

**Matt. 7:13-14:** Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide & the way is easy that leads to destruction, & those who enter by it are many. <sup>14</sup> For the gate is narrow & the way is hard that leads to life, & those who find it are few.

**Intro:** We must make many choices in life. But one choice is more important than all others! Jesus' conclusion!

- **Moses: Deuteronomy 30:19:** I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live

- **Joshua 24:15:** And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

- **Jeremiah 21:8:** Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death.

**There's a choice behind our choice:** God's choice: **Acts 13:48:** as many as were appointed to eternal life believed

- **John 6:44:** No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.

- **Of The Righteous And The Wicked:** We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

- **Of The World To Come:** We believe that the end of the world is approaching; that at the last day Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

**Jesus concludes His sermon with 4 warnings: Boice:** What Jesus says in these last verses is that everyone must choose either one way or the other of two ways, exactly what Jeremiah said when he wrote of "the way of life & the way of death", or what the first Psalm urges when it contrasts those who "walk in the counsel of the wicked" with those whose "delight is in the law of the Lord". Here Jesus presses his points by a series of four contrasting images. He speaks of two gates (& two paths), two trees (or teachers), two claims (or professions), & two builders (or foundations). In each case the choice of the one way leads to heaven; the choice of the other leads to hell.

**The verses we are focusing on today: Voddie Baucham:** Two entrances (narrow/wide way); two paths (narrow & hard path/broad & easy path); two crowds (the few/ the many); and two destinations (life/destruction)

### **1. Jesus' Command: Enter By The Narrow Gate**

**Matthew 7:13:** Enter by the narrow gate.

**a. What is the narrow gate? 1) It's entering the Kingdom of Heaven: Matthew 7:21:** Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

- **Matthew 18:3:** unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

**2) It's the way to eternal life:** V. 14 tells us this gate ultimately leads to life! Eternal life! Life in the Kingdom!

**3) It's the way to know God: John 17:3:** this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, & Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

**4) It's the way to salvation: Luke 13:23-24:** someone said to him, "Lord, will those who are saved be few?" & he said to them, <sup>24</sup> "Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter & will not be able.

**5) It's the way of obedience to God's Word: Matthew 7:21:** Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

**6) It's Jesus Christ: John 10:9:** I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved . . . .

**b. Jesus commands & desires His hearers to enter the narrow gate:** Jesus is pleading with the people: Enter the narrow gate! Come in & receive eternal life! Know God! Know Me! Come in & be saved! He's pleading with us!

**John 3:16-18:** For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. <sup>18</sup> Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

**Ezekiel 33:11:** As I live, declares the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live

**2 Peter 3:9:** The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

**c. You must intentionally choose to enter in:** Gospel Question – I was born a Christian?

**d. Jesus is the narrow gate and made it possible for you to enter the narrow gate: GOSPEL!**

Enter this narrow gate! Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved!

## **2. Jesus Warns Us About Making The Wrong Choice**

**Matthew 7:13:** 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.

**a. The gate you want to avoid is the wide gate:** Many lanes; many choices; “all roads lead to the same god” idea.

Universalism; Atheism; Agnosticism; Hinduism; Buddhism; Islam; Judaism; Hedonism; Idolatry; Self-ism

**b. The way you want to avoid is the easy, broad way: Broadest highway in the world:** With 26 lanes in certain parts, the Katy Freeway, or Interstate 10 in the Houston, TX, area is the widest highway in the world.

**Narrowest Road:** Reutlingen, Germany: Spurhofstrab: 12 in. wide (narrowest); 19.6 in. wide (widest point)

Anything goes on the broad way – whatever you want is right; whatever you feel is right! It's easy – just do what you want, when you want to do it, the way you want to do it! No faith required; no repentance required!

**c. The way you want to avoid is the way of the crowd: V. 13:** those who enter by it are many. We don't want to follow the crowd!

The many died in Noah's day & the few were saved; The many died when God destroyed Sodom & Gomorrah & the few were saved; A remnant was saved in Elijah's day: **Rom. 11:4-5:** “I have kept for myself 7,000 men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.

**Matthew 7:22-23:** On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' <sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

**d. The way of destruction: 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10:** when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels <sup>8</sup> in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey

the gospel of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup> They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, <sup>10</sup> when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed. **(Ps. 73: He saw their end!)**

### **3. Jesus Warns Us To Count The Cost Of Making The Right Choice**

**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. <sup>14</sup> For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

**a. The narrow gate is the gate you want to enter:** It's like a turnstile when you get on the subway. Only one person can pass through. You have to get rid of baggage – it won't fit! You must repent of sin! You must repent of self righteousness! You must repent of worldliness!

**Hebrews 12:1-2:** Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, & sin which clings so closely, & let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus

- **John 14:6:** I am the way, & the truth, & the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

- **Acts 4:12:** And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. **(Don't make it more narrow than God! Legalism! The Pharisees did this!)**

**b. The narrow, hard way is the way you want to follow: (Last week someone asked about the peacefulness of the Christian life) Matthew 5:10-12:** Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

- **Acts 14:22:** through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

- **2 Timothy 3:12:** Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted

- **Philippians 2:12-13:** work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

- **1 Corinthians 9:24-27:** Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. <sup>25</sup> Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. <sup>26</sup> So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. <sup>27</sup> But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

**Steven Cole:** Again, picture the Olympic athlete. He/she makes winning the gold medal the focus of his life. Everything he does is controlled by his goal of winning the gold. He won't eat anything that is not good for him, because it might hinder his muscles from performing at their maximum on the day of the race. He doesn't go to parties and stay up late the night before, because he wants to be rested and ready to give everything to the race. He will refrain from engaging in fun activities that his other friends enjoy, such as skiing or playing softball, because he doesn't want to break his leg or tear his ligaments. He is disciplined to work out for hours, often when his body is screaming, "That's enough!" because he wants to win. That's the kind of attitude that we should have toward our own salvation, according to Jesus. It shouldn't be a nice thing to think about every once in a while when you don't have anything better to do. It should be on your mind every day. It should govern everything you do. It should determine how you spend your time, your money, and your leisure hours. You must strive to enter because the door is narrow. It's not a great big wide door that you can wander into without thinking about it. You must be earnest to make sure that Christ alone is your hope of salvation.

**Examples:** 1) Friend who works in a Christian ministry; the ministry is saying those who work in this ministry must use the preferred pronouns of transgender people. But my friend agrees with Christians like:

**Byron "Tanner" Cross (Teacher in Virginia):** I am a teacher, but I serve God first, and I will not affirm that a

biological boy can be a girl, and vice versa, because it is against my religion, it's lying to a child, it's abuse to a child, and it's sinning against our God.

2) Friend in another country; Her boss asked her to have sex with him; She refused; Her boss started criticizing her and ultimately fired her.

3) A person shared with me their battle being single and fighting the temptations of lust and sexual immorality.

**The Christian life is hard! Spurgeon** argues those God loves the most suffer the most (think Jesus!) - they are heaven's favorites: Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus (John 11:5). They were three of His special favorites, and thus He sent them an extraordinary trial (John 11:1). When a dealer in precious gems finds a stone of minimum value, little time is spent cutting it. But when a rare diamond is found, that stone will be cut, and cut, and cut again. When the Lord finds a saint whom He loves much, He may spare others trial and trouble but not this one, His well-beloved. The more Jesus loves you, the more of the rod you will feel (Heb. 12:5-6). It is painful to be a favorite of heaven, but seek it and rejoice in it. Being in the King's council-chamber involves such work for faith that flesh and blood might cringe from the painful blessing. If a gardener gets an inferior tree, he lets it grow wild and takes whatever fruit it produces. But if the tree is exceptional, he will want every branch in its proper place, and he will cut here and cut there because this produces more fruit. The gardener leaves nothing on the tree that would be detrimental. You who are God's favorites must not be astonished when trials appear. Rather keep your door wide open, and when trials come say, "Welcome messenger of the King! The sound of your Master's feet is behind you. You are welcome, for my Master has sent you."

**c. The way that few find is the way you want to find: John 6:65-68:** And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." <sup>66</sup> After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. <sup>67</sup> So Jesus said to the Twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" <sup>68</sup> Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life

**d. The way that leads to life is the right way:** Salvation! Eternal Life! Perfect Peace & Joy! Ultimate satisfaction!

**David Livingstone:** For my own part, I have never ceased to rejoice that God has appointed me to such an office. People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa . . . Is that a sacrifice which brings its own blessed reward in healthful activity, the consciousness of doing good, peace of mind, and a bright hope of a glorious destiny hereafter? Away with the word in such a view, and with such a thought! It is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather it is a privilege. Anxiety, sickness, suffering, or danger, now and then, with a foregoing of the common conveniences and charities of this life, may make us pause, and cause the spirit to waver, and the soul to sink; but let this only be for a moment. **All these are nothing when compared with the glory which shall be revealed in and for us. I never made a sacrifice.**

Jesus walked on the narrowest way & the hardest way, yet His life ended in the punishment of eternal destruction away from the presence of the LORD & the glory of His might on that cross. There He took all our baggage of sin, self righteousness, and worldliness upon Himself, so that we might be forgiven & freed from it so that we might enter the narrow gate & walk the narrow, hard path all the way to glory. Yet Jesus' path also led to life: He is risen!

Christ Jesus Is The Narrow Gate  
Enter By Him Salvation's Great  
He Is The Way That's True And Straight  
In Christ Alone We're Saved From Hate  
Perfect Love He'd Demonstrate  
And Gave God's Glory All Its Weight  
He Died God's Wrath Propitiate  
Then Rose All Death To Devastate

And Gives New Life To Celebrate  
By Faith Alone Grants Righteous State  
And All Our Hearts He'll Captivate  
So Though It's Hard On Christ We Wait  
To Him Our Lives We Dedicate  
He Is Our All, Our Potentate  
Who Will Forever Fascinate!