

THE NARROW WAY
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Matthew 7:7-14

1. Jesus concluded the teaching portion of His message in verses 7-12.
 - a. We are to actively pursue the things of God.
 - b. We are to treat others the way we would want to be treated.
2. In verse 13 He began to apply His teaching. Martyn Lloyd-Jones
 - a. "Now that you have heard from the King the principles of My Kingdom what are you going to do with them?"
 - b. "It is not praise Jesus desires, it is practice."

NOTE: It is not enough to agree with, appreciate, and admire Jesus' teaching; His teaching must be embraced and applied.
3. As we will see over the next several weeks Jesus commands and expects obedience.
4. God has always placed a clear choice before those who profess to be identified with Him.
 - a. Deuteronomy 30:19-20
"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, **20 by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him**; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."
 - b. Joshua 24:14-15
"Now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. 15 "If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."
 - c. 1 Kings 18:21
Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people did not answer him a word.
 - d. Revelation 3:15-16
"I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 16 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.'"
5. In these, and the concluding verses of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus clearly defined the choices before us and the consequences of those choices.

NOTE: It is a sad reality that many ignore the implications contained in these verses.
6. One of my favorite poems was written by John Oxenham. It goes:
"To every man there openeth a Way, and Ways, and a Way,
And the High Soul climbs the High Way, and the Low Soul gropes the Low,
And in between, on misty flats, the rest run to and fro.
But to every man there openeth a High Way and a Low,
And every man decideth the Way his soul shall go."

I. Two gates.

- A. The gate Jesus recommends is the narrow or small gate.
- B. It is the narrow gate through which we gain entrance to the narrow way that leads to life.
- C. The language used here reveals that the narrow gate:
 - 1. Admits people one at a time.
 - 2. Admits people by invitation only.
 - 3. Is not easy to enter because of obstacles that are in the way.
 - 4. Cannot be entered without dealing with those obstacles; things like sin, self, and surrender.
 - 5. Is not the choice of most people.
- D. What we must remember is that the narrow gate and the wide gate both have the same destination posted over them.

NOTE: Sadly, recent surveys have revealed that many people who claim to be born again evangelicals actually believe that there is more than one way to God.

E. Additionally, many modern approaches to evangelism are not biblical because they do not deal with the doctrines related to original sin, human depravity, repentance, and lordship.

F. Jesus and the Apostles repeatedly stated that God has provided only one way to be reconciled to Him.

1. John 10:9

"I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture."

2. John 14:6

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

3. Acts 4:12

"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

4. 1 Timothy 2:5

"For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

G. The wide gate is the popular gate because it is easily entered due to few obstacles.

- 1. Just pray the "Sinner's Prayer," and be baptized and you are on your way to Heaven.
- 2. Just sincerely believe whatever you believe and you will be alright.

II. Two ways.

A. The way that leads to life is described by Jesus as the narrow way.

- 1. Its boundaries are clearly defined.
- 2. It's the uncrowded way, and therefore, often the lonely way.
- 3. It calls for faith and endurance. Heb 12:1-3

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

4. It is the way that leads others to Christ. (Proverbs 10:17 AMP)

"He who heeds instruction and correction is [not only himself] in the way of life [but also] is a way of life to others."

B. The way that leads to destruction is the broad, well-populated way.

1. Its boundaries are undefined.
2. It's the popular, and therefore, crowded way.
3. It's the crowded way because it is the inclusive way.

“The way that is broad is the easy, attractive, inclusive, indulgent, permissive, and self-oriented way of the world. There are few rules, few restrictions, and few requirements. All you need to do is profess Jesus, or at least be religious, and you are readily accepted in that large and diverse group. Sin is tolerated, truth is moderated, and humility is ignored. God's Word is praised but not studied, and His standards are admired but not followed. This way requires no spiritual maturity, no moral character, no commitment, and no sacrifice. It is the easy way of floating downstream in ‘the course of this world according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.’ (Ephesians 2:2) It is the tragic way ‘which seems right to a man,’ but whose ‘end is the way of death.’” (Proverbs 14:12) John McArthur

III. Two destinations.

- A. Life eternal and all that it involves.
- B. Destruction, ruin, loss, and eternal damnation.

IV. Two groups.

A. The few.

1. Jesus was asked on one occasion, “Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?”

Luke 13:23

2. His response is recorded in Luke 13:24-30.

"Strive to enter through the narrow door; **for many**, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. 25 "Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up to us!' then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.' 26 "Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets'; 27 and He will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you are from; DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS.' 28 "In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being thrown out. 29 "And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God. 30 "And behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last."

B. The many. Titus 1:10, 16

“For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers...16 They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.”

APPLICATION

1. All of this does not mean that those on the narrow way will never stumble or struggle, but it does mean that they will keep on keeping on..
2. It does mean that those who have entered the narrow gate have genuinely repented of sin and have actually embraced, by faith, Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
3. Because they have they are born again children of God, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and determined, by the grace of God, to faithfully follow Jesus while being transformed into His image and accomplishing His work.