is more than just what we may call a golden rule.

This is the divine rule. This is not uttered by Buddha or Muhammad. This was uttered by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the one who is God in the flesh, who came to this earth and who spoke with the authority of God.

And I think we all know it's a hard rule. This is a hard rule. This is not an easy rule. This is a hard rule. And I think if we are honest with each other, we would admit that this has been a difficult rule to live by.

It's a noble rule. But it's a hard rule. And this rule is hard because many people, and perhaps some of us, have altered it because of our inability to keep it, our inability to live it out.

And so sometimes it's altered. And people would say, don't do to others what you don't want them to do to you. And that's changing it because what they're really saying about that is don't do bad things to others that you don't want them to do to you.

[10:47] That's pretty easy, generally speaking, for us to do. But that's not what Jesus says. Jesus says you're to do to others what you wish them to do to you.

And so the implication is that you do good. You wish them to do good to you. So you do good to them as well. But again, this is a hard rule.

And why is it hard? Why is this rule to do to others what we wish them to do to us a hard rule? Well, it's a hard rule because we live in a fallen and a broken world.

And we are selfish sinners by nature. And that's why we can naturally and easily do to others what we don't want them to do to us.

And we find it so hard to do the good to them that we want them to do to us. And sometimes, even when we, by the grace of God, are able to do good to others, the good we want them to do to us, because we live in a fallen and a broken and a sinful world, there's a real possibility that the good that we do to others is not returned to us.

[12:08] And I think those of us who serve Christ have lived long enough to experience that. You do good.

Good is not returned. Good is not returned. Sometimes those we do good to will only remember the good that we do for them when they need good again. And they'll come back to hopefully receive more good.

And sometimes we're the same way ourselves. And so the golden rule is hard because sometimes the golden rule is not a two-way street.

The golden rule is a one-way street. The good we do for others and we wish for ourselves is sometimes not returned.

Jesus knows this reality. Jesus knows this reality. But still, he says to those who are his disciples, whatever you wish others to do for you, you are to do to them.

[13:15] But notice that Jesus adds a critical, clarifying statement at the end of verse 12. For this is the law and the prophets.

The New International Version says, for this sums up the law and the prophets. And again, at the time that Jesus uttered these words, the law and the prophets, it was all the scripture that they had. All they had was from Genesis to Malachi. And that is the law and the prophets. It still is the law and the prophets. That's the way we refer to the Old Testament, the law and the prophets.

And Jesus said, when you do for others, you are to do to them what you wish they would do to you. He says, this sums up the whole law and the prophets.

This sums up all that God required of his people in the Old Testament. When you think about it, this is a most profound statement. It is the most profound statement that that single statement of Jesus summarizes and covers all the scripture that was required of his people in that day.

[14:39] And why does it sum up all of the law and the prophets? And how does it sum up all the law and the prophets?

And those are two separate questions. How does it sum it up? Why does it sum it up? I think we get the answer to this, to these two questions a little later in Matthew's gospel account.

It is in an encounter that Matthew records between Jesus and a lawyer in Matthew 22 verses 34 to 40.

When Jesus gives some insight into what he meant by saying that when we treat others the way we wish them to treat us, it sums up the law and the prophets.

Here's what it says, Matthew 22, 34 to 40. But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.

[15:47] And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? And he said to him, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.

So what is Jesus saying to this lawyer who came to him? Jesus says, loving God with all your heart, soul and mind, and loving your neighbor as yourself are the two commandments that all the law and the prophets rest upon or depend upon.

However, in Matthew 7, 12, he tells us that doing to others the good that we wish they would do to us sums up the law and the prophets.

And notice in Matthew 7, 12, Jesus doesn't mention anything about love for God. But yet he says both of them achieve the same end. But he doesn't mention love for God in Matthew 7, 12.

[17 : 15] And brothers and sisters, when we think about it, when we spend some time to contemplate what Jesus says in Matthew 7, 12, it is nothing short of breathtaking.

It's nothing short of breathtaking. It's nothing short of humbling. Here's what he's saying. He says that treating others as we ourselves wish to be treated sums up the law and the prophets. And that's why Jesus doesn't mention love for God. That's why Jesus doesn't mention love for God. That's why he's able to just say, if you do this, you are fulfilling all the law and the prophets. Because Jesus knows that only those who do that, only those who love their fellow man in that way, are those who love God.

God. It is only with a transformed heart, a heart that God himself is transformed and shed his love abroad in.

[18 : 42] It's able to give that love to another person. And that's why he doesn't have to mention it, because it is implicit in the act itself.

That when we act towards others in that way, in that divinely inspired way, that's because our own hearts have been affected by the love of God. Scripture says we love him because he first loved us. And we can give that love to others. The driving force behind this rule of living, brothers and sisters, is divine love. Divine love that has been shed abroad in our hearts.

It's a love that we have come to learn is an alien love. It's a love outside of us. It's not a love that is naturally in us. None of us naturally possesses this love.

It's a love that comes to us through a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. God's love comes to us. God's love comes to us.

[19 : 50] And we in turn give that love to others by treating them the way we desire ourselves to be treated. We do good to them and we restrain from doing evil to them.

But here's the problem. The problem is that while all of us who belong to Christ do seek to one degree or another to treat others the way we want to be treated, there's something in us that wants to do that.

In all of us. But all of us have to admit, none of us does it perfectly. Our best efforts to love our neighbor the way we love ourselves, to treat them the way we want to be treated, fall short of the perfect standard that God requires.

And that's not just true for those of us assembled here. This is a universal problem. No human being has perfectly loved God and no human being has perfectly loved his fellow human being to want to treat them the way they themselves want to be treated.

So then what is our hope to live out the golden rule? I'm going to answer that question, but I want to come back to it. For now, let's move on to the second rule.

[21 : 24] And the second rule is this. Enter by the narrow gate. Enter by the narrow gate. Although Jesus gives this rule for living as well, it's not as well known as the golden rule.

And so let's try to understand what Jesus is really saying. When we analyze verses 12 and verses 13 and 14, here's what we see. We see that Jesus talks about two different groups of people, the few and the many, who enter by two different gates, the narrow and the wide, that lead to two different ways, the hard and the easy, and which result in two different outcomes, life and destruction.

And the destruction. This is very important to understand what Jesus is saying. So let me just say it again. And let me just say it again. Jesus talks about two different groups of people, the few and the many, who enter by two different gates, the narrow and the wide, that lead to two different ways, the hard and the easy, and which result in two different outcomes, life and destruction.

So what can we say about these two gates? I think, hopefully you see that these two gates represent two ways of living.

And that's what Psalm 1, the first scripture reading this one, it was all about. These two ways of living, the way of the righteous and the way of the wicked. Jesus is saying that these two gates are the approaches that people take to finding life, living life.

[23 : 24] And the truth is that although the wide gate leads to an easy road that ends in destruction for all who travel on it, the sign above the wide gate promises much more than that.

It promises life to those who come through it. And the wide gate is an attractive gate. The wide gate probably has whatever is the best kind of sign you could imagine with neon lights and flashing

messages, advertising, all that the wide gate offers.

A lot of options. A lot of flexibility. A lot of options. A lot of flexibility. It's an easy road to take because after all, there are a lot of people on this road.

But the narrow gate is quite the opposite. The narrow gate is unattractive. The sign above it promises life at the end.

But the sign also says right up front, this is not an easy road. It tells you you wouldn't be able to do what you please on this road.

[24 : 51] It's not as flexible as that other road. On this narrow road, you can't live your life the way you want to live it. It tells you right up front that sometimes you're going to be alone because there aren't many people on this road.

Jesus said there are few that be that find it. Another reality about these two roads is that all human beings, without exception, are naturally drawn to the wide road, to the wide gate.

And not only are we just naturally drawn to the wide gate, we run to the wide gate and we run through the wide gate. All of us, without exception.

We naturally love the wide road. We want to go through this gate because it accommodates every degree of fallenness. This wide gate will accommodate religious Pharisees.

It will accommodate irreligious pagans. It is a to each his own kind of gate. You can do what you like on it.

[26 : 05] You can have your own rules. You can make them off as you go. But living by the golden rule takes place through the narrow gate and on the hard road.

It doesn't take place in the wide gate on the easy road. It takes place through the narrow gate, on the hard road, and it is a road that none of us is naturally drawn to.

But the good news is that even though all human beings naturally are drawn to the wide gate, Jesus tells us in verse 14 that there are some who find it.

He says there are some who find this gate that leads to life. But he refers to them as the few. And by few, he doesn't mean few in number.

He means few in comparison. Not few in number objectively by itself, but few in comparison to those on the wide easy road.

[27 : 34] And I think when we consider this, it should raise some valid questions in our minds.

Why do the few find it? How do they find it?

And we find the answers to these questions as we follow Matthew's gospel to the end. Matthew is giving a gospel account, and he has an objective in mind.

And what we see at the end of Matthew's account is a crucified Savior and a risen Lord.

And we have to work our way through the Gospel of Matthew, work our way through the Gospels, to be able to see how and why anyone, but in particular how and why the few, come off of this broad easy road onto this narrow and hard one.

[28 : 45] What we find as we follow Matthew's Gospel, and indeed all the Gospels through, is that in his teaching and by his living, Jesus demonstrates the life that God has called all of us to.

He perfectly loved God with his whole heart. He perfectly fulfilled the law and the prophets. And although he committed no sin, he died on the cross to pay the price for sin on behalf of every single person who would ever put their trust in him.

God is able to credit to sinners what he purchased through his living and through his dying.

God is able to purchase to sinners the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. He's able to forgive their sins, their past, present, and future sins.

God is able to forgive their sins. And he's able to do that because Christ died as a substitute on the cross to pay the full penalty of sin for sinners.

[30 : 13] The saving work of Christ is a divine rescue. It's a divine rescue because what Jesus has done in his living and in his dying is he rescues lost people from the wide road that leads to destruction, and he places them on the narrow road that leads to life.

And that's how the few find it. The few find it because Christ finds them. That's how it happens.

He finds them and he brings them to the narrow way. They don't find it because they are smarter.

They don't find it because they are morally superior.

They don't find it for any reason that is within themselves. They find it because it was a divine rescue that took them off of that natural road that they were inclined to and that all their affections were ordered to, and he brings them on another road.

Brings them to the gate and takes them through the gate on that narrow road. And when we think about that, the only reason that we can give as to why that happens, and see, we must think about this.

[31 : 42] Why is it and how is it that the few are on the narrow road? They've found it. And yet there are many on the road of destruction. And again, it's not because of wisdom or morality.

The answer, brothers and sisters, is summed up in two words, and it is sovereign grace. It is sovereign grace.

That is the only reason why any would find the narrow way. That is the only reason why any would go through that narrow gate and be on that hard road that leads to life.

The sovereign grace of God found them on that wide road and brought them on the narrow road. I think one of the most important truths in the Christian life that we have to learn and grasp is this combination of divine sovereignty and human responsibility and how it works out through our lives, starting with our salvation.

[33 : 03] Notice in verse 4 where Jesus says, verse 14, sorry, Jesus says, few there are that find it.

We find the narrow road. We find it. But how did we find it? Did we find it as a matter of first instance?

Did we find it in and of ourselves? No. God enabled us to find it. And we find it because he found us.

If he did not find us in our lostness and in our darkness, we would never find or be interested in the narrow gate. We were all on that wide road.

We were running as fast as we could to hell, and we had a smile on our faces, and we thought it was our best life we could ever live. And God in his mercy came to us, opened our eyes, and convicted us of our sin, and enabled us to see the beauty of Christ, and enabled us to repent, and turn from our sin, and put our faith in him.

[34 : 22] He enabled us to do all that. We did it, but it was divinely enabled. It was all because of the sovereign grace of God that he gave us when we were on that wide road.

The Bible says when we were still sinners, God demonstrated his love for us, that Christ would die for us. And through the narrow gate and on that hard road, even as we live for Christ, even as we try to live out the Sermon on the Mount, we don't do it perfectly.

Yes, we do it sincerely, motivated by the grace of God, empowered by the Spirit of God. But brothers and sisters, we fall short.

We fall short. And if our salvation was determined by our ability to faithfully and perfectly live out this rule, both of these rules, living on that narrow way, in a way that perfectly pleased God in and of ourselves, none of us would make it.

The only way that we make it in the end is we plead the mercies and the merits of the one who did it perfectly.

[35 : 48] Our own merits will indict us and they will condemn us. So I left a question hanging on the first rule.

The question I left hanging was, what is our hope to live the golden rule since it is humanly impossible in and of ourselves to live it perfectly?

If you heard the sermon series at the beginning when we were in chapter 5, in Matthew 5, 17, Jesus said, I did not come to abolish the law and the prophets.

I came to fulfill them. And he did fulfill them. When Jesus hung on the cross, among the seven things that he said, one of the things he said was, it is finished.

What was finished? What was finished was what he came to do. What was finished was that he had completed the work that he came to this earth to do and part of that work was to fulfill the law and the prophets.

[37 : 11] Brothers and sisters, there would be an indictment on God's redemptive plan and on God's divine son if he came to this earth and he said that I have come to fulfill the law and the prophets and it's not fulfilled.

And his earthly ministry is done. But he did fulfill it. He fulfilled the law and the prophets. And brothers and sisters, our only hope to do what Jesus has said, loving God with all of our hearts, loving our neighbor as ourselves, doing unto others as we'd want them to do to us, demonstrating that the love of God is in our hearts.

The only way to do that perfectly is by resting on Jesus and trusting in Jesus. Jesus is our only hope.

He fulfilled the law and the prophets and God credits to us the work that Jesus Christ has done on behalf of sinners like you and me.

And so we have these two rules to live by. To love others as we love ourselves, it's a golden rule, and to live on the road that leads to life by entering through the narrow gate.

[38 : 40] And I think any honest assessment of these two rules will bring us to the sober conclusion that we cannot in and of ourselves fulfill them to the satisfaction of a perfect holy God.

Again, our only hope, our only hope is through the one who perfectly fulfilled them, and that's the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, for those of us who are believers, a critical mistake that we could make is thinking, well, we can't fulfill the law and the prophets perfectly.

We can't perfectly love our neighbor as ourselves. We can't perfectly do to others as we want them to do to us. We can't perfectly live on the narrow road.

And we can resign to not making any real effort. And we can say, well, I'm just going to rest on Jesus and trust in his finished work on my behalf.

[39 : 48] But brothers and sisters, that's a mistake to think like that. The Lord Jesus knows better than any of us that we cannot fulfill the golden rule and we cannot faithfully by ourselves live on the narrow road.

Yet he calls us to do it. He calls us to that endeavor. He lays that command upon us. even though he knows we cannot in and of ourselves perfectly do it.

And so, by God's grace, we need to make sincere efforts to live by these rules. And as I close this morning, I want to suggest a few ways that we can make earnest efforts to live by these two rules. verses, we seek to live out the golden rule all of us who belong to Christ should humbly and honestly think about our dealings with others.

This is practical and I pray that you are thinking about your relationships with others. and I pray that by the Spirit of God we are allowing the Spirit to illuminate those relationships and to convict us where we need to be convicted.

[41 : 26] Encourage us where we need to be encouraged as well, yes, but to be convicted where we need to be convicted. For example, are we giving less mercy than the mercy we ourselves want to receive?

are we showing the same kindness, patience, and forgiveness towards others as we ourselves want to receive?

Perhaps you're a boss or a supervisor. You have responsibility for employees. Are you dealing with those employees with the kind of grace and goodness that you yourself want to receive?

And would want to receive if you were in their position? For those of us who are husbands, how do we treat our wives in the exercise of our leadership?

Would you really want to be treated the way you treat your wife if you were in her position submitted to your authority?

[42 : 52] You see, brothers, I say this because I know how easy it is for us to focus on our authority that God has made us the head of our wives and not be mindful of our actions towards them and thinking if I were my wife, would I want to be treated the way I'm treating her?

And wives, if the roles were reversed, would you be satisfied with the manner of your submission and your support that you give to your husband?

If you were the one in his position, would you be satisfied with the respect, with the submission, with the support that you're giving to your husband as his wife?

Perhaps some of us who have been sinned against, how are you responding? how are you responding to the person who has sinned against you? Are you responding with patience and forgiveness that God has given to you in Jesus Christ?

And that you would want when you sin against others? I know doubt there are other ways that the Lord would be speaking to us in our different relationships that we have.

[44 : 23] But the same applies. the same applies that we are to be doing to others as we would wish them to do to us. And now some considerations for how we might apply the narrow gate and that role that we are called to live by.

Christ in his mercy has rescued us off of the broad road. And you know sometimes we should just ponder and think where we would be if he didn't. Some of us would have lived ruined lives. Some of us would have been in the darkest places. But Christ had mercy on us and rescued us off of that wide road that leads to destruction. And I think we need to hear this afresh and we need to take it to heart. We need to contemplate both of these roads and that road that takes us to destruction, the road that leads to life. And I think as we do, we will grow in our appreciation for the mercy that God has given to us. And this helps us because you know sometimes even though we're on that road that leads to life, we could foolishly desire to be on the easy road when we find that road to be so hard. [45 : 58] We could be delusional like Asaph in Psalm 73 where he's saying, I wash my hands in vain. Because when I look at the wicked, I see them prosper, I look at the righteous and I see them suffer.

And sometimes we need to remember, this road leads to life. That other road leads to destruction. There's a hymn I grew up singing in the Church of God. And some of you may know it's an old hymn titled It's Not an Easy Road. And they would sing that hymn regularly. For those who don't know it, I'll just read the first verse of it and the chorus. It's not an easy road. We're traveling to heaven. For many are the thorns on the way. It's not an easy road.

But the Savior is with us. His presence gives joy every day. And there's a difference between happiness and joy. Happiness is just by the word.

[47 : 12] It's happenstance. It's chancy. not so joy. There are seasons of our lives where we may be devoid of happiness, but there's a steady joy in our souls.

This is not dependent on circumstances. It's dependent on the one who gives joy. The one who is the fountain of joy.

Here's the chorus. No, no, it's not an easy road. No, no, it's not an easy road. But Jesus walks beside me and brightens the journey and lightens every load.

Brothers and sisters, it is beyond encouraging to think about any burden that we carry this morning and to remember that we don't carry the full weight of it.

God in his wisdom allows us to know burdens on the journey, but none of us carries that burden along because the Savior walks beside us and he's not just going to walk on the side of us and let us be burdened down with the full weight of our burden.

[48 : 29] He helps us to carry those burdens. He lightens every single load. And if you've served Christ for any reasonable length of time, you know this to be true.

You know this to be true when you come to trials, but the Savior is right there. Brothers and sisters, we need to regularly consider that the narrow gate is a gate of mercy.

It is a gate of mercy that God has brought us to. All of us, without exception, deserve to be on the broad road that leads to destruction.

All of us. None of us deserves to be on the narrow road. None of us deserve to come through that gate that's going to lead us to life. None of us.

And if you think you deserve it, you have to think again. You have to read Scripture again. All of us deserve one thing. We deserve death. Eternal death and separation from the Holy God.

[49 : 34] But he gave us mercy and brought us on the narrow road. And that gate that we have come through, that is a gate of mercy.

We should remember this. We should remember this. And it's not just grace to bring us to the road and on the road. It's grace that sustains us on the road.

We don't just get grace in the beginning of our salvation. No, we need grace every single day. gate. And that is the road of grace that he brings us to.

Every time that we fall short, and we fall short on the narrow road. Every time that we sin, and we sin walking in the light. We are children of the light, but yet we sin as we walk in the light.

The Bible says that we confess our sins. God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness. And he does that through the Lord Jesus Christ.

[50 : 40] It is his mercies that we get in those moments. The Lord Jesus Christ perfectly loved God.

The Lord Jesus Christ perfectly obeyed God, even to the point of death, even after in Gethsemane, as he cried out, Lord, if there be any way, Father, take this cup, if it is possible.

Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done. He did that for you, he did it for me, so that we could be on that narrow road that leads to life.

Brothers and sisters, our only hope this morning to make it to the end of the road, to make it to the destination of life, is the Lord Jesus Christ. We need to cling to him, we need to stay close to him. We shouldn't begrudge the narrow gate and the hard road, and we should hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, no matter what we face.

[51 : 55] Christ. If you're here this morning or whether watching or listening online, and you don't know Jesus Christ, you're probably wondering how all of this relates to you.

I mean, when you think about it, if even those who follow Christ, those who have committed their lives to Christ, cannot in and of themselves be saved, and make it to the end, what about you, who have not yet even trusted in Jesus Christ?

Well, the good news is that, like the rest of us, you can find your face at the foot of the cross. There's room for more at the foot of the cross.

And the grace and mercy that came to us is as real and as alive as it ever was. And so you are invited to come to Jesus, to come to the Savior who made this promise, all those who come to me, I will never turn away.

Never turn away. Not only will I receive you, I will never turn you away. That is the promise that the Lord Jesus Christ gives us. And that is our hope.

[53 : 28] Our hope is the God who cannot lie has said, you come to me, I will hold on to you and keep you to the very end. No matter what.

And so we invite you, come to this Savior. the destruction that it talks about in this passage we considered this morning, it's more than destruction in this life and a bad outcome in this life, it is an eternal destruction that is in view.

And so we say, come to Jesus, come to the only one who can rescue us from our failings, the only one who can take us off the broad road and bring us on that narrow road that leads to life.

My prayer is that you do that today. My prayer is you would do that today. Let's pray. Lord, thank you for the mercy and grace that has come to us through Jesus Christ that has transformed our hearts, that has enabled us to love others and do to them what we would want done to us.

And Lord, thank you for bringing us off the broad road that leads to destruction onto the narrow way that leads to life.

[55 : 19] I pray you would fill our hearts with amazement and gratitude for the sovereign grace that you have given to us. Would you do this, Lord? In Jesus' name, Amen.