

The Two Travelers # 23

Matthew 7: 13-14

As we continue our study in the Sermon on the Mount, we come to a passage that all need to hear in our day. This is a passage that all can relate to and understand. It is here that Jesus speaks of the way we are traveling and the course of life that we are on. These are two courses with totally different directions and totally different destinations.

As we begin tonight I want us to consider the fundamental truth that is revealed in the verses we've read. Each of us travels on a journey through this life. Each day presents new challenges and choices. Each day we choose which path we will travel and those choices determine where we end up at the end of the day.

This is true in many ways. There are particular places that we need to go each day and if we are to arrive where we need to be, we must choose the right path. If I am planning to go to Winston Salem, I need to take the right road and head in the right direction if I expect to arrive at my destination.

The same is true in our spiritual lives as well. If we are to end up in the right destination, we must choose the right path. This is where we must make a distinction. In a physical journey there are many roads going in the same general direction. There are different courses we could take and end up at the same destination. The spiritual path is not that way. There are only two paths we could travel and they end in vastly different destinations. Let's take a few moments to consider the words of our Lord and the [directions](#) He gives as we think on: [The Two Travelers](#).

I. The Clarity in the Command (13a) – Here Jesus offers a simple command, but it is one that must be heeded. Notice:

A. The Participants – This is simple and yet it is profound. Jesus commands all who are listening to enter in at the strait gate, **Enter ye**. This would have included the disciples who followed Jesus, but it wasn't reserved for them alone. This command was given to all.

- Our Lord spoke these words thousands of years ago and yet they are relevant and applicable for today. Each of us is responsible to enter in at the strait gate. This is not a command that is reserved for a select few, but it is given to all. He made provision on the cross of Calvary for the redemption of mankind and it is our responsibility to enter in at the strait gate. We are all on a journey headed somewhere.

B. The Portal (13a) – **Enter ye in at the strait gate:** Jesus defines the location we are to enter. I want to take a moment to consider the strait gate. It is not to be confused with the English word “straight” which means “not crooked or bent.” The word **strait** in the text means “*narrow, difficult to be entered.*” Not all gain access to this gate. It is a way that only those who are deemed righteous in the eyes of God can enter. This is only achieved through the righteousness of Jesus Christ being applied to one’s account through salvation in Him. There is only one strait gate that leads to life eternal, and there is only one means of access through it, the Lord Jesus Christ.

C. The Priority (Luke 13:24) – **Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.** In Luke’s gospel Jesus said that we are to strive to enter in at the strait gate. This is an interesting aspect. The word **strive** literally means “*to contend or struggle, to endeavor with strenuous zeal.*” It is the word from which we get our word “*agonize.*”

- I don’t want anyone to misunderstand the text. This in no way implies that we can work earnestly enough to achieve salvation. Jesus is not emphasizing works, but commitment and priority. He reveals that our salvation ought to be something that we earnestly seek. It is that important. In fact, it is the most important moment in our lives. This is not something that we can afford to be careless about. It is up to us to strive to enter in at the strait gate!

I. The Clarity in the Command (13a)

II. The Reality in the Contrast (13b-14) – In these verses Jesus offers a stark contrast between the two ways. First let’s consider:

A. The Broad Way (13b) – **for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:** Notice:

1. The Portal – **for wide is the gate.** The gate we are to strive for is strait, but Jesus also speaks of a **wide gate**. This is a gate without restriction or limitation. It is easily accessible by anyone. In fact, apart from the saving grace of Jesus Christ, all are on this path and will enter the wide gate. You don’t have to do a thing to enter the wide gate. By virtue of our fallen nature, all are on the broad way and headed toward the wide gate unless they come to Christ and reverse course to travel the narrow way that leads to the strait gate.

2. The Pleasure (13b) – *for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction.* Jesus also reveals that this is the broad way. The word broad means “*spacious, giving the sense of broad appeal and acceptance.*” As we consider the broad way, all we have to do is look around at our society and we can clearly see that many have chosen that path. It is broad and spacious. It is not restricted; access is not limited. Many are on the broad road.

- That is exactly what the adversary wants. He wants the broad road to appeal to the flesh. He desires the path to destruction be lined with the pleasures of this life and plenty of company. The broad road appeals to humanity. There are many on that road and pleasures abound.

3. The Popularity (13b) – *for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:* Here we find a troubling fact that we are all too familiar with. The broad road is filled with many who are traveling the road of sin and indulgence. This is the road that the world longs to travel. It is the road that is promoted and encouraged by most. The lure of the flesh compels many to travel this road. We all face the temptations of the flesh and it longs to be with those who seek to satisfy the flesh.

- I knew this was true as a young man growing up, but it seems even more prevalent today. Our young people are bombarded daily by those who want them to travel this broad road. We must lift them up in prayer so that they will either come to Christ in salvation or continue strong in their faith if they are already saved. This world does not desire nor promote the ways of God.

B. The Narrow Way (14) – *Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* Notice as we consider the Narrow Way:

1. The Struggles – Jesus describes this way as the *narrow way*. The word narrow reveals much more than what one would expect. It is from a word that means “*to be hemmed in, like a narrow mountain pass.*” It has the idea of “*pressing together, to compress.*” The same word is translated “*afflicted, troubled, and to suffer tribulation*” in other New Testament passages.

- This is not consistent with much that is being taught today, but it is what our Lord said. Seeking to live for the Lord and traveling the path He has chosen will not be an easy journey. Trouble and affliction will come to those who are committed to living for Christ. *John 15:20a – Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you;* Living for the Lord will have its share of difficulty, but this world and its reward is not all there is for the child of God.

2. The Separation (14) – *Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* Just as the broad way is filled with many people, the narrow way will have few that travel it. We are not alone, but it will be a lonely path at times. As we travel the narrow way, there will be occasions when it feels as if we are walking by ourselves. There will be times when it feels as if the entire world is against us. That will likely be the case because the world does not embrace the ways of God nor do they seek to honor Him.

- There may be times when we are lonely and discouraged, but in reality we ought to rejoice in those times. If you are traveling a path different from the world, it is likely that you are going in the ways of God. However, if your path seems consistent with the world, you might want to consider your path and seek the ways of God. The Christian cannot walk in the ways of this world and live pleasing unto the Lord.

I. The Clarity in the Command (13a)

II. The Reality in the Contrast (13b-14)

III. The Eternity in the Choice (13-14) – Clearly Jesus has revealed there are only two paths that we can travel, the broad way or the narrow way. Each of these are different paths that lead to two totally different destinations. The significance is the length of time that will follow the final destination. The path we choose in this life will determine where we spend eternity. Consider:

A. The Broad Way (13) – *Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:* The broad way always leads to destruction. That means “*to perish, ruin.*” In the context of this passage it literally means “*the destruction which consists of eternal misery in hell.*”

- That is little mentioned in our day, but it is true nonetheless. All who choose the broad way will come to a destructive end. All who travel that path will be rejected of God at the Great White Throne judgment and be cast into eternal separation and misery in hell, [Rev.20:11-15](#).

B. The Narrow Way (14) – *Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* The broad way leads to destruction, eternal separation and death, but the narrow way leads to life eternal in the Lord. This speaks of the absolute fullness of life that is only found in the Lord Jesus Christ, through a personal relationship with Him. Just as the condemned are cast out, the saved will enjoy the pleasures of heaven for eternity, [Rev.21:1-7](#).

We have considered a profound truth this evening concerning the direction of our lives. Jesus reveals the paths of two different travelers, each going in a different direction that will ultimately lead to different destinations. One is a destination of suffering, misery, and death, while the other leads to a destination of peace, joy, and life.

Each of us are on one of these two paths tonight. We are either traveling the broad way that leads to destruction or we are on the narrow way that leads to life. We were all born in sin, separated from God. By virtue of our fallen nature, all begin traveling the broad way. The only way to access the narrow way is through Christ. If you have never been born again, you remain on the broad way. If you choose to reject the narrow way this evening, you have made a choice to remain on the broad way. If you are on the broad way and the Lord has spoken to you, please come and be saved so that you too can travel the narrow way!