

Small Group Discussion:

How can a person that tithes, is active in church, and emotionally involved lack authenticity?

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Text messaging Exercise #1

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“But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life”

**Matthew 7:13-27** - New International Version (NIV)

## **The Narrow and Wide Gates**

<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.**

## **True and False Prophets**

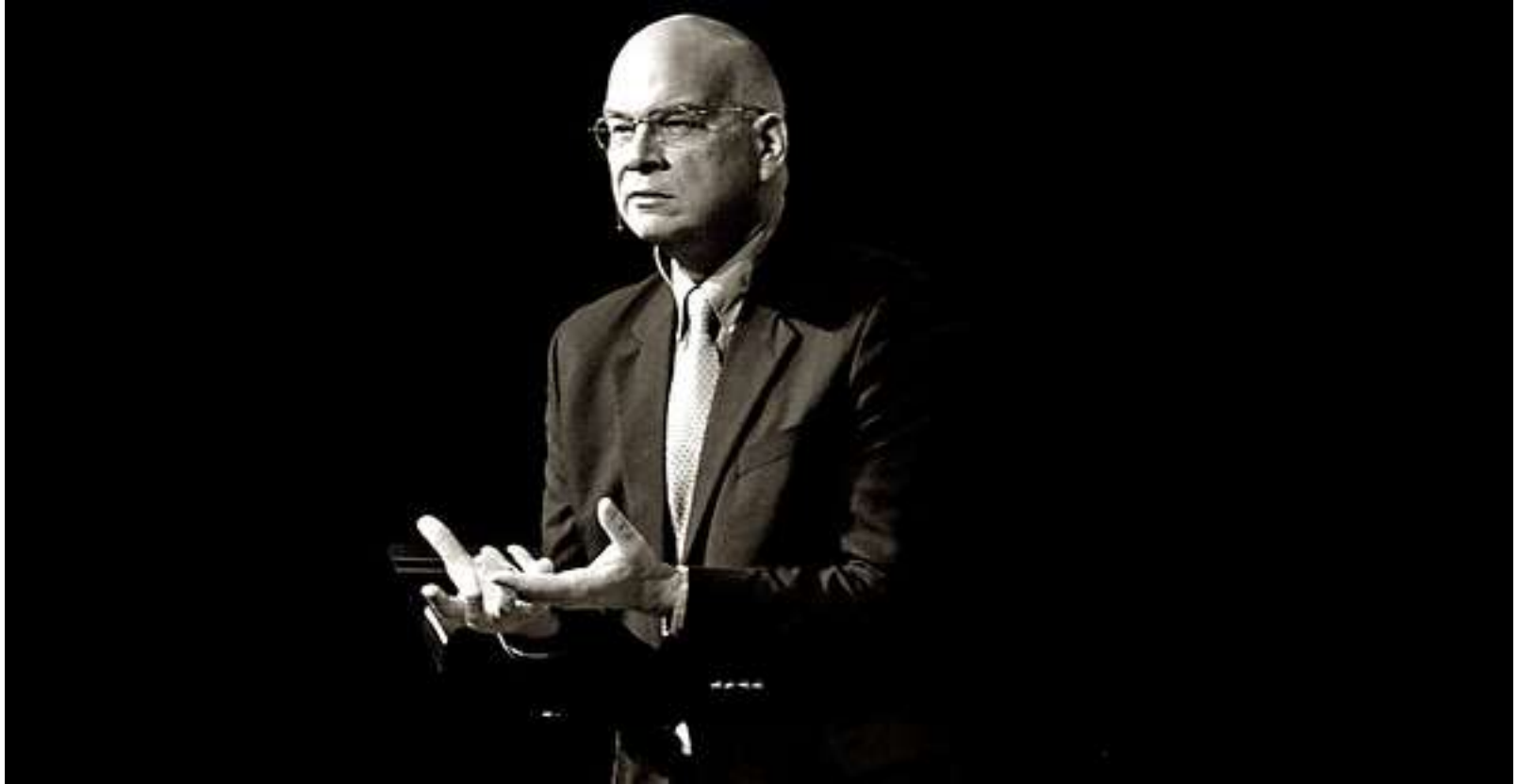
<sup>15</sup> “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. <sup>16</sup> By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but 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.

## **True and False Disciples**

<sup>21</sup> “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one 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 in your name perform many miracles?’ <sup>23</sup> Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

## **The Wise and Foolish Builders**

<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.”



Pastor Timothy Keller  
“Authentic Christianity”  
[www.redeemer.com/](http://www.redeemer.com/)

“Authentic Christianity” by Timothy Keller:

This is a collection of sermons from Dr. Keller called “The Hard Sayings of Jesus”

This passage ends the lengthy Sermon on the Mount found on Mathew CH 5 and 6.

Jesus give us three areas for us to recognize true from false

1. In the world, you are going have presented to you various ways to God. Jesus says you have to discern the true from the false.
2. You will have lots of teachers. Jesus says that not all of the teachers can be trusted.
3. There are lots of people who think they are Christians. But not are all authentic Christians. Some are self deceived and some are counter fit.

Dr. Keller allocates the rest of this time to discuss #1 and #3 above.

Our culture says that it is not a good idea to be judgmental.

This is a sobering set of teachings that we have to come to grips with so that we live authentic lives. We need to possess the ability to judge authenticity in our beliefs.

“Authentic Christianity” by Timothy Keller:

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Other versions state “straight is the gate”

What is Jesus saying here?

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What is Jesus saying here?

1. Everyone is on a road that leads to a spiritual destination. Everyone is on a religious path that has consequences. A brilliant metaphor.
2. Your faith commitments are taking you some where
3. “I am not a religious person and require hard proof” is in fact a spiritual destination.
4. There is no neutrality. The modern mindset is that there are many roads leading to one destination. Jesus says that are two roads going to two opposite destinations.
5. The word narrow in Greek = hard

“Authentic Christianity” by Timothy Keller:

Blaise Pascal (1623 – 1662)

A great intellect of history.

A Christian with a lot of skeptical friends in Paris, France.

He authored what is now called the Pascal wager

Person X: Believes there is a God, a judgment day, and an afterlife where he is either saved or lost. Putting his faith in God.

Person Y: Does not believe in God. No potential to be either lost or saved. Can not prove there is a God or differentiated afterlife.



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Both are wagering their lives on their belief system. Most things that have beauty and meaning can't be proven or disproven. If you do not believe in Christianity, that is a gamble. You owe it to yourself to thoroughly investigate them matter.

“Authentic Christianity” by Timothy Keller:

Does Christianity teach intolerance?

To be civil = to be polite. To show respect for people that have different views.

Many civilizations have been build on Jesus’ example of tolerance (Matthew 5:43)

Social tolerance – yes

Relational tolerance – yes

Legal tolerance – yes – see our first amendment.

This is the essence of civilization.

Theological tolerance – impossible

Saying that all roads go to the top (all religions are relative) is in fact a religion.

“You must not convert” = saying that my religion is superior.

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- Orthodoxy of doctrine – the believe in God and the savior
- Emotional involved – Lord Lord (intensity of emotion) they are excited about Jesus
- Active in service – Teachers of the word, lead people to Chris. Deeply involved in ministry.



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But I never knew you!!!



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Does not demonstrate that you are a Christian

## The selling of indulgences by the Catholic Church



Martin Luther

- German monk, priest, professor of theology
- Refused to accept that freedom from God's punishment (indulgence) for sin could be purchased with money.
- He confronted indulgence salesman Johann Tetzel with his Ninety-Five Theses in 1517.
- Triggered the Protestant Reformation.



## Lordship issue – the mark of authenticity

- He who does the will of my father.
- You either abandon your will or your do not. You can have it both ways
- It is possible to be emotionally stimulated and socially useful and not want God.
- Are you serving God or using God?
- I want the sense of meaning in life, however I dot want to be a in position to decide for myself.
- I do not want to be in a position where I do not get to decide for myself.
- Have you surrendered your will?
- Authentic = Teachable with many faults.
- Authentic = Quick to repent and forgive
- Authentic = I want to know when I am disobedient
- See Saul and challenge from Samuel. Saul: You fool God did not want the sheep.



## The Grace Issue – the mark of authenticity

- A grasp of the grace of God
- The house represents all of the religious activity
- The one house is based on the rock of Jesus Christ.
- The second house is on sand meaning that the other house is its own foundation.
- If your obedience is your own foundation, he will never know you.
- A Christian says: “Father, my repentance is half hearted, my affection for you is cold, my obedience is weak. I fail often, but your son dies for me, died my death, paid my penalty and welcomed me for his sake.
- You admit that a person can only be a Christian by the Grace of God alone.
- See Paul in Phil 3: My faultless record is counted as lost so that I can gain Christ.
- Acceptability only through God and Christ
- Only then is my house build on a rock.
- You become personal with God. Not an abstraction.
- A sense of personal dealing. Not just a flare.