



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

[CALL TO HEAR]

Matthew 7:12-14 ESV

The Golden Rule

¹²"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

¹³"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

**Pastor - "People of God, this is the Word of God."
People - "Thanks be to God."**

Pray

Illustration

What makes something Golden? Growing up most of us remember the Golden ticket from Willy Wonka, that was the epitome of the lottery for a kid, to gain entrance into the most secretive chocolate factory in the world (For Charlee's granddad it meant giving up his savings to buy one bar). A Gold album is when you sell over 500K of a record which used to be quite a feat when an artist may be only a one hit wonder (think of the work required to get a person to buy one album). I know that for many of us when choosing things like vacation packages, maintenance services, health insurances, and streaming subscriptions the gold standard is your top line with all the bells and whistles. It seems that our culture tells us that the 'Gold Standard' is what you get when you have finally made it. It is not something that everyone can get, it comes with a higher price tag, but it comes with more benefits. It is an attainable measure, but it comes with a cost.

There is also a 'Gold Standard' in Christianity as well and it is found here in v. 12.



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

This has been deemed the Golden Rule for all Christians and like our earthly Golden Standards that means something. It too has been categorized to be the top rule as it relates to others, perhaps even the rule that if one can perform this successfully then you know you have made 'it' (according to last week that means to us entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven). It is the highest moral for anyone to attain to, and if performed accurately leads us to the gateway into what we affectionately call eternal life, or in today's passage is called the 'Narrow Gate'. It is 'THE' way of living that takes people from all walks of life, all cultures, and all socio/economic status' and puts them on an even playing field and says everyone has that same ability to live with joy in God.

This Gold standard did come with a High Cost though, but that cost was not passed onto you. Let me put it this way, all people cannot afford this standard, as well all people cannot afford not to have this standard, BUT thanks be to God all people may attain this Standard through Faith in the payment of Christ on their behalf and **those fortunate few** will share in the equal benefits of its' blessings.

It is also important to note though, that every other way of living you must leave behind, this type of living does not mix with other philosophies. **It will cost the individual something**: any allegiance to one's past, one's independence, and one's loyalties to any party affiliations in this world. As Jesus said earlier, you cannot serve God and money (6:24), you cannot serve the world and the Kingdom, you cannot pick the Bronze/Silver package. There is no other level, there is only one standard family, the Golden Rule or nothing at all.

The upside of tackling this command though family is that the payout is a Larger Reward than anything you thought you could ever have and is infinitely more valuable than anything you are afraid of losing.

MP:



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

Loving your neighbor enables the discovery of the 'Narrow Gate'.

Our Lord does not desire to keep us out by such a command but He desires that none of His people should perish, that is why He is sharing this way. He understands His people will be different, they will aspire to live like Him, because the Christian's inspiration comes from a heart that has been changed by the selfless love of Christ. I am NOT saying the Golden Rule is easy, nor doable under our own will power, but I am making the same statement as scripture makes today, **God's people will do it.**

We also need to see family in the SoM today, this is the very first command that has come out of the SoM. Jesus up to this point has been describing, He has been pleading, He has been instructing, He has been warning, and now He calls us to go and accomplish this Kingdom life. **The SoM is not a sermon that says come and deliberate it says go and do;** I pray you are ready to do exactly that HCC!

Today to help us I just want to show us three things to help us *go and do*. First, we need to see **that what we do to others shows the law accomplished.** We do not perform the Golden Rule as an attempt to fulfill the law, the law has been fulfilled in Christ, the Golden Rule is fueled by His work, birthing a genuine affection for Him, producing faith that believes that even in our imperfect living He will be glorified. Secondly, we **strive to enter the Narrow gate while being wary for the Wide Way.** Striving to live in the Kingdom is hard but God blesses us with reminders when we can see the path that most chose. Lastly, **we embrace the hard life for it leads to an eternal one.** There is no other standard, there is no straddling the fence, choosing to live for Christ puts you at odds with this world, but the payoff is, it is now enjoyed for you know where you are going.

1. We do to others to show the accomplishment of the Law.

¹²"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

This rule can only be accomplished by a Christian for only a true believer can perform this. I once worked for a short time for a self-proclaimed Christian Counselor who claimed that there is truly no way for anyone to be altruistic; *having or showing an unselfish concern for the welfare of others*¹. If so, then Jesus has given an impossible command here for then no one would be able to live this way, for it calls for selfless living.

The term, the Golden Rule, is not mentioned by name anywhere in scripture but was a *categorical description* added by our religious forefathers in the 16-17th centuries. Much like this teaching of Jesus is called the *Sermon on the Mount*, but again that is a categorical name provided by men much later on. That does not mean though that it is not true nor accurate. Jesus used this Golden Rule as the standard for all people everywhere when He quoted it one time as one half of what we have come to call the **Law of Christ**.

Matthew 22:36-40 ESV

³⁶"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ 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."³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

If you want a quick translation of how that works, it means; **those that Love God first in their lives will love God's people the same way in which they love themselves.**

The world picked up on this Golden standard a long time ago, some of the oldest religions in the world have very similar teachings. Therefore, some have accused Jesus of borrowing the idea of the Golden Rule from the Eastern Religions.

- **Confucianism:** "Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you" (*Analects* 15:23)
- **Hinduism:** "This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you" (*Mahabharata* 5:1517)

¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/altruistic>



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

• **Buddhism:** "Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful"
(*Udanavarga* 5:18)

These texts for Confucianism, Hinduism, and Buddhism, cited above, were all written between 500 and 400 BC, at the earliest. What some modern historians neglect to discover or don't want to see is that Jesus got that from and even older teaching.

Leviticus 19:17-18 ESV

¹⁷"You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. ¹⁸You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but **you shall love your neighbor as yourself:** I am the Lord.

Jesus didn't steal anything, rather He gave that teaching to Moses about 1,000 years before the eastern religions. If anything, it shows their plagiarism.²

These sayings are similar to the Golden Rule but are stated *negatively* and rely on passivity. Jesus' Golden Rule is a *positive* command to show love proactively. The Eastern religions say, "Refrain from doing"; Jesus says, "make sure your accomplishing". The Eastern philosophies say it is enough to hold your negative behavior in check; Jesus says to look for ways to put your love to work! The world is always saying to us it is enough to just leave people alone, but God says go be involved in the lives of others! Family, this go and do command of the Golden rule is an active way not a passive one.

I am so glad Jesus did not copy the eastern religions; can you imagine that!? If Jesus lived as a disciple for Confucius, He would have been a pacifist and would have never confronted the Pharisees/Scribes/Sadducees. If He lived as a Hindu, He would have put the Sanhedrin/Herod/Rome first in all things not wanting to cause them or Himself pain. If He practiced Buddhism, He would have tolerated everybody and everyone, there would be no awareness of sin. **Not one of these philosophies are acceptable because none of them displays a love of God first (the Law of Christ) but displays the worldly love**

² <https://www.gotquestions.org/Golden-Rule.html>



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

of loving self above all! That's what we have been seeing with all the Kings in our daily Bible readings, don't rock the boat, go with what the people want, and in the end, it caused war, mass idolatry, exile, death, and even their own assassinations and ends to their family lines.

Jesus came and loved God first, He fulfilled the law and spoke out against false religions, and in return loved us as He wanted to be loved with encouragement to pursue God with everything you got. Only no one never did that for Him, none cheered Him on in Life, and instead people still brought Him pain when He only sought to bring life! And if you think you would have done differently family, is to be ignorant of your own behavior.

1 John 4:20-21 ESV

If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

If you have neglected to love actively, positively, and ongoingly Jesus' people, then you have neglected to love Jesus Himself. Yet there is still grace for you!

Now for His people, before we are ever repentant, He gives us His accomplishments by faith, His standing as righteous, which leads to repentance and the newfound ability to love God first! His people can now see that Christ came and anything He asks us to do has first been done by Him, secondly, we now know because of the resurrection it was done perfectly, thirdly that means I am judged by His work now not mine, therefore when I attempt this Golden Rule I am not judge by how well I did it, but did I try!

MP - Loving our neighbor as we want to be loved is positive movement towards the Narrow Gate. I don't enter in by my works, but my works in loving people shows I am already in, because only people loved by Jesus want to love others in that way! That is the only way to be altruistic, this is the only way to obey this command of Jesus. **Loving others shows that the law was**



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

accomplished by Christ for you. Family please, if you don't love others, if your feelings of self-preservation always win out over in wanting to preserve others, if you refrain from being involved instead of proactively seeking out to be involved, especially in your church family, repent because to me that sounds like the wrong path.

2. We strive to enter the Narrow Gate while being wary of the Wide Way.

¹³"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.

Illustration

I know you have done it. You have gone to a place like a ball game, or a theme park, the Atlanta airport, or back when we had checkout people at the grocery store, and in those experiences, what were you looking for all the time? That's right the **Narrow way**, the short line, the one that people are missing. You never knew you were so desperate for something until you were able to compare the Broad path to the Narrow Way.

I remember when I was at the grocery store as a kid, and it's a Saturday afternoon, and I am there with mom thinking how did I get here? She had spent the night before getting all her Winn Dixie stamps put on paper, that's what you did before your rewards number btw. She waited for me to cut the grass with dad, I got cleaned up, and she kidnapped me before I was able to set up my plans with my friends for the evening, and yes it looked like just out of a scene out of Stranger Things, where we were going to ride our bikes and get into minor mischief. Instead, I have been sucked into a mass of humanity herded together like cattle in the long lane that separates the shelving with all the product and check-out lines.

So, you are standing there, and to help your mom you try and find a perch on the cart so you can see above the heads of the people. Then, every once in a while, a miracle would happen. A new lane would open up, and not just that, but it would open up right next to you, and it was like a sunbeam from heaven, the pillar of light to show the way in a dark land shines forth to your Salvation. You grab the cart and yell at your mom, *"Move, Run, get to the Teller!"* The



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

feeling of elation when you got when you found that Narrow Way, the Narrow Gate, and understood Grace brought you there, not your work. Then you look out and you can see the mass of humanity that missed their chance, and you give thanks that you will be home in time to still make your plans come true.

Christian one of the blessings of Spiritual Birth is the ability to be able to see and inquire about the paths that are most beaten down and used by this world. We have seen some of those paths now and hopefully you are becoming more aware of the Wide Paths that lead to destruction, and you are looking for the Narrow Gates that lead to life, and when you are in the Kingdom you should be seeing them more often than not.

3 Wide Ways to be wary of:

- **Wide paths in coerced morality.**

We forget as Christians sometimes that just because the populace says that it is good to do doesn't mean you should be doing it:

- It is good to shut down the church for several weeks because church is not an essential service; nope won't do that again.
- It is good to wear a mask when you are not in close proximity (like driving in your car) to anyone to make people feel better, nope that's just tribal identification markers.
- It is good to let children determine their sexuality and wear what they want pretending to be what they are not.
- It is good to allow diverse and perverse literature into public libraries to corrupt/enrich the minds of the young.
- It is good to allow rioting and law breaking if it makes different cultures feel good about themselves.

The answer is NO, and here's why.

Galatians 1:10 ESV

For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, **I would not be a servant of Christ.**



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

To be a servant of Christ is not to follow coerced morality, Jesus never did that, and it caused Him persecution too, but that is a Wide Gate that you should be seeing by now.

- **Wide paths in friendly ecclesiology.**

As Christians it is sometimes easy to think if I just go along with the beliefs of the biggest and brightest then I won't be led astray.

- Just because it is a Mega Church with a Mega Pastor does not make them Mega Right! People like Joel Olsteen, Joyce Meyers, Andy Stanley, JD Grear, David Platt, Steven Ferguson, Bill Johnson, Rick Warren, Bill Hybels, Johnny Hunt, Creflo Dollar, Ed Stetzer, and the list goes on and on and gets bigger and bigger every year.
 - These churches teach tolerance and acceptance and that a sign of true belief is the money and numbers the church can bring in. Their Salvation is not in Faith alone but in Works displayed by physical wealth. **Gentile Way**
- Just because it is an old church does it mean it has the right way, like the Greek, Russian, Coptic, or Catholic Orthodox church.
 - These churches claim they teach justification by faith along with justification provided by the church in the sacraments. This has led a lot people to Hell, because people went out of this world not having made peace with God, but that got their last rights read over them by a Priest. **Pharisee Way**

What should you be looking for in your church, what does the narrow way look like?

1 Corinthians 2:2 ESV

For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Within the Narrow Gate is a church that holds to Scripture alone and believes it is the authority of God, and it is faith in Christ gifted to us by Grace alone



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

that saves. This Gospel saves this way so that the church should get no credit or man, but it saves to the glory of God alone. You want to know what is the oldest church around? It is the church of the elect that has held to the traditions since the first century, that baptizes believers only based upon a profession of faith and teaches only what is found in God's Word that men are saved by the eternal working of the Covenant of Grace through Christ. Are you on the Narrow way or are you still enticed by the Wide friendly ecclesiological path?

- **Wide paths in political sociology.**

Sometimes as Christians it is easy to get hanged up in just being a good citizen, follow the laws, cause no harm, and follow your ruler's lead.

- We should blindly accept DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) because this leads us to social peace; instead, it has led us to a weakening in our schools, infrastructures, military, and has taken fairness out of women sports.
- We should accept the tax structure and how the government spends money because they know best. If you have been watching the news lately you know the truth of that.
- We should accept the spying on in our lives for it is in the best interest of the country and democracy. While I don't like terrorists and gangs in my land, I do not want my government spying on my communication or even my shopping habits.
- We should accept the diminishing of freedoms to ensure the peace and stability in our land. The loss of things like the freedom of speech and the right to bear arms is what has led to some of our neighbors to lose their way of life and it has caused crime to spike in these lands because there is no government big enough to police itself into peace.

Exodus 23:2 ESV

You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice,



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

We don't use the law to bring about a social peace or a social justice for much of our governing leaders are depraved. **True biblical peace comes when the church is free to proclaim a true Gospel, and she is free to practice according to what God commands, not man.**

Family, the point I am trying to make, you need to wake up and look around and where you see the masses joining don't think that is what you need to do, be discerning, the more is not the merrier. As a matter of fact, the more trying to go through a Wide Gate the more dangerous that way is.

MP - We strive to enter the Narrow Gate by loving our neighbor rightly but be aware that the popular way of living usually does not lend itself to loving a neighbor well, it actually negates it.

3. We embrace the hard life for it leads to an eternal one.

¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

Jesus gets to the summation here in what He is saying. The Narrow gate, the one that loves a neighbor as oneself, that one that does to them as they would want done unto themselves, the one that that strives to discern the Narrow Way, that doesn't jump on every band wagon that comes by, IT IS HARD! The alarming reality is that only a few find it.

This past week it struck me, that out of the hundreds of thousands in the Nation of Israel in the days of the kings, the 10 tribes that left to follow Jeroboam, that by the time Ahab comes along, the Bible says in **1 Kings 19:18** *Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.* That was not even 1% of the population back then. It was only like a 120 years earlier their ancestors were in Jerusalem for the biggest religious festival of all time, when they partied for days over the completion of the Temple representing the presence of God being with them! It shows what happens when you follow the Wide Gate, when you allow yourself to accept the religious practices prescribed for you and you never questioned the governing authorities that lead you.



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

The Narrow way is hard, and it will only allow a few through, and it is by Grace you get in, therefore let us be diligent in making these ways know to our family, those we care about around us!

[CALL TO OBEY]

Romans 12:2 ESV

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- **We leave behind the 'cravings' of this world.** – *"You must start realizing that, by becoming a Christian, you become something exceptional and unusual."* – Martin Lloyd Jones

One of the first things that a Christian needs to realize is that God saved you an individual in a world where the majority is going through a Wide Gate. We have to forfeit the desire to have the toys like everyone else, to engage in pursuits like everyone else, and you must remind yourself verbally and speak it out loud, that you live for Christ, it is a better way, it is an eternal way, and it is the way that loves others. Speak the truth to yourself in love, *that you are not your own, but you have been bought with a price* (1 Cor 6:20).

- **We leave behind the 'spirit' of this world.**

Jesus has already taught us earlier in this sermon, *"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'* ³⁹ *But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. (Math 5:37-38).* The Spirit of this world says protect yourself, seek out a tribe and join with them like a gang and make an enemy, it is only by worldly alliances can you protect yourself. That is the description of our nation right now, if you are to be right then all others must be your enemy, and you cannot be for them. But being a peacemaker in the Kingdom means I don't seek vengeance, I don't pursue retribution, but I pursue love and, in the



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

church, we find support for these endeavors. We must not live in the spirit of the Wide Gate, for that will suck you in.

These things also mean you may have to choose to leave certain people. Jesus calls us to worry about the Narrow way, and if you want to help them then the best thing you can do is head for it and let them see the truth of this world in your life.

- **Choose to live in a way that helps others.**

Family the Narrow way is hard, but it is not done alone, in isolation, God has provided for us a people. We are here to help each other stay on this way and we are here to receive help in times of need from each other. **The way home is in the life we choose to live with each other now.** We stick together, we love together, and we rejoice together as we go through life finding encouragement for that path that is hard to follow. Again, you will not find this through self-preservation but through the act of helping to preserve others in this room, that is the Golden Rule.

MP:

Loving your neighbor enables the discovery of the 'Narrow Gate'.

Family let us pursue this worthy endeavor together, let us love as we want to be loved, let us all find this Narrow Path together.

Prayer

Communion

Matthew 26:26-29 ESV

²⁶ Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body."²⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you,²⁸ for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.²⁹ I tell you I will not drink again of this



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Today when you eat of the bread remember the life of Jesus. Jesus came to fulfill the law that was set before us, to love God with all he had and love His neighbors as Himself. Jesus loved us in a way that got our minds off of ourselves and put them on the things of the Kingdom by living a life of perfect obedience and perfect loyalty to the heart of the law. Praise be to Him for His perfect discipline!

Today when you drink the juice remember the cost of our sin displayed by His blood. We broke all the law as witnessed by our lives always caught up in the pursuit of the Wide Gates. We were headed for destruction until He offered His life for redemption, His life for ours, the perfected Golden Rule. Praise be to Him for His wonderful Love!

[CONFESSION OF FAITH]

* The Congregation will stand

Elder – "Christians, what do we believe?"
Congregation - recites

Romans 13:8-10 ESV

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

[OFFERING+LAST SONG]

[BENEDICTION]



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

Go in the name of the Father, that conceived the plan out of love for His rebellious children to find their way home to Him.

Go in the name of the Son, that perfected the Narrow Way marking clearly for us the way to go in the shadow of His cross.

Go in the name of and power of the HS, that opens our eyes to the two different ways, that chorales us towards the right path, and enables us to call out to others to join us.



Sermon on the Mount
Wk.29 "The Path that Few Follow"
By Pastor Jody May 03/09/2025

[BIBLIOGRAPHY]

Akin, Daniel L. [*Exalting Jesus in The Sermon on the Mount*](#)/Christ-Centered Exposition. (Brentwood, TN: B&H Publishing, 2019).

Lloyd-Jones, [*Martyn D. Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*](#)/One Volume Edition. (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1976).

MacArthur, John. Topical Sermon Series. Grace to You Ministries. *The Heart of Christian fasting, Part 2: Fasting in the Sermon on the Mount*.
<https://www.gty.org/library/blog/B110111/the-heart-of-christian-fasting-part-2-fasting-in-the-sermon-on-the-mount> (January 11, 2011), Web 2025.

Meyer, Jason. [*Lloyd-Jones on the Christian Life / Doctrine and life as Fuel and Fire*](#). (Wheaton, Ill., Crossway Publishing, 2018).

Morris, Leon. [*The Gospel According to Matthew*](#)/The New Pillar Commentary. (Grand Rapids, MI: Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1992).

Stott, John R. [*The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*](#)/Revised Edition. (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2020).

[*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016).