

Living is Dying

Matthew 7.12-14

Overview

- **Do to others what you wish they would do to you (v 12)**
 - Christ has just shown that God gives good gifts to those who love Him (v. 11)
 - Disciples of Jesus should likewise give good gifts, or do good to others in the same way we would want them to do to us.
 - Christ doesn't simply say "Don't do to others what you would want them to do to you"
 - He would likely affirm such a statement, but Jesus makes the command more difficult by making it more aggressive and saying it positively
 - Its not that we should just NOT treat others the way we want to be treated, but that we OUGHT to DO to others what we want them to do for us
 - By His ramping up the command we are reminded yet again of our inability to obey this command that reflects the entire Law and Prophets
 - This shows us our need for Christ and His obedience for us
 - God did for us what He wished we would have done for Him, namely by sending His Son to lay down His life in sacrificial Love and obedience
 - This models what it means to do to others...
 - Also, it reveals the Gospel which explains why the Golden Rule can be said to be the Law and the Prophets

- **The Gate is Wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction and most will enter it (v 13)**
 - Jesus understands that the average person will choose a life of ease and walk the way of destruction
 - Destruction here seems to be the opposite of 'life' (v 14), indicating death...hell
 - The way of ease is the life that follows after whatever the heart lusts after (Romans 1.24)

- **The Gate is Narrow and the way is hard that leads to life and few will enter it (v 14)**
 - Jesus lived this verse and the Golden rule to the letter:
 - His life was hard because He was doing to others what God would have them to do to Him
 - Because mankind is evil (v 11) it was hard and it will be for us that believe
 - Life comes to those that walk the narrow road that is hard:
 - We must die to ourselves and to the world in order to live
 - Christ's Resurrection shows that true life comes by dying

Questions

Discussion Starter: *Share some personal stories or others stories you are aware of that display what Christ teaches in the "Golden Rule"*

1. Read Matt. 7.12-14: Why it is important to notice Jesus doesn't just say "Don't do to others what you don't want them to do to you?" In what way does Jesus make this command more difficult to follow?
2. How does verse 12 equate to the Law and the Prophets (1T/OT)? In other words, how does this verse teach us the gospel?

3. Share some ways that Christ did this. Share some examples of how you can/should/need to obey this command (e.g. where do you find yourself struggling to obey?). Share some ways our church can/should/needs to obey this command.
4. How does this command and Christ's fulfillment of it point to the uniqueness of the Christian faith?
5. In verse 13 Jesus says the gate that leads to destruction is "wide and easy." What does this mean, and why is this the case? How are you tempted to walk through the wide gate?
6. In verse 14 Jesus says the gate that leads to life is "narrow and hard." What does this mean, and why is this the case? Is this what we see in Christ's life?
7. How do verses 13-14 inform our evaluation of the world and what is going on?
8. How can these verses encourage us to persevere in difficult times?
9. How does Jesus seem to understand what it means to have life? How does that compare to what our culture teaches us?

Accountability Question: *Discuss some places or people you are having trouble doing to others what you want them to do to you. Probe at why this is the case and apply the Gospel then pray for help to Gospel others as Christ "Gospeled" you in doing to you what God wished you would do for Him.*

Encourage others where there this has happened in the past few weeks.