

# Life: It's a matter of choice

Dominic Steele, Matthew 7:13-29

Jesus says ...

<sup>13</sup>"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. <sup>14</sup>But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

<sup>15</sup>"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. <sup>16</sup>By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup>Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup>A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup>Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup>Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

<sup>21</sup>"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>22</sup>Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' <sup>23</sup>Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

<sup>24</sup>"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup>The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. <sup>26</sup>But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. <sup>27</sup>The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

<sup>28</sup>When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, <sup>29</sup>because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

*Dear Jesus,*

*Today I acknowledge that I have not followed you as I ought.*

*I have failed to do what I ought to do and have done what I ought not to do.*

*Thankyou that in your death you have paid for my forgiveness.*

*Today with the help of God's spirit I am making a choice.*

*Today I choose life over destruction.*

*Today I choose narrow over broad*

*Today I choose good over bad*

*Today I choose obedience over evil*

*Today I choose rock over sand.*

*Today I choose to submit to you as my Lord.*

*Please by your spirit help me.*

*Amen.*

1 'The Options generation'

2 Choosing

a choosing a gate, path, destination 7:13-14

broad

narrow

easy

difficult

destruction

life

b choosing a teacher 7:15-20

i broad or narrow

ii fruit

bad fruit

good fruit

c choosing to be a follower 7:21-23 cf 24:24

evil doers

do Father's will

away from me

enter the kingdom

d choosing to build 7:24-27

hear and don't put into practice

hear and practice

great crash

stability

e choosing an authority 7:28-29

just another teacher

Lord

3 Making a choice today