

Weekly Bible Study for Highcliffe and Bransgore Methodist Churches

MATTHEW 7:13-14 Enter through the Narrow gate by Norman Bonnett w/c Sunday 2nd August 2020

Do read the two verses again and consider, if you will, the ways in which choices surround our lives. They are there in our early years -choosing friends, games to play, what to eat and so on. They are especially there in our late teenage time. Who shall I marry? What job shall I do? Shall I go to university? And so, I could go on.

I would like you to think for a moment of what choices you have made in your life, were they easy? Were they right? Were they choices between two options – or were they more?

Write down the choices you made in your life which turned out successfully -and those which were not successful:

Successful

Unsuccessful

I started out as a bank clerk – and that was a wrong choice. Thankfully my two years National Service made me think it out again and I became a teacher which was, without doubt, the correct choice.

Jesus is here presenting an inescapable choice. There are, says Jesus, two gates, one narrow and one broad. There is no third option – no half- way house, no self-made everything in moderation religious road, just a straight choice, one or the other.

The broad way is easy, it allows for a diversity of opinion and a laxity of morals. It is a way of anything goes, if it feels good just do it, your happiness overrides everything - many people are on this road. By contrast the hard way is narrow and is used by the few. It is dependent on God's truth; it is a way of the cross and a way of holiness. For many of us who have made the choice the implications were challenging and the thoughts to turn back sometimes surfaced. But to find the narrow gate is to find the road to true life and true joy.

That life, eternal life, begins here and now in the certainty of sins forgiven, of fellowship with God, of an awareness that He, the creator of the universe, walks with me and talks with me and He tells me I am His own.

Spend a few minutes thinking: have I decided to enter through the narrow gate and follow Jesus?

Notes:

This very morning Jill and I were pointed to Ephesians 4: 3-6. It underlines the focus and clarity we find in the choice of the One God and the One Gospel to which we are all called. It is also put so well in Deuteronomy 30: verse 19b “choose life... “ to the end of the chapter.

May you all be blessed in Him - Norman