

The Narrow Door **Luke 13:22-30**

On His way to Jerusalem, to be the sacrificial Lamb of God, Jesus took every opportunity to minister to people and to teach about the Kingdom of God. At one of His stops, someone asked him a penetrating question. “Will those who are saved be few?”

From time to time a random group of people will be asked some moral, ethical, or theological question. Their answers are all over the map. Less than 10 percent will have a favorable answer. What will happen to these people? Will they go to heaven, or will they go to hell?

In America, dying is the justification for going to heaven. All you have to do in America is die, because for the overwhelming number of people, so broad and wide is the mercy and great grace of God that almost everybody gets to heaven— or is it a minority, a small minority.

Jesus answers this question in a few ways. “Make every effort to enter by the narrow door.” Matthew 7:13-14 says, “Enter by the narrow gate...”

Jesus sets before his disciples two contrasts: The first contrast is a hard, narrow way with a narrow door or gate with an easy, broad way with a broad door or gate. The other contrast is the number of those who go each way. Those who go the broad way that lead to destruction are many; those who go the hard way to the narrow gate are few.

What is Jesus saying? He is saying *that most human beings that have lived, are living, or will live are going to Hell.*

Now Jesus is not denying justification by faith when he says, “Enter in by the narrow gate,” or as he says in Luke's version, “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, for many, I tell you, will seek to enter, but they won't be able. They think they can get through the narrow door by living on the broad way.”

The problem gets worse.

Jesus doesn't stop there about the few and the many, the narrow and the wide. He then says, when the Master of the house has risen and shuts the door and then those outside gather, knock at the door, and say, “Lord, open to us.” Notice, they don't say, “Who's ever in there please open to us.” They say, “Lord, Lord, open the door!”

In Matthew 7:21-23, Jesus said, “They will say to Me, ‘Lord, Lord, didn't we do this in your name? Didn't we do that in your name?’” And Jesus said to them, “Who are you? Please leave, you workers of iniquity. You pretenders.”

Now he knows the existence of every one of those people whose knocking at the door, but he doesn't know them in a saving way. So, he says, “You are not known by me in a redemptive way. So, I can't hear your knocking at my door. *It's too late.*”

Has the thought ever occurred to you that you might be deceiving yourself about your salvation? That you might not be saved? Has the thought ever occurred to you that your eternal destiny is hell?

“Lord, Lord, open the door to me,” and he will say, “I do not where you're from,” and you'll say, “Well, we ate and drink in your presence. We came to the Lord's table. We celebrated holy communion. You taught in our streets; I was there when you came through our village and healed the paralytic. I saw that. I was at the wedding feast at Canaan. I saw you turn water into wine. I've seen many things of mercy and grace that you have done.” Then Jesus will say, “I tell you, I don't know where you come from. Depart from me all you workers of evil. Depart from Me, you pretenders.”

Then he describes the nature of hell and the human response of being in hell. Some people when they wake up in hell will be devastated and they won't find enough water in their eyes to satisfy their need to weep. It will be the greatest disappointment they could possibly experience, to wake up in Hell. Then the other group that will be gnashing their teeth, which is a biblical metaphor for human fury. The anger of the damned will know no bounds.

If you were sent to hell because you were deceiving yourself, you could make no just complaint against Him. You have been guilty of cosmic treason every time you have sinned. You have asserted your will over the will of your Creator. You have declared that you are sovereign, and not the Lord God. You have worked against his kingdom not for it. You have sinned against a holy and infinitely righteous being, who owes you nothing. If you wake up in Hell, you will realize you have only received what your life has merited—not cruelty, not injustice, but perfect justice.

You do not want to go to hell. I hope you do not desire that anyone else go there. Even though you may love the majesty of God, as a fallen human being, you have so much more in common with your fellow beings in the flesh. So, I pray, you have much sympathy for anybody in hell.

You possibly would not believe in hell, if it were not taught so clearly by Jesus himself. Jesus taught more about hell than he did about heaven.

Let's not leave it here.

Luke 13:18-21 - Jesus says the kingdom of God is like that incredibly small seed that you plant; you water; then it pokes its little head through the earth and begins to grow and expand not just to a bush but to a tree of 10 or 15 feet high with a vast outreach of branches so thick that birds of all kinds can come and nest in its branches—not just land there for a few seconds—but build a nest.

The Kingdom of God is something that begins so tiny that it's imperceptible, but blossoms and blooms and grows and expands to the whole world. We are mustard seeds in a dying world. We are mustard seeds in a barbarian culture. We are sons and daughters of the King, who takes every seed that we plant, every leaven that we put into the bread, so that it grows and expands and fills the world.

So, in the final analysis, if we want to overcome the world, we don't have to worry how strong the world is. All we need to know is who the King is, because He's the one that will determine the destiny of this nation, of this world, and of this people.

May you find yourself in “agony.” That is what “Make every effort” means. Make every effort to enter in the narrow gate or the narrow door. Christ used the word *agon* which means “use a herculean effort.” Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Your works will never get you into the kingdom, but once you are saved, you're to work with all your might. Don't turn to the left or to the right. no matter how many obstacles, how many enemies, how much opposition—there's a door.

Christians were first called the people of “The Way,” and it was the narrow way that leads to life.

“Am I numbered among the few or the many?”

God grant that your answer will be among the few.