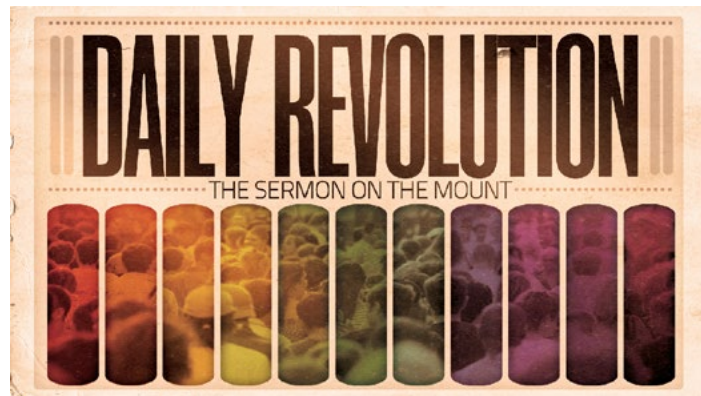


# BEYOND THE WEEKEND

For the sermon on June 15-16, 2013  
"The Narrow and Wide Gates"



**Welcome to *Beyond the Weekend!*** The experiences below are designed to connect with the weekend message and fit a variety of learning styles. They provide additional readings from other sections of Scripture such as the Old Testament, Psalms, Gospels, and Epistles (letters). Take 20-30 minutes each day and enjoy your pursuit of God!



Prefer e-mail? ***Beyond the Weekend*** is also available via daily e-mails, which include links to the Scripture (both written and audio), the sermon video, and a weekly blog post. To sign up for the daily e-mails, go to [adabible.org/btw](http://adabible.org/btw).

## Day 1 Matthew 16.24-28 | The Narrow Path

*Enter through the narrow gate...small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life,  
and only a few find it (Matthew 7.13-14).*

Christ beckons his people to walk the narrow path. The path is difficult because it leads us to deny ourselves; it is narrow to keep us focused on Christ and to protect us from paths that can harm or steer us away from our Lord. Clearly, Jesus' goal is not our comfort, but rather our transformation into a life that mirrors the character and heart of God—nothing less.

This narrow path is marked by the cross. When God calls us to take up our cross and follow him he means for us to identify wholly with the sacrifice of Christ and pattern our life after his. It shouldn't be burdensome because Christ is with us. He doesn't ask us to walk where he has not already been. He was "tempted in every way" (Hebrews 4.15), but he focused on pleasing the Father. His sinless perfection made possible his offer of salvation. And praise God! We can share in his nature and follow his example through trusting him for salvation and accepting his righteous life into our own (Romans 3.21-26).

Today, assess the road you are walking. Is it the wide, easy path (serving your own interests) or the narrow, difficult path (denying yourself like Christ)? Is it marked with an eye on pleasing the Father? Read Matthew 16.24-28 and assess what areas you need to surrender to God's guidance. Commit that to him and ask him to enable you to walk the narrow road more faithfully.

## Day 2 Jonah 1-4 | The Wide Path

*... wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction,  
and many enter through it (Matthew 7.13).*

The path of destruction is wide because it promises to satisfy our cravings and meet our deepest needs. Who wouldn't want that? But the wide path is a dead end because our cravings and passions become an end unto themselves. They lead us away from our Lord and in the end toward death (Romans 6.23).

Consider the life of Jonah. God called him to warn the Ninevites about their evil ways, but he instead ran the other way and sought his own plan for his life. He ended up on a boat in stormy seas, was thrown overboard, and swallowed by a giant fish. After three days of contemplating his wayward ways, he repented and determined to return to God's path.

Today, read the story of Jonah and listen to "The Chasing Song" by Andrew Peterson (search youtube.com). Pay attention to the lyrics, and notice the refrain, "David, he chased God's own heart. All I ever seem to chase is me." Ask God to reveal anything in your life leading you to follow your own desires. Repent as Jonah did, and ask the Lord to strengthen your resolve to chase him.

## Day 3 Luke 4.1-13 | Temptation

Christ calls us to be satisfied most by him and sustained most by his grace. However, we will always be tempted to pursue lesser things like food, money, power, or comfort. No one is immune to this pull, and yet "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it" (1 Corinthians 10.13).

In Luke 4.1-13, Jesus had been fasting for 40 days and in his weakness was tempted by the devil. Jesus overcomes his temptations. How? By calling to mind Scripture and by leaning on God's promises to sustain him. Today, consider memorizing verses that can help sustain you when you are tempted. Start with Proverbs 3.5-6; Romans 8.37; Hebrews 4.16; James 4.17 and 1 John 1.9.

### BTW Blog

Ada Bible Church staff and leaders share how God is meeting them through the sermons. BTW blog posts are hosted on Sabea, our blog for spiritual formation, and go live on Wednesdays.

This week we hear from Doug Bishop, venue pastor in the Studio, Cascade Campus.

[adabile.org/sabea](http://adabile.org/sabea)



## Day 4 Psalm 42 | Hunger for Righteousness

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled (Matthew 5.6).*

The narrow path is marked by a continuous hunger to live for God—also called *the righteous life* in Scripture. We hunger for the things of God and want to know him, be like him, and love him more. Jesus said that in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven our righteousness must exceed the militant discipline of the Pharisees (Matthew 5.20). What hope do we have?

The Bible is clear that none of us can obey the law fully (Romans 3.10); but a righteousness from heaven is revealed through Christ Jesus who gives us his own righteousness when we trust in him (Romans 3.21-26). Through that exchange, granted by God's grace through faith, our righteousness can actually exceed that of the Pharisees. Do you hunger for Jesus and for his righteousness? To help you hunger for him more, read Psalm 42 and listen to the song, "In Christ Alone" (search youtube.com).

## Day 5 Matthew 7.21; Psalm 24 | Each Is Called Alone

Christ's call is a relational one. In effect, he says: *Come and follow me. Walk with me. Love me. Have it mark you as a constant desire in life. You will not be saved by going to church, or because your parents were Christians. You have to own your own faith and walk accordingly.* "Whether disciples want to or not, they have to make a decision; each has to decide alone...Christ makes everyone he calls into an individual. Each is called alone. Each must follow alone" (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship*, p. 92).

Today, read the passages above, and ask God to shed light on your commitment to him. Consider just one area of your life—your life in church. Why do you attend Ada Bible Church? What is your motivation? Is it to know and love God more? Or is it something less? Surrender this to the Lord and commit to following him simply for him—to know and love *him* more.

## MORE

**Daily E-mail** | Sign up for daily e-mails at [adabile.org/btw](http://adabile.org/btw).

**Small Group Discussion** | For a discussion guide related to the sermon, e-mail [rcorlett@adabile.org](mailto:rcorlett@adabile.org).

**Questions or Comments** | Contact Tim Nelson, pastor of spiritual formation, at [tnelson@adabile.org](mailto:tnelson@adabile.org).



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