

Connecting Church and Home

Quarter 1, Week 6 :: **The Entrance to Christ's Kingdom**

Treasure Story: Matthew 7:13-29

Illustrations are a powerful tool for speakers to use to connect with their audience. In today's Treasure Story, Jesus uses four illustrations to make the point that there are only two ways to live. We can either follow Jesus and become citizens of heaven, or we can despise Him and His Word and experience death.

Connect

"The *incorruptible* things are all within the narrow gate. The peace of God which passes all understanding—the bright hope of good things to come—the sense of the Spirit dwelling in us—the consciousness that we are pardoned, safe, ready, insured, provided for in time and eternity, whatever may happen—these are *true gold*, and *durable riches*."

- J. C. Ryle, *Practical Religion*, pg. 17

The illustrations made this point very clear to Jesus' audience, His disciples. There is an easy path with little resistance, and there is a hard path that is ultimately more difficult to follow but in the end leads to life. He also used sheep and wolves, fruit trees, and two men building houses to further illustrate this primary point. Christ's illustrations lead to a simple conclusion: if we take the hard path and follow God's commands, we will enter His kingdom. As you prepare to share the activities below with your family this week, think about the many blessings and hope that we receive as we follow Christ.

- **Paper Football:** Make a triangular football out of paper to use in a miniature game of football. You will create a goal with your hands by touching your thumbs together and extending your pointer fingers into the air. You children will try to flick the paper football so that it becomes airborne and flies through the makeshift goal. Start with a small narrow goal and gradually let it get bigger. Talk to your children about how much easier it is to get the football through the larger goal. Use this activity to begin talking about the large gate and the narrow gate in today's Treasure Story.
- **New Fruits:** Purchase some exotic fruits from the local grocery. Let your family members try them to see how they taste. Undoubtedly, there will be a few that they do not like as much as their standard favorites, like strawberries, apples, or watermelon. You can use this activity to begin talking about the good fruit and bad fruit in today's Treasure Story. Ask your family to explain what we mean when we talk about the fruit of our lives.

My Mission As Parent

- We have many options for most of the decisions we make each day. We can choose dozens of things to put on our hamburgers or to include in a new car purchase. We also have one big choice to make in the game of life, but Jesus taught that there were only two options to choose from. We can take the easy way, or we can take the hard way. As parents, are we taking the narrow path that Jesus described? Are we taking the time to teach our children the lessons they need to know, or are we making the wide path seem enticing by giving them an easy path without discipline?
- One of the greatest opportunities we have as parents is the ability to begin molding the foundation of our kids' faith. We can teach them Gospel truths, explain sin to them, and point them to our sinless Savior. However, our own lives must have a firm foundation before we can be used in our children's lives. Ask the Lord to help you rely on the foundation of Christ's love and grace and not your own efforts.

Prayer Points

- Praise God for His commands and for clearly teaching us what it means to follow Christ.
- Pray for your family. Ask God to give each member of your family the firm foundation of His Son so that they can follow Christ's way instead of the way of the world.
- Praise Jesus that He is our sinless Savior.