

PERCEIVING THE NARROW GATE

“I am the way and the truth and the life.” —JOHN 14:6

Some years ago, I visited the flight deck of a Boeing 747 on a flight from western Canada to London. I asked the Captain if it was somewhat boring to fly a plane once it was in the air. He told me that he was constantly checking his position and direction, and that the routing to London was an extremely narrow one.

If the plane was one degree off course on the compass bearing, that would take us hundreds of miles in the wrong direction. I was very glad we had a pilot who was interested in the narrow way! I would not want a Captain who perceived that all routes went to London, put his feet up on the instrument panel, and took a nap. It is in this sense the road to life is narrow.

Paradoxically perhaps, it is in travelling the narrow road, which deprives us of many indulgences the secular world offers, that true freedom is found. To illustrate, our cars work best when we put gas in the tank, not ginger ale. Our engines work best when we lubricate them with oil, not syrup, and our tires work best with the right poundage of air pressure, not the right poundage of bananas. To insist on gas, oil and air for our cars may seem restrictive, but in keeping with those instructions, the car is free

to function as intended. And that makes us feel good and confident about driving the car. Why? Because our car is sufficiently taken care of and we can drive it at liberty.

Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life.” He does not simply show us the way and tell us the truth, so that we may enjoy the life, but He is Himself, the way, the truth and the life. That is why, if we were the car, we cannot put ginger ale in the gas tank, syrup in the engine or bananas in the tires. Human beings are not meant to run on anything but the indwelling Spirit of Christ. If we fail to bring Jesus into our everyday lives, and lean instead on our own way of thinking, our own understanding, we are running on insufficient power. Our compass bearing will be off course, and we will be taken hundreds of miles in the wrong direction, one that will inevitably lead to the broad road and the wide gate.

Entering the Kingdom of Heaven through the narrow gate – we simply cannot imagine what that will be like, but we know with certainty only Jesus can take us there.

PRAYER: Precious Lord, I pray for that deep, inner strength that comes from You to keep me on your path, and headed for the narrow gate. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Have I given thought to how much it would please Jesus to greet me at the narrow gate?