

## Two Ways

**"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." Matthew 7:13-14**

The harsh reality of Scripture is that very few people are going to heaven. There are literally millions of people, perhaps billions of people in the world right now who are going to spend eternity in hell. To bring this harsh reality a bit closer to home; this means that most of the people you know; your co-workers, your classmates, your neighbors, and yes, even your family members are most likely lost. Yesterday we talked about the two gates; the narrow gate and the wide gate. Today we are going to be looking at where those two gates lead: the narrow gate **"leads to life,"** and the **"wide"** gate leads to the **"broad"** way which **"leads to destruction."** **"The narrow gate"** is the narrow way this is the way of the godly ones, and the broad way is the way of those who are ungodly. These are the only two ways that people can travel. Psalm 1:2-4 says this of the godly person:

**"How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law, he meditates day and night."**

The **"broad"** way is the way that is most attractive to the world because the world is selfish, self-indulgent, and permissive. There are precious few rules, limited restrictions, and very few requirements. All one needs to do is make some sort of profession of Jesus, or at a minimum be religious, and then you are very easily accepted in that large and diverse group. Sin is tolerated, truth is moderated, and humility is ignored. God's word is praised but it is not really studied in any depth. God's standards are admired but they aren't really followed. The broad way requires no real spiritual maturity, no moral character, no commitment, and no sacrifice. The broad way is based almost entirely on emotion, how we feel. The broad way is **"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 what Proverbs 14:12 describes as a way **"that seems right to man,"** but who **"end is the way of death."**

The contrast to the broad way is **"the way"** that is **"narrow."** This is the hard way, the demanding way, the way that calls us to self-denial and the way that calls us to the cross. Verse 14 tells us that **"few...find it"** so this implies that this **"narrow"** way is to be sought after diligently. Jeremiah 29:13 says, **"And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."** In Luke 13:23-24 Jesus was asked a question: **"Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?' And He said to them, 'Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.'"** The word **"strive"** comes from the Greek word *agonizomai* and it indicates to us that entering the narrow gate or door of God's kingdom takes conscious, purposeful, and intense effort. This is the Greek word from which we get our English word agonize. In 1 Corinthians 9:25 Paul uses the same word that is translated as **"competes"** as he describes the athlete who agonizes or **"competes"** to win the race. He uses it again in 1 Timothy 6:12,

**"Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."**

The great theologian William Hendrickson wrote, "The Kingdom then is not for weaklings, waverers, and compromisers...It is not for Balaam, the rich young ruler, Pilate and Demas...It is not won by means of deferred prayers, unfulfilled promises, broken resolutions and hesitant testimonies. It is for strong and sturdy men, like Joseph, Nathan, Elijah, Daniel, Mordecai and Peter...Stephan... and Paul. And let us not forget such valiant women as Ruth, Deborah, Esther and Lydia."

We cannot pay a price for our salvation, because Christ has already **"paid it all."** But when we come to Christ it costs us everything we have. Jesus said in Luke 14:26, **"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple."**

The man or woman who repents of their sins and believes in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior must then say no to the things of the world, that is what repentance is. To be a Christian is to be in Christ and that means that we now rely on Him and on His power rather than on our own and that we are willing to forsake our own way of life for His way. It can cost, and does cost, persecution, ridicule, and tribulation. When we identify ourselves with Jesus Christ we are declaring war on the devil, and he in turn declares war on us. The one who we used to be subservient to is now our greatest enemy. The way we used to think and the things that once were front and center in our lives now become our greatest temptations and pitfalls.

In some of the last instructions that Jesus gave to the disciples, He reminded them of the price that they would pay for following Him. John 15:19-20 says,

**"If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you."**

In John 16:2 He said,

**"They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God."**

John 16:22 says, **"Therefore you too have grief now."**

John 16:33 says, **"In the world you will have tribulation."**

Along with those warnings about suffering the Lord Jesus also gives us some wonderful promises which we can rejoice in and that we can take courage in because it says in John 16:33 that He has overcome the world. God promises us that He will enable us to prevail in those times of trial and suffering. So which way are you on? The narrow way that leads to life or the broad way of destruction?