

Calvary Chapel  of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY BASKETBALL DEVOTIONS

4-9 year olds

February 25th, 2023

The Narrow Gate

The Narrow Gate

The objective is the goal or main teaching point of this week's study. If you convey one thing to your players, make it this.

Read this passage aloud to the kids, as it will be the focus of this week's study. Each week's memory verse will be in bold.

Here is where we will discuss today's passage with the players. This can be read off the page or summarized and explained in the coach's own words.

Objective This lesson will present the Gospel using **Matthew 7:13-14** and give the kids an opportunity to respond in faith.

Scripture Passage:

“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. **Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.**”

Matthew 7:13-14 (Memory Verse, Matthew 7:14, in **bold**)

In the Word

Imagine you were on a journey and you saw two paths in front of you. The first way is wide and easy to walk on, and there are many people taking that path. The second road is narrow and difficult, with few people on it. Which one would you choose?

These two paths represent the two different ways we can choose to live our lives. The first path, the easier one, represents the world's way, or living life the way we want. People on this path follow their own sinful, selfish desires and do whatever makes them happy. Many people choose this path because it's easier, sounds more fun, and is more popular. But in Matthew 7:13-14, Jesus warns us that this path leads to destruction. The Bible tells us that the punishment for our sins is death, and those who choose the way of sin will be separated from God forever.

Instead, Jesus tells us to take the narrow, difficult path, the path of following Him. This way requires you to give Him control of your life and obey His commands. That means doing all the things we learned about this season, such as being salt and light, loving your enemies, and storing up treasure in heaven. This way isn't easy, and not many people take it, but the end reward is worth it: eternal life in heaven with Jesus.

When you look at the end of these two paths, the choice seems obvious. But the problem is, all of us begin our lives on the first path, the path to destruction, because we are all born sinners. Sin is anything we think, say, or do that disobeys God, and the punishment for sin is death.

In the Word (Continued)

But God didn't want to be separated from us forever, so He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to save us from our sins. Jesus was born into the world as a human and lived a perfect, sinless life, but He died a criminal's death on the cross. By dying, He took the punishment that we deserved, and then on the third day, He rose again from the dead, defeating death. Now He offers all of us a way to be saved from our sins and live with Him forever.

If you want to be forgiven of your sins, all you have to do is believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose again for you and ask Him to forgive your sins and be your Lord (King) and Savior. When you do that, you can be sure that you will spend eternity with Jesus in heaven, where there is no more sin, death, suffering, sadness, or pain. If you have never asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior, you can do that today. Anyone can have their sins forgiven and become a child of God.

"On the Court" gives some in-game situations where today's lesson can be applied, while "Off the Court" gives examples from everyday life. Encourage them to do the things you listed during the game today.

On the Court

- The most important thing you can take away from this basketball season is knowing Jesus as your Lord and Savior. If you haven't made that choice before, do it today.
- When Jesus is your Savior, following Him is what's most important. Let everything you do on the court today be done for His glory.

Off the Court

- Some of your friends and family might not know Jesus. Tell them the good news that they can be forgiven of their sins and receive eternal life.
- The way of the crowd is the way of destruction. Don't do something that's wrong just because everyone else is doing it. Instead, follow Jesus and live to please Him.

These are some final notes/goals to accomplish this week. These are not meant to be read, but are instructions for the coach.

The Game Plan

1. Review last week's memory verse, Matthew 6:33, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." Give a ticket to any player who can recite it.
2. Learn and memorize Matthew 7:14 with your team. Encourage them to practice the verse over the week.
3. The main goal of this week is to present the Gospel to the kids and to give them an opportunity to respond. Let Chris know if anyone asks Jesus to be their Lord and Savior.