

The Commands of Jesus pt. 21

Choosing The Narrow Way Matthew 7:13-14

Jesus has made available to us His special kind of overflowing life (see John 10:10), it is a wonderful kind of life that is ever filled with an abundance of His peace, His joy, His love, His righteousness etc. How do we experience this life? Jesus has shown us in today's text.

It's a fact that on a daily basis each one of us face a variety of situations in our relationships, responsibilities and routines. Each situation, whether positive or negative, is an opportunity to experience Jesus' kind of abundant life if we approach them correctly.

How do we approach them correctly? We get our answer in the command that Jesus gave us in Matthew 7:13-14.

Matthew 7:13-14, "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."

While this passage can refer to our salvation; in that the only way we receive God's redemption and forgiveness is through entering the narrow way of faith in Christ alone. These verses go beyond our salvation and are about the way we are to approach all of our situations in life.

Let's first consider the wrong way we are to approach the situations we face on a daily basis.

Matthew 7:13b, "For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it."

Basically, Jesus is talking here about the worldly way of entering into things and the worldly ways of conducting ourselves in our situations.

The worldly gate is wide because it allows us to enter into a given situation packing the stuff of our carnal selves. Where we approach a relationship, responsibility or routine with unbiblical ideas, sinful indulgences, selfish agendas, negative attitudes, rebellious issues etc.

The road is broad in that it allows us to travel with our favorite worldly philosophies on one side, and with those who support our compromised Christian lifestyles on the other side. It's so wide it gives you plenty of room for you to do it your particular way according to how you feel.

Approaching our situations in these kinds of worldly and compromised ways will always lead to things in our life being destroyed, even our fellowship encounters with the Lord.

It is to the worldly, compromised Christians we find the warning in **James 4:4, "You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God."** (See also Proverbs 14:12 & 16:25).

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Now let's consider the right way to approach our daily situations in order to experience the abundance of life that Jesus promises us.

Matthew 7:13a & 14, "Enter through the narrow gate... But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."

Please note that this is a command of Jesus. To understand what Jesus is talking about when He speaks of the narrow/small gate, the narrow road, and the life it leads to, we must see how our Lord Himself has defined these terms.

Concerning the "narrow/small gate": Jesus said in **John 10:9, "I Am the gate, whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out and find pasture."**

Because Jesus himself is the gate, we must enter into each situation through Jesus, depending on Him to give us what we need to face each thing with His heart and His righteousness.

When we choose to approach each situation by going into it through the narrow way of Jesus, we find that there is no room for all of the worldly baggage of our flesh, and so it becomes discarded right then and there (see Romans 7:18, Philippians 3:3, Galatians 6:14).

Concerning the "narrow road": Jesus said in **John 14:6, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me."**

Because Jesus himself is the way, He is "the narrow road" that we must walk on. Thus, we must conduct ourselves in every positive or negative situation that we find ourselves in according to Him, living by the truth of God's Word, and behaving by the standards of His holiness.

The way of Jesus is the path of real holiness (see 1 Peter 1:16, Hebrews 12:14) where our lives are set aside for God's purpose and our actions and attitudes are distinct from the world. It's the narrow path because it requires self-denial and self-sacrifice (see Luke 9:23, Romans 12:1-2).

Concerning the "life": Jesus said in **John 11:25, "I Am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die."**

Notice here that Jesus doesn't just give life, He Himself is "The Life". This means when you are experiencing His abundance of peace, joy, love, righteousness etc. you are actually experiencing Him by the Holy Spirit (see John 16:14, Romans 14:17).

The benefits of entering into every situation through Jesus and conducting ourselves according to the truth of Jesus is that it places us in Jesus' presence where Jesus shares Himself and His abundant life with us and through us.

Why do only few find that abundance of life? Because they didn't consider entering into their everyday situations through Jesus nor choose to conduct themselves in it in partnership with Jesus according to His ways. Let's choose the narrow and experience His fullness of life!