

Essentials

Two Roads

Matthew 7:13-14

September 24, 2017 am

HDBC

Open your Bibles to Matthew 7:13-14. Continuing our series on *The Sermon on the Mount*. In it, Jesus lays out the **Essential Expectations** for those who follow Him as savior and Lord. For the most part the Sermon on the Mount is not about how to be saved, but how the saved are to live.

Jesus is speaking to people who have already chosen to follow Christ and are on the road to Heaven. These are instructions for how to live as we travel that road. **Now he points out** a critical reality.

There are only two roads. One leads to heaven and the other to hell. You can do all kinds of good things along the way, but if you are on the wrong road it will be meaningless in the end. **So, here, toward the end of his teaching** He offers a warning to make sure you are on the right road.

In this passage Jesus speaks of the choice we make about Christ. He contrasts the two options people have when it comes to Christ. One can trust and follow Christ, or one can reject Christ. The choice one makes will dictate the **road one travels**. Remember, there are only **Two Roads**.

Jesus describes the consequences of this one choice by drawing our attention to four pairs of opposites. Jesus speaks of two **gates**, two **ways (roads)**, two **destinations**, and two **groups of people**. It all hinges on the beginning point.

The gate you enter determines the **road** you travel.

The gate you enter determines your **destination**

The gate you enter determines the **group you travel with**.

Read the text: Matthew 7:13-14

1. Two Gates

Jesus indicates that there are two possible gates through which we can go. Speaking of the point of decision. One leads to eternal life (heaven) and the other to destruction (hell). The destination is dependent upon the road one travels. The road one travels is determined by the gate they go through.

To reach the right destination you have to be on the right road.

To be on the right road you have to enter through the right gate.

A. Narrow Gate

Jesus makes it crystal clear that this is gate He wants people to enter. Very first word of the verse is called an **ingressive aorist** by the scholars. That means it has the force of **urging a beginning**. Aggressive, not passive. To enter the kingdom one must come through the right door. The narrow door is the right one.

The size of the gate points to three truths:

1) Only way to Heaven

Jesus is the only way. *There is no other name under Heaven. . .*

We don't proclaim this because it is popular, for it surely is not.

We don't proclaim this because it **makes us feel good**. It does not.

We don't proclaim this out of arrogance, for we, like all, are sinners.

We proclaim this because this is what the Bible teaches.

We proclaim a narrow gospel because Jesus is the only way.

2) Each Person is Responsible

Turnstiles at ball parks. Only one body can squeeze through at a time.

Purpose is to allow only one person to enter for each ticket. You can't enter Heaven on someone else's ticket. Salvation is a personal thing.

One by one.

3) Come Just as You Are

Also means no baggage can be brought. You can't bring anything with you. Must leave sins behind. Forsaking your past in order to begin a new future. This is what Jesus means when He speaks of denying ourselves.

A rich, young ruler wanted to enter the kingdom but was unwilling to give up his riches. He refused to yield all that he had to Christ as Lord. Therefore, he did not enter.

B. Wide Gate

By default, the wide gate includes any and every way other than Jesus. It would include all world religions and all self-help efforts to be right with God. It is the popular gate, the easy gate, the gate most will choose.

2. Two Roads

Two gates lead to two ways or two roads.

A. Wide Road

The wide gate leads to the way that is wide. This road is **easy, attractive, inclusive, indulgent, permissive and self-oriented**. There are few rules, few restrictions and few requirements. Those on this road may do religious things, or they may not. Pretty much anything goes. There is room for variety of thought, belief and practice.

B. Narrow Road

This way is **hard** according to Jesus. It is the way of self-denial, the way to the cross. The word **narrow** comes from a root word that means **to groan**, as **from being under pressure**. It means to be restricted.

The way of the true believer is not easy. It is often painful and for some even deadly. It involves real struggles and real suffering. When we declare allegiance to Christ, **Satan declares war on us**. The more we identify with Christ the more the world presses against us.

God's way of salvation is remarkably simply, but it is not easy.

3. Two Destinations

Both gates and both roads promise eternal life. But only the narrow gate and the narrow way actually leads to it. The great lie of all false religions and all other declared ways to heaven is that they will lead to Heave. But they will all fail. There is only one way to heaven.

Jesus points out that there are only two destinations possible for all people. He uses two words to describe those destinations. The wide gate and way lead to destruction. The narrow gate and way lead to life.

A. Destruction

The word does not refer to extinction or annihilation, but to **total ruin and loss**. It is not the complete loss of being but the loss of well-being. It is another way of describing hell.

B. Life

The narrow gate and way lead to **life**. This is eternal life, fellowship with the creator, our heavenly father. This word implies more than the continuation of life. It speaks of a **quality of life that can only be enjoyed with God**.

Jesus told his apostles that he was leaving to prepare a place for them. He would come again for them that where he was they would one day be.

4. Two Groups

This may be the most startling truth revealed in these verses. There are two groups. He calls them the **many** and the **few**.

A. Many

The majority will enter through the wide gate, follow the wide road and end up in destruction. In this group we find those who trust in other religions for their salvation. We find those who rejected all religion and any thought of the afterlife. We find those who considered the claims of Jesus but rejected them. We find some who intended to get right with God, but never got around to it. We find people from every walk of life and from every culture.

B. Few

These are the ones who entered the narrow gate (faith in Christ) and walked the narrow road (obedience to Christ) and will end up in heaven. They are few in number. True believers will always be in the minority.

Jesus said, *Do not be afraid, little flock* (Luke 12:32). The word translated *little* is *mikros*, from which we get our prefix *micro*. Small.

Believers are not few in number because the gate is too narrow. Nor is the number few because the size of heaven is limited. The number is few because the majority simply fail to place faith in Christ for salvation. This is not a reflection of God's desire but of human reality.

This sermon is all about choices. Actually it is all about **one choice** that determines the road you travel, the people you travel with and your ultimate destination.

What choice have you made about Jesus and His offer of salvation to you? To avoid the question is to make a choice and that is to reject the gift. If someone writes and asked me to come to their house and I do nothing, I have made a choice. Same is true of eternal life.

You will either choose heaven or hell. The choice is yours!

Hell is the chosen place of the person who loves self, more than God, who loves sin more than his Savior, who loves this world more than God's world.

Judgment is that moment when God looks at the rebellious and says, Your choice will be honored.

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