

Jesus Is The Narrow Way

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Luke 13:22-30 ²² And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. ²³ Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" And He said to them, ²⁴ "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. ²⁵ "When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' ²⁶ "then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' ²⁷ "But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' ²⁸ "There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. ²⁹ "They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. ³⁰ "And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last."

At the New Delhi train station in India, there is a massive sign pointing in the right direction to the foreign tourist office. My brother Nate and I were standing there, looking at this sign when a local approached us and asked if we were looking for the tourist office.

"Yes, we are," we responded.

"Follow me," he said, as he pointed us in the opposite direction.

"But the sign says to go that way," we replied.

At this point, he became angry. "You don't trust me? You think I'm lying?" he snapped.

"Okay," we said, "lead the way."

We let him take a few steps in the wrong direction, then we disappeared into the crowd, following the arrow on the sign. The truth is, despite the size of the sign, such tactics seem to work — or else the locals wouldn't still be trying them. How many, despite the clear sign, allow themselves to follow the lie?

Jesus has put up a huge sign telling us the right way to find salvation.

John 14:6 — Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

John 11:25 — Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live."

John 3:16 — "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Yet, despite this clear sign, few actually find the right gate. Many seek other doors. Many follow false arrows. Some listen to false prophets who do not preach the Word of God but instead promote their own dreams and imaginations.

"Seek to enter through the narrow gate," Jesus tells us in our text. Seek no other. That narrow gate is Jesus Himself, and we enter through repentance and faith.

Do not look for any other door. Do not follow any other arrow. Do not listen to any voice except that of your one true Shepherd. There is only one door leading to salvation. That door is Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and rose again. There is only one Word of God that points the way.

John 10:27-28 — "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand."

SEEK

Jesus calls us to strive for, or seek, the narrow door, which is Him.

Sometimes the problem isn't finding the right answer but asking the right question.

The answer to the question—"Are there few or many who are saved?"—is yes, indeed, there are few. But that isn't the right question. Whether many or few find salvation, the real question is: **How can I be saved?**

The right question isn't the one asked in our text but the one asked by the Philippian jailer in Acts 16:

Acts 16:30-31 — "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" "And they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.'"

"Theoretical questions framed in the third person, like 'Put off repentance and do not lead to faith,' Jesus will not let a questioner examine others without himself first examining." — (*Just*, p. 551)

That's why Jesus responds not with a simple yes or no, but with an imperative: **strive** or **seek**. You seek the narrow door. Don't worry about others. Worry about yourself.

Struggle or seek — these words, along with others like Paul's exhortation to "run with endurance the race that is set before us," can tempt our sinful flesh to think that salvation depends on our own efforts. However, Scripture makes it clear this is not the case.

The word **strive** here means not that our effort saves us, but that we should urgently pursue salvation without delay. Do not put it off, because the opportunity might not last.

Hebrews 3:15 — "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

Psalms 95:7-8 — "For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion, as in the day of trial in the wilderness."

Ephesians 4:30 — "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

The same word, **strive**, is also used in 1 Timothy 6:12:

1 Timothy 6:12 — "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called, and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

Jesus is the narrow gate, and He gives salvation as a free gift of God. Do not strive to find salvation in any other way but diligently seek the forgiveness He offers through His death and resurrection.

HE WILL SHUT THE DOOR

Jesus calls us to seek the narrow door now, while it is still open.

He speaks of shutting the door, a reminder that He has come to open the way of life. Seeing that opening, we should enter now.

If Culver's has a sign out front — **"Free Ice Cream"** — you wouldn't say, "Let's wait and see if it's still there tomorrow." You go and get it now.

The door is open now. Now is the time to repent. Do not delay because you do not know when God will shut the door.

Remember the people of Noah's day. They laughed at Noah as he built the ark. They refused to enter even when they saw the animals going in. Then the Lord shut the door, and there was no more opportunity. The rain began to fall, and their chance was gone.

Jesus has given us a big, clear sign pointing the way to the narrow gate. He has graciously opened it for us. He is calling us to enter now — while it's open.