

12/3/17

The Straight And Narrow Way

Matt. 7:13-29

The Sermon on the Mount is a contrast of citizens of the kingdom to those professing to be in the kingdom.

Jesus has said some key things:

- 1) If we are citizens of the kingdom, the characteristics of spiritual character will be evident. Matt. 5:3-12
- 2) Unless our righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, we will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 5:20
- 3) We are to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and God will provide for us the necessary things for life. Matt. 6:33

Now today as I look to Christendom, the collective body that is to be the church, I see many subtle and troubling inconsistencies.

- 1) The broad gate of hell is being confused for the narrow gate of heaven.
- 2) The confined or compressed road of Christ which leads to life is being broadened by alternative choices of behavioral modification, rather than transformation.
- 3) The many on the road to destruction are being identified with the few on the road to life.
- 4) We are not to judge with a critical spirit, yet we are to make judgments between hypocrites and sincere believers. Matt. 7:1-2, 6

5) We are to depend on God for everything, in full confidence and trust. Matt. 7:7-8

Jesus coming to the end of the Sermon on the Mount brings it all together as He addressed His disciples about the Kingdom and the life of the kingdom.

* All of chapter seven deals with various aspects of judgment and discernment regarding the Kingdom!

We want to look at the words of Jesus regarding the judgment that must be made to enter the Kingdom of God, characterized by three things. Matt. 7:13-29

- I. The invitation to enter the Kingdom. vs. 13-14
 - II. The caution while on the way to the Kingdom. vs. 15-23
 - III. The examination whether you have entered the Kingdom. vs. 24-29
- I. **The invitation to enter the Kingdom. vs. 13-14**
 - A. Jesus declared there are two gates.
 1. The narrow gate. vs.13a
 - a. This gate is ordered to be entered into, “Enter the narrow gate” an imperative command in the aorist active tense.
 - 1) This indicates an act of making a decision in a moment, the emphasis is on immediacy to enter.
 - 2) The gate may not always be open.

- b. The gate is narrow, there is just enough room to enter in by God's righteousness for justification.
* KJV calls it the "strait gate".
- c. There are conditions placed on a person who enters this gate, repentance from sin.
- d. There will be concern, responsibility, accountability and self-examination to enter in it.
- e. This gate people do not drift into, but enter only by responding to the gospel.

2. The wide gate. vs. 13b

- a. This gate is not commanded to be entered simply because all of humanity is born and drifts into this gate.
- b. There are no restrictions placed on a person regarding this gate.
- b. The gate is wide, there is plenty of room to walk and enter through with anything.
- c. There is no concern, anxiety or examination of self to enter it.

B. Jesus declared there are two roads.

1. The broad way. vs. 13b

- a. The word broad "euruchos", means spacious, there is ample room and space on this road.
- b. There is even the sense of being secure, due to its vastness.
- c. This broad way is lined up with the wide gate.

2. The narrow way. vs. 14a

- a. The word narrow "steros", means strait, in contrast to the broad way.
- b. The narrow way is confirmed by the word difficult "thlibo", a compressed way, this is the more confined, restricted or limited way.
- c. There must be vigilance and diligence to travel on it.
- c. This narrow and difficult way is lined up with the narrow gate.

C. Jesus declared there are two companies. vs. 13c, 14b

- 1. There are many who go in and enter the wide gate, traveling on the broad way. vs. 13c
 - a. Those born into this world as sinners.
 - b. Those living after their sin nature.
- 2. There are few who go in and enter the narrow gate, these are traveling on the difficult or confined way. vs. 14b
 - a. By the grace of God discovering the gate.
 - b. By trusting and abiding in Christ. Jn. 15:4

D. Jesus declared there are two destinies.

- 1. The wide gate and broad way leads to destruction. vs. 13b
 - a. This is the reason for the imperative command to enter in the "narrow gate",

because a person is being led consistently and progressively to their demise.

- 1) The word destruction “apoleia”, means perdition and utter ruin, not annihilation.
 - 2) This is a participle in the present active tense, literally, “leading to the destruction”, the article indicates the harmful quality of life while living in the world.
- b. The context regards two things.
- 1) The lack of spiritual life by having no relationship with God, being dead in trespasses and sins, living contrary to God’s word. Eph. 2:1-2
 - 2) The eternal separation from God, the second death in the Lake of Fire.
* Isaiah says, “Because you have said, “We have made a **covenant** with **death**, And with Sheol we are in agreement. When the overflowing scourge passes through, It will not come to us, For we have made lies our refuge, And under falsehood we have hidden ourselves.” Is. 28:15; Jer. 21:8
2. The narrow gate and confined way leads to life. vs. 14a
- a. A person is led consistently and progressively to their life with God.
 - 1) The word life “zoe”, means the state of one who is possessed of vitality

and fullness of life, both essential and ethical, which belong to life. Strong’s

- 2) This is also a participle in the present active tense, literally, “leading to the life”, the article indicates the beneficial quality of life that begins while living in the world.
- b. The context regards two things.
- 1) The possession of spiritual life by having a relationship with God, having made us alive together with Christ by grace being saved, living according to God’s word. Eph. 2:4-5
 - 2) The privilege of living in eternity with God.
* “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess.” Deut 30:15-16
- E. Jesus declared there are two decisions.
1. Those who enter by the wide gate, “there are many who go in by it.” vs. 13c
 - a. These are persons rejecting the gospel message of salvation through repentance.

- b. These are person embracing a self-directed life seeing no need of Jesus.
 - c. The majority of people “many” will choose this wide gate and broad road that is leading to destruction by their own decision and is a strong warning.
 - d. The gate and road does not need to be searched out or found.
2. Those who enter by the narrow gate. vs. 14a
- a. These are persons believing the gospel message of salvation through repentance.
 - b. The person embracing a God-directed life with Jesus Christ.
 - c. The minority of people are “few who find it” will choose this narrow gate and difficult way leading to life.
 - * The word find “heuriskontes” is a participle indicating perception of what is discovered by grace, the gate leading to life, a present active tense!
 - d. This gate and way is found or discovered by the grace of God, placing this gate before a person to enter while there is time.
 - * “And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of 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.” Josh 24:15

Illustration

An old gold miner went to Colorado and struck a gold vein but latter it ran dry and ultimately lost all trying to find it again, so he sold it for pennies. The new owner hired a geologist who told him to dig just feet in a certain direction and he would find the vein and it was bigger than the one of the first owner.

* So many stop short of the Kingdom!

Application

1. No person is excluded from knowing the way.
 - a. “For **God** so **loved** the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” Jn. 3:16
 - b. “I am the way the truth and the life and no man comes to the Father but by Me.” Jn 14:6
2. No person is forced by God to choose one or the other, He respects human will and choice.
 - a. “Behold, I stand at the **door** and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the **door**, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.” Rev. 3:20 (Laodidea)
 - b. Jesus said, ““I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.” Jn. 10:9
3. No person can avoid the destiny of the way and gate they choose to walk down.

- a. “Then He said to them, “Take heed **what** you **hear**. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who **hear**, more will be given.” Mk. 4:24
 - b. Jesus said, “Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him.” Lk. 8:18
 - c. “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his **flesh** will of the **flesh reap** corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit **reap** everlasting life.” Gal. 6:7-8
4. No person should confuse or be deceived about proper association of the way and road they are traveling and the gate it is lined up with.
- * “And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there few who are saved?” And He said to them, “Strive (agonize) to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.” Lk 13:22-24

This is the invitation to enter the Kingdom is to all!

II. The caution while on the way to the Kingdom. vs. 15-23

- A. Jesus pointed out there are those who sound and look like prophet of God, but are not. vs. 15-20
 - 1. These men are identified as counterfeit prophets, “Beware of false prophets.” vs. 15a
 - a. The word beware “prosecho”, means to give and take heed, another imperative present active command.
* Literally “keep holding your mind from”, “watch out for”.
 - b. The warning is now expanded to those who proclaim a false gospel.
* False prophets “pseudopropheton”, one passing himself off as God’s prophet,
 - c. They are not proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, nor are in the Kingdom.
 - d. They are out to deceive those walking towards the Kingdom and those who hear the gospel of the Kingdom.
 - 2. These men disguised themselves, “who come to you in sheep’s clothing.” vs. 15b
 - a. They appear to look like sheep.
 - b. They are in the midst of the sheep.
 - c. They are not sheep.
 - 3. These men in reality are dangerous, “But inwardly they are ravenous wolves.” vs. 15c
 - a. The word ravenous “harpax”, means rapacious, roaming predators motivated by self-interest, self-gain and self-exaltation.

- b. Their goal is to deceive spiritually to take advantage, merchandize and destroy the sheep, being enemies.
* Matt. 24:4-11; Acts 2:24; 2Pet. 2:1; 1Jn. 4:1
- 4. These men are known by their ungodly nature and life conduct. vs. 16-19
 - a. Their identification is marked by their methods that are contrary to the Kingdom, not lined up with the “narrow gate” or Kingdom, “You will know them by their fruits.” vs. 16a
 - 1) Their fruits is their doctrine or teaching and life conduct.
 - 2) The tense is the indicative future middle voice, the person would be the one recognizing them.
 - b. The question that follows is rhetorical, “Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?”. vs. 16b
 - 1) There is only one correct answer, NO!
 - 2) Illustrating their contrary nature to the “narrow gate and difficult way” being able to recognize them as false prophets. vs. 16b
 - 2) If you are around such men long enough you will see they are not consistent with the Biblical standard and principals!
 - c. The amplification focuses on the distinction of kind, quality of fruit

- produced, a good and bad tree, “Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.” vs. 17
- c. The explanation is indicated by the nature of the tree, “A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. vs. 18
- d. The conclusion is the certain judgment of the false prophets, the ravenous wolves, the bad trees is to fall under the fiery judgment of God, “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.” vs. 19
- 5. These men are conclusively known by their fruits, “Therefore by their fruits you will know them.” vs. 20
 - a. The person who manifests and affirms the nature of the gospel, the narrow gate, difficult way is a God.
 - 1) They have entered the narrow gate.
 - 2) They are travelling on the difficult way that is leading to life.
 - b. The person who manifests and affirms a nature contrary to the gospel, the wide gate, the broad way is not of God.
 - 1) Their teaching is not always wrong, as the Pharisees, who taught the Law, but were not doers of it, hypocrites.
 - 2) Their words, deeds, life-style and false doctrine will result in God’s judgment. Jesus said regarding the

religious rulers, “Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.” Matt. 23:3

- B.** Jesus pointed out there are many who say they are serving Jesus, but will never enter the Kingdom. vs. 21-23
1. The profession of Jesus will not get a person into the Kingdom, but doing the will of the Father, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.” vs. 21
 - a. These men use the name of the Lord to validate their genuineness deceptively.
 - b. These men are not doing the will of the Father, but their own deceiving sheep.
 - c. This is the first time Jesus indicated Lord and the Son of the Father in Matthew.
 2. The manifestation of the super-natural in the name of Jesus does not guarantee entrance into the Kingdom, “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’” vs. 22
 - a. They will stand in the day of judgment and attempt to defend themselves, “Many will say to Me, in that day”.

- b. They will point to all the super-natural things they were instruments of and for God. “Lord Lord, have we not”.
 - 1) Prophesied in Your name.
 - 2) Cast out demons in Your name.
 - 3) Done many wonders in Your name.
 - * Three times “In Your name, emphatic!
3. The adjudication of Jesus will be pronounced as the Divine judge. vs. 23
 - a. Jesus pronounces the verdict, “And then I will declare to them.” vs. 23a
 - 1) The word declare “homologeo”, is a legal term with trials and judgments. Acts 24:14; 1Tim. 6:12
 - 2) The indicative future, at the White Throne Judgment.
 - b. Jesus will say, “I never knew you”. vs. 23b
 - 1) Their words and deeds did not deceive Jesus.
 - 2) The supernatural works were used by God sovereignly, for the love of the people, the honor of His word and name.
 - b. Jesus will say, “Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!” vs. 23c-d
 - 1) This is an imperative present active command to depart to eternal damnation “depart from Me”.
 - 2) They are punished for deceiving by their evil character, “practicing

lawlessness” evil, being a law to themselves!

Illustration

A soldier walking through a minefield pays close attention to how and where he walks, knowing that not all the ground is safe to step on, so if he wants to get through, he must be cautious and obedient to what he has heard and been taught!

Application

1. The warning against false prophets and teachers runs throughout the Old and New Testament.
 - a. God compares His word to wheat and all else to chaff and commanded the sentence of death for all false prophets, who would lead His people away. Deut. 13; Jer. 14:14-15; 25:15; 29:9; Zech. 13:3; Matt 24:5, 24; Lk. 9:49; 21:8
 - b. Paul told the Ephesian elders, “For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.” Acts 20:29-30
2. Their destiny is the Lake of Fire.
 - a. John confirmed the judgment of false prophets, “And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and

gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Matt. 3:10, 12

- b. The False prophet and anti-christ and the worshippers will end up in the Lake of Fire, “Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.” Rev. 14:10
3. The Scriptures tell us to examine our lives.
 - a. Paul tells us to examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith, less we be disqualified. 2Cor. 13:5-6
 - b. Paul’s advice is to be a good Berean. Acts 17:11

This is the caution while on the way to the Kingdom is real!

III. The examination whether you have entered the Kingdom. vs. 24-29

- A. Jesus identified the wise man. vs. 24-25
 1. The wise person is the one who hears and obeys the words of Jesus, “Therefore

whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them.’ vs. 24a-b

- a. He has entered the narrow gate.
 - b. He is travelling on the difficult way.
2. The wise person is compared to being strong and stable, the image is vivid and clear, “I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock.” vs. 24c
- a. They have been born again.
 - b. They are trusting in Jesus and His word.
 - * “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” Matt. 5:16
3. The wise person will be tested throughout life by the storms of life, “and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.” vs. 25
- a. The tests are certain.
 - b. Their house stands in the storms of life.
 - c. Their obedience to God’s word is the foundation for the coming storms!
 - * “For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.” Matt. 5:20

B. Jesus identified the foolish man. vs. 26-27

1. The foolish person is the one who hears, but doesn’t obey the words of Jesus, “But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them.” vs. 26a-b
 - a. He is still on the wide gate and broad way.
 - b. He is being led and headed for destruction.
2. The foolish person is compared to being deceived and in danger, “will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.” vs. 26c
 - a. They are have not been born again.
 - b. They are not trusting themselves and the words of deception.
 - * “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” Ja. 1:21-22
2. The foolish person will equally be tested throughout life by the storms of life, “and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” vs. 27
 - a. The tests again are certain.
 - b. Their house falls in the storms of life.

- c. Their disobedience to enter the narrow gate is their weak foundation for the coming storms and great is his fall!
 - d. Soil **liquefaction** describes when saturated or partially saturated soil substantially loses strength and stiffness in response to an applied stress, usually earthquake shaking or other sudden change in stress condition, causing it to behave like a liquid.
- * “For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a **doer**, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a **doer** of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.” Ja. 1:23-25

C. Jesus is identified as superior to the Scribes. vs. 28-29

- * This is actually the summary statement!
- 1. The people hearing Jesus responded to His teaching, “And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching.” vs. 28
 - a. Jesus had “ended these sayings”, found five times. Matt. 11:1;13:53;19;1; 26;1

- 1) The Sermon on the Mount was for His disciples, not the crowds. Matt. 5:1-2
 - 2) The Sermon on the Mount contains the truths and principles of the Kingdom for Christians to be lived out on earth.
 - 3) Jesus commands obedience!
- b. The people in the background listening were awe-struck.
 - 1) The word astonished “ekplesso”, means struck with amazement dumbfounded.
 - 2) The word teaching “didache”, means the instruction or doctrine taught to His disciples.
 - 2. The people acknowledged the words of Jesus are authoritative, distinct from other men. “for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” vs. 29
 - 1) The scribes would refer to past Rabbies, “You have heard that it was said to those of old.”
 - 2) Jesus said, “But I say to you”
 - 3) Jesus is the ultimate and final authority on the word of God!

Illustration

One day the disciples were out on the Sea of Galilee and the wind came up and they all were terribly afraid and Jesus said to the wind, “Be muzzled”, and they all said, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?” Mk. 4:39-41

* This is the power and authority of the Creator and Savior of mankind!

Application

1. The Proverbs personify wisdom as a woman who is calling on the simple and foolish young person, but refusing to hear. Prov. 1-9

* “How long, you **simple** ones, will you love simplicity? For scorers delight in their scorning, And fools hate knowledge.” Prov. 1:22

2. The wise is contrasted to the fool, he obeys and stays clear of the areas they have been warned about.

* “My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you, So that you incline your ear to wisdom, *And* apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, *And* lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as *for* hidden treasures; Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God.” Prov. 2:1-5

a. Have you entered in the narrow gate?

b. Are you walking on the difficult or confined way?

c. Are you hearing and obeying Jesus, the way?

3. The storms of life are many and no one has any idea of what the future holds, yet some think that certain things will never happen to them, but they do.

a. The regret of being sexually permissive and the consequences, such as an unwanted pregnancy, S.T.D's or having to deal with these things with your future husband or wife.

- b. The condition of an unequally yoked marriage and their involvement with drugs or alcohol.
- c. The disappointment of an unfaithful mate.
- d. The news of a fatal disease or tragic death.
- e. The heartache of rebellious or ungodly child.
- f. The pressure of earning a living, as the head of your home, husband and Father, the woman as keeper of the home to care for your husband and children.

1) No one is sufficient for without Jesus!

2) “Now to Him who is able to do **exceedingly** abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” Eph. 3:20-21

This is the examination whether you have entered the Kingdom by the narrow gate and traveling on the confined way will be throughout life!

Conclusion

These are the words of Jesus regarding the judgment that must be made to enter the Kingdom of God, characterized by three things.

- I. The invitation to enter the Kingdom is to all!
- II. The caution while on the way to the Kingdom is real!
- III. The examination whether you have entered the Kingdom!