

THE TWO GATES AND THE TWO WAYS

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Matthew 7:13,14**. From Roy H. Enoch (8-1-93).
- B. This passage illustrates the vast differences between the teachings of X and the religious world.
 - 1. They teach that there are many ways to heaven.
 - 2. Some teach that one can be saved by only believing that Jesus is the Son of God.
 - 3. Some teach that a child of God cannot sin and be lost.
 - 4. But Jesus teaches that there is a great contrast.
 - a. There are only two gates or ways, and only one leads to heaven.
 - b. There are only a few going to heaven.
 - c. The way to heaven is narrow and difficult.
 - d. We have to exert great effort to enter the narrow way.
- C. Satan does not mind people being religious, as long as they are faithful.
 - 1. He is glad for them to call themselves "Xians" as long as they are lukewarm and worldly.
 - 2. X is shamed before the world by a negligent Xian.
 - 3. Those who are lukewarm have a false sense of security and are an abomination to X.
- D. Today, examining this teaching of X about the two gates: two ways.

I. JESUS COMMANDS US TO "ENTER" THE "NARROW" GATE.

- A. He teaches that great effort is required to enter this gate (Lk. 13:24).
 - 1. See also Col. 4:12; 1Tim. 6:12.
 - 2. Man may say that there is nothing that one has to do to be saved, but Jesus says that we must "strive," "labor fervently" or "fight" to enter the "narrow gate" that "leads to life."
- B. Jesus makes it clear that the road to heaven is not long an easy path of idleness and inactivity, but requires persistent application, untiring effort and wearisome toil.
- C. As the words of the familiar song,
 - Shall I be carried to the skies
 - On flowery beds of ease,
 - While others fight to win the prize,
 - And sail through bloody seas?

II. THE "NARROW GATE" MUST BE ENTERED.

- A. We must actually pass through the gate that leads to eternal life.
 - 1. It is not enough to merely listen to preaching when pleasant and convenient.
 - 2. It is not enough to have fathers and mothers who are dedicated and faithful.
 - 3. It is not enough to assemble w/those who are dedicated.
 - 4. It is not enough to give lip service to Jesus and be baptized.
- B. Entering the narrow gate and walking the difficult way requires self denial and consecrated service (Mt. 16:24).

III THE GATE IS "NARROW" WHICH MEANS THAT IT IS NOT EASILY ENTERED.

- A. The nature of heaven, being holy, requires a very strict gate to keep it pure (Rev. 22:14,15).
 - 1. In Rev. 22:12 heaven is pictured as the heavenly Jerusalem with 12 gates that are never shut, and men are invited to enter from all nations of the earth.
 - 2. But the gate to the only way to heaven is narrow and the way is difficult and narrow so that sinful people will not enter it (Rev. 21:27).
 - 3. It could not be otherwise and still be the holy city of God.
- B. Since the gate is narrow, men cannot enter w/loads of corruption and material things.

1. It is barely large enough for a man humbled by godly sorrow and repentance, and one accustomed to kneeling for prayer.
2. It is too small for the worldly to enter w/pride and money bags of ill-gotten gains.
3. One puffed up w/self-importance and self-righteousness could not get through.
4. Jesus says those who trust riches cannot enter the kingdom of heaven (Mk. 10:24,25).
5. The desire for fame and the praise of men will also keep one from the kingdom of God.
6. The love of the world will keep one from the narrow gate (1Jn. 2:15-17).
7. The narrow gate not only involves self denial and dedicated service, but it requires faithfulness (Mt. 24:12,13).

IV. JESUS DESCRIBES THE GATE AS NARROW, AND THE WAY DIFFICULT.

- A. The way has to be narrow because it is the way of truth.
 1. Nothing is more narrow than truth or broader than error.
 2. It is narrow because it is enclosed by divine commands.
- B. We should be thankful that it is narrow and difficult.
 1. It protects us from error and its dangers.
 2. Like the highway to Key West, that has guard rails to protect from the dangers of deep water, God's law keeps us from the dangers of sin.
 3. The way of truth is narrow and difficult to shut out the worldly and evil.

V. FEW WILL TRAVEL THIS NARROW, DIFFICULT WAY TO HEAVEN.

- A. "There are few who will find it."
- B. All humanity is invited to travel this road and offered its blessings.
 1. But we must give up our ways trust the Lord enough to search diligently for the narrow gate and difficult way.
 2. This teaching of Jesus is difficult and unpopular.
 3. Most want to believe that each can do as he pleases and that God will still bless him here and in eternity.
 - a. The Jews were filled with pride and believed that since they were of the fleshly descendants of Abraham, they would all be admitted to the privileges of heaven.
 - b. But Jesus warned his disciples that unless they did better than that, they could not enter heaven (Mt. 5:20).
 - c. Many believe today that America is a "Christian nation" all will be blessed.
 - d. Others think that they are all right since they are in a "Christian family"
 - e. Others think that having some "church membership" will suffice.
- C. All are invited to salvation, but "there are few who find it."
 1. Family and friends of a deceased love one often expect the assurance that the deceased is now "at rest" regardless of his not being even a Xian, much less not dedicated.
 2. Most do not believe the teachings of Jesus and consider one who preaches His teachings as unloving, bigoted and narrow.
 - a. They teach that only the worst have anything to fear, and they would cease to exist, but have no pain in punishment.
 - b. This only confirms their unbelief.
- D. Only the narrow way of truth leads to eternal life.
 1. It is pictured as uphill and difficult.

VI. THE "BROAD WAY" IS EASILY FOUND AND ENTERED WITHOUT EFFORT.

- A. It is the popular way of self-gratification and selfishness.

1. It lets each do as he pleases.
 2. It is easy to travel because it is downhill all the way.
 3. It is wide and crowded, because "there are many" who travel it (Prov. 14:12; Psa. 1:6).
- B. The Lord warns us to consider the consequence of the way we choose (Prov. 4:26).
1. Men seem more willing to consider the consequence of their actions in material things than in spiritual.
 2. Paul contrasted the physical w/the spiritual (1Tim. 4:8).

CONCLUSION.

- A. Consider your ways while you have disposition and opportunity to change it.
- B. See Mt. 7:13-14.