

#205 “The Narrow Way”
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Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14, “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.” Jesus said that there are two options when it comes to our eternal destinies. The road to destruction is broad like a six-lane highway. It is easy to pass through the gate, and, because of the multitudes who also go that way, there is great peer-pressure to join the crowd. On the other hand, there is a small gate that only a few pass through. The wide road looks smoother, easier, faster, and wiser, and the narrow road appears difficult, lonely, and of poor visibility. It requires faith to take the lesser traveled road, but most choose to trust their sight rather than to walk by faith. Only the narrow road leads to life, and few find it because few are even interested in bothering to investigate it. Those who do consider the narrow way often conclude that Jesus’ teaching is too burdensome because of the obedience required. Rejecting Jesus, the great majority find themselves ensnared by the lusts of sin, harmed by its travails, and empty at heart. Seeking only temporary pleasure after temporary pleasure, they miss the abundant life that only Jesus provides (John 10:10). Truth-seekers, on the other hand, question the merits of how things appear, and they seek out how things really are. This leads them to Christ, to faith, and to the narrow path (John 3:21). There are not many of these people, but these will be rewarded.

There is a temptation amongst evangelical leaders to want to give in to more ecumenical thinking. Some teach that a person could find Jesus despite being part of a false religion that rejects Jesus as Messiah. This conclusion is firmly anti-biblical, but it is much more palatable to the world which despises those of us who teach that there is only one way to God, namely, Jesus Christ. They hate this kind of thinking, calling it narrow-minded. They don’t realize that they are complimenting us by affirming that we are heeding the call of Scripture which teaches a narrow way. Christians should think through things from every angle, but, in the end, their open-mindedness guided by Scriptural truth will make them narrow-minded in terms of the gospel message. Anything else would be an abomination and a blasphemy to the sacrificial death and resurrection of our Lord. The fact remains that any who reject Christ will end up in the lake of fire forever. If this wasn’t true, why would Christ suffer through the cross? He loved mankind enough to make a way of escape for them, but, sadly, most spite Him and race to the fire of hell. Ecumenism is a false comfort for teachers and preachers of false gospels. The truth remains that the way is narrow, and few find it.

The history of man recorded in the Old Testament proves Jesus’ thesis concerning few finding life. Only Noah and his family were saved from the worldwide flood. This means that only a handful of people out of all of the people living on the entire planet were righteous before God. As Genesis 7:1 says, “Then the LORD said to Noah, ‘Enter the ark, you and all your household, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this time.’” All the rest had chosen the wide road of destruction. They all thought that

Noah was out of his mind and that he was a narrow-minded religious loon or bigot. But it was Noah who was right while the entire world (yes, the entire world!) was wrong. That is some intense peer pressure not to bow to and some incredible faith to hold fast to the truth. The way is indeed narrow.

Lest we dismiss Noah's case as a rare exception, we should remember Abraham's conversation with God concerning Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:20-33). Abraham began by asking God to spare the cities if there were fifty righteous persons. Perhaps knowing that that number was too generous, he kept asking God until the number was cut to ten. If there were ten righteous persons in the two cities, then God would recant on His promise to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Yet the cities were destroyed, and only righteous Lot (2 Peter 2:7) was spared along with his two daughters. Even Lot's wife turned back and was turned to a pillar of salt (Genesis 19:26). The fact remains that there are few righteous.

Things were equally bad if not worse in Jesus' day, for He said that the day of judgment would be better for Sodom and Gomorrah than for the unbelieving people to whom He preached (Matthew 11:21-24). They had additional revelation, seeing Jesus in the flesh and His miracles, but still they rejected Him. Many crowds initially followed Jesus, but, after a while, they turned away, thinking that the teaching was too difficult for them (John 6:60, 66). It would require too many changes and too much obedience, and they rejected Him. In the end, eleven disciples followed Him. Jesus' own family initially rejected Him, and His own hometown refused to receive Him (Matthew 13:57). But God faithfully grew His church throughout the book of Acts. Yet, lest we get overexcited, we should remember Paul's testimony that all who were in Asia who had professed Christ as a result of his missionary journeys had since turned away (Acts 19:26, 2 Timothy 1:15). Timothy reminded us that things will go from bad to worse with deceivers and those being deceived constantly growing (2 Timothy 3:13). We who are righteous must stand fast and finish the race even if few join us along the narrow path. Even if we have to walk it alone or with the company of only our families, this we must do.

God desires many to come to faith (2 Peter 3:9), and He calls us as His witnesses (Acts 1:8). There will be people from every tribe, tongue, and nation in heaven (Revelation 5:9, 7:9), but, compared to all who have walked the earth, it will be a very, very small number. In this world, it is a badge of dishonor to be a part of the few, but it is a guarantee of heavenly honor. Wise men will wear the badge of Christ with joy, looking fully to the reward.