



MOUNTAINSTREAMNEWS

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THE NARROW WAY

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR



*Matthew 7:13-14
"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. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few"*

Popularity is highly valued today. For example, people with large social media followings are able to monetize their popularity by selling their influence to market products. Entities with many adherents point to their numbers as proof of their value and worth. Alongside popularity, ease is also in high demand. Our most brilliant minds devote themselves to inventing products to make life easier – and ingenious people try to discover “hacks” aimed at making life even easier. It

is no wonder that Jesus’ declaration about the pathway into the Kingdom of God seems so jarring to many. Jesus reveals that the way into the kingdom of God is not easy and popular, but narrow, difficult and unpopular.

The path of true spirituality – a genuine, personal relationship with Christ – proves difficult for many of us because it requires the opposite of what our sinful nature prefers. Walking with God demands humility and dependence on Him, while we like to boast about our own strength and independence. It requires admission of our utter sinfulness, while we like to declare ourselves “good people.” It requires admission of our absolute inability to save ourselves while we venerate “pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps.” It requires sacrifice and suffering while we prefer self-indulgence and ease. No wonder it is avoided by so many. Our desire for ease has led us so far as to invent an alternate form of spirituality which really isn’t spirituality at all.

This alternate pathway promises spirituality on easier terms. It promotes indulgence by claiming

that God is primarily concerned about our happiness. It tells us we can set our own adjustable standards of right and wrong. It denies that following Christ demands daily self-sacrifice. Ultimately it tells us we don’t need to conform ourselves to Christ’s image – we can conform Him to ours instead.

Unfortunately, but predictably, this pseudo-spirituality has drawn many under its sway.

In direct opposition to this “spirituality” Jesus says that people who are serious about following Him must be content to be in the minority. They must be willing to embrace difficulty – and even suffering. They must be willing to walk the hard and narrow way. They must be willing to sacrifice quantity of companions for the one True Companion. May God protect us from being discouraged that we are not crowd favorites. May we recognize that the way of Christ can only be followed by those who are willing to give their all to Him.

God bless you,
Pastor James

ARISE AND GO, FOR THIS IS NO PLACE OF REST



Dear Friends,
I urge you, as alien and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. 1 Peter 2:11

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WEEK

<p>CORPORATE PRAYER TUE @ 7 PM</p> <p>May 4 Join us via Zoom video Please contact Pastor James for log on information at rcantio@gmail.com</p>	<p>EVENING SERVICES 1st & 3rd SUN @ 6 PM</p> <p>May 16 via Zoom Please email us at mountainstreamchurch@gmail.com for login information.</p>	<p>WORSHIP SERVICE SUN @ 11 AM</p> <p>May 9 In-person service and livestream. Livestreaming only on Facebook and our church's website.</p>
<p>QUICK TIPS</p> <p>Two ways to give your offering. Traditional with a check by mail or through our secured website online giving is now possible. Please remember to hit "SAVE" after you give if you did not set up an account so the church can have a record of who gave for tax purposes. Thank you!</p>	<p>YOUTH GROUP FRI @ 6:45 PM</p> <p>May 7 Youth meetings are in-person at church.</p>	<p>VIRTUAL KIDZONE SUN @ 4 PM</p> <p>May 9 Kidzone is available every Sunday. Contact Candice at candicebrich@gmail.com for log on information.</p>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Men's Breakfast Saturday at 9am.** Invite a friend and bring something to share for breakfast if you can.
- Join us on Saturday May 15th as we participate in the annual Middle Smithfield Street Clean Up. Please contact Tom Watson for details.
- Beginning in May, we will have **two evening services.** In-person on the First Sunday Evening in the month, and online on the Third Sunday. Both services start at 6 pm. Looking forward to seeing you!
- Please support the Pregnancy Resource Center of the Pocono's virtual Fundraising Banquet on Thursday May 13 at 7 pm. You may access the banquet at prepoconos.org.
- (SSI) program provides monthly payments to adults & children with disabilities who have income and resources below specified amounts. And 65 and older without disabilities who meet the financial limits. visit <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/> or call 1-800-772-1213.
- **Bible reading plans for 2021** are available at the Information Table and on our website. Also read Jimmie VanSant's daily blog.
- We are excited to have you at our in-person worship at 11 am on Sundays. Please call ahead to 570 856 3310 or email us at mountainstreamchurch@gmail.com to let us know you are coming.
- Please see our webpage for detailed information on in-person gatherings.