
Third Presbyterian Church
Sermon on the Mount – Lesson 25
“Broadway doesn’t lead to Heaven”

Matthew 7:13-14 (NIV)

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

1. Why are most people apt to believe in heaven but quick to dismiss the reality of hell?
2. What is your reaction to the sermon saying that the broad way and the narrow way is on the same road just different directions?
3. There are cost to following Christ through the narrow gate. In the form of personal testimony speak to the following areas of cost in your life and how it impacted your faith and walk with Jesus:
 - a. The narrow gate cost me my will!
 - b. The narrow gate cost me some relationships!
 - c. The narrow gate cost me my life!
4. How might you respond to the charge that Christians are narrow-minded and arrogant to think that the only way to heaven is through Jesus?
5. Why do many people prefer the broad way that leads to destruction?
6. In what ways to bumping into others as you head in the narrow direction draining?
 - a. What can you do to overcome getting weary in your well doing?
7. What can you do this week to point someone toward the narrow way?
8. Share your greatest takeaway or what impacted you most about the sermon.

(7:13-14) **Life— Decision**: the two choices in life. The picture is not of a man standing at a crossroads, as some paint the scene. What man faces is a single gate, not two gates. There are two gates, but man faces and sees only one. Man cannot see the narrow gate; it has to be searched for and found. (Note the words "find it," Matthew 7:14.)

The charge is forceful: turn from the wide gate (worldliness), search for and find and enter the narrow gate.

1. There are two gates (see Deeper Study #1—Matthew 7:13-14 for discussion).
2. There are two ways (see Deeper Study #2—Matthew 7:13-14 for discussion).
3. There are two ends (see Deeper Study #3—Matthew 7:13-14 for discussion).
4. There are two travellers (see Deeper Study #4—Matthew 7:14 for discussion).
5. There are two decisions (see Deeper Study #5—Matthew 7:14 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY #1 (7:13-14) Salvation— Life— Decision

Thought 1. The wide gate is the world. The narrow gate is the Kingdom of Heaven. The wide gate stands open. It is so wide that four things can be said about it.

- 1) There is not a single hindrance to entering the wide gate. Nothing keeps a person from entering it. It is as if a person naturally stands before its wide open doors.
- 2) Plenty of people can enter and are entering its wide doors at any given time. A person has plenty of company in entering the wide gate.
- 3) It appears to be the only gate to enter because there...
 - is so much growth around it.
 - are so many people entering it.
 - is so much activity going on.

The point is that a person does not even think of another gate, much less look for one.

- 4) The wide gate is wide enough to include all: all philosophies and beliefs no matter how extreme, all appetites and passions, all liberties and licenses, all sin and selfishness. The gate is swung wide open so that any and all can enter.

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21).

Thought 2. The narrow gate is so narrow it cannot be seen. This says several things.

- 1) We must turn from the wide gate: turn from following the crowd; turn from the pull of the activity and attractions around the gate.
- 2) We must search for the narrow gate and seek it out diligently.
- 3) We must enter immediately when we find the narrow gate. However, it is hard to enter for it is very narrow.

Thought 3. How does a person enter the narrow gate (heaven)?

- 1) He must repent: turn from the wide gate, the crowd, the activity and attractions around the gate (the world).

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).

- 2) He must confess that he does not know the narrow gate (heaven); the location (belief); the activity around it (righteousness, good works); and the attraction of it (hope, spiritual qualities, and real life), and that he needs help to find it. (See note—' Ephes. 1:3.)

"They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Romans 3:12).

- 3) He must be born again:

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God...." (John 3:3).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:23).

Thought 4. How does a person enter the narrow gate?

- 1) A person must stoop and bow down: become as a little child (Mark 10:15; Luke 18:17).
- 2) A person must strip down: put off the old man (Ephes. 4:23-24; Col. 4:10).
- 3) A person must struggle: struggle against the flesh (2 Cor. 6:17; Gal 5:17).

DEEPER STUDY #2 (7:13-14) Salvation— Life— Decision

Thought 1. The broad way is the easy way, the way of the world. The narrow way is the hard way, the way of heaven, the way of faith, hope, and righteousness. The broad way is very broad and ever so easy to travel.

- 1) It has very few hedges, or restrictions, or stops to slow a person's journey down. A person can travel right along as he wishes with few prohibitions. He may stop as he is attracted or invited.
- 2) It offers many attractions along its way. There are attractions that stir the mind and the flesh, aesthetic values and sensual desires, cultural interests and pleasurable stimulators. There are many, many attractions that appeal to all the sensations of a person's nature.

"Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths" (Proverbs 2:15).

"...the way of transgressors is hard" (Proverbs 13:15).

"The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace" (Isaiah 59:8).

Thought 2. The narrow way is very narrow, and it is hard and difficult to travel.

- 1) The way (road) is surrounded by a frightening, threatening, and swampy wilderness. Resistance is needed. The temptation to return to the broad way is sometimes strong. Self-denial and the will to struggle are needed to overcome the flesh and the fear.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23).

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Galatians 5:17).

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephes. 6:12).

"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (1 Peter 5:10).

- 2) The way (road) is unpaved, covered with gravel and rocks. It takes strong will and determination and personal sacrifice to stick to the road (Romans 12:1-2). A person must endure hardness and sufferings.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:1-2).

"And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God" (Phil. 1:28).

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim. 2:3-4).

DEEPER STUDY #3 (7:13-14) Salvation— Life— Decision

Thought 1. The broad way or road ends. There is an end to it, but the traveller does not pay any attention to its end. The road appears to be so broad and long as he travels day by day that he figures he will know when he comes to the end. There is little chance he can miss it, so he thinks. But he overlooks one thing. The broad road has so many side attractions to draw and embrace the traveller's attention that he often runs upon the end without knowing it. He fails to see that the end is immediately ahead; therefore, he runs off the end without having prepared himself to face the abyss.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

"As righteousness tendeth to life: so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death" (Proverbs 11:19).

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12).

"The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord" (Proverbs 15:9).

Thought 2. The narrow way does not end. It leads to a glorious world that is yet unseen, but it opens up an unbelievable life to the traveller.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23).

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away" (Rev. 21:1. See note— Ephes. 1:3.)

DEEPER STUDY #4 (7:14) Salvation— Life— Decision

Thought 1. Many travellers desire the crowd and the attractions of the broad way so much that they are willing to run the risk of wrecking among so much traffic.

Thought 2. Many travellers on the broad road figure this: since so many are travelling the broad road, they could not be wrong. All the *paths* taken within the broad way must end up at the same end. And they are right; the travellers of the broad way, no matter which *path* they take, do end up at the same end.

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24).

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock....and every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand" (Matthew 7:24, 26).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:17-18).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:15-16).

"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise" (Proverbs 12:15).

DEEPER STUDY #5 (7:14) Salvation— Life— Decision

Thought 1. Some seek the narrow gate and never enter it.

- 1) Some come upon it, but they decide it is too narrow for them. It requires too much effort, discipline, and self-denial to enter.
- 2) Some seek unthoughtfully. They carelessly walk right by it without ever seeing it.
- 3) Some seek half-heartedly. They still look back to the wide gate so as not to lose sight of it. They miss the narrow gate because of insincerity and lack of discipline.
- 4) Some seek and run across it, but they do not like what they see: the restraints, the discipline, the gravel and rocky covering. Therefore, they turn back to the wide gate.

Thought 2. The narrow gate is narrow and hard to find. But it is not shut. It is open to all who seek and find it. The invitation is out to whomever will enter it.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

"And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" (Luke 14:23).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isaiah 55:1).

DEEPER STUDY #1

(7:13-14) **Salvation— Life— Decision:** there are two gates, one wide and one narrow. Every man stands before the wide gate. It is immediately before him, right before his face. It is the only gate that faces him; in fact, it is so close to him that no entrance is necessary. All he has to do is take a step and he has entered it.

The narrow gate is not seen. A person has to search for it in order to find it. It is both narrow and facing in the opposite direction from the wide gate. This means it...

- is not immediately nor naturally seen.
- can be found only if one turns (repents) to find it.
- has to be sought.
- is difficult to enter when found (narrow).

The point is striking and forceful.

1. The way to eternal life is very specific and very few will choose it (cp. Jeremiah 21:8).
2. There is no choice. There is only one way, not many.
3. The way is Jesus Christ. If a person wishes eternal life, he has to come to God through Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

DEEPER STUDY #2

(7:13-14) **Salvation— Life— Decision:** there are two ways or two roads to life—one easy and one hard.

The broad and easy way can be followed without thought. There is plenty of space to walk in; there is plenty of space for the attractive things of the world to grow and allure; there is plenty of space for a person to wander about. It is difficult to wander off its path. The broad way is the way of the unthoughtful, the undisciplined, the lazy, the worldly, the ungodly, the materialistic, and the carnal.

The narrow and hard way requires commitment, determination, discipline, control, and self-denial. There is little space along its path. It is difficult to get through. A person has to stay alert at all times lest he wander out of the way off its path. The narrow way is the way of the thinking, the disciplined, the responsible, and the spiritual.

The two travellers may be contrasted as the thoughtless vs. the thinking; the undisciplined vs. the disciplined, the lazy vs. the responsible, the materialistic or carnal vs. the spiritual-minded.

DEEPER STUDY #3

(7:13-14) **Salvation—Life—Decision**: there are two ends. The broad way ends in destruction and in death. In fact, even as a person walks along the broad way, he is said "to be perishing [apoleian]."

The narrow way ends in life, that is, in "the fulness of life" and in "the highest ideal of life" (John 10:10. See note—1 Cor. 1:18 where Paul draws a contrast between "those who are perishing" and those who are "being saved" [Grk.])

DEEPER STUDY #4

(7:14) **Salvation—Life—Decision**: there are two travellers, the wise vs. the unwise. The unwise are *many*. They enter the wide gate, travel the broad and easy way, and end up perishing and experiencing destruction.

The wise are the *few*. The few search for, find, and enter the narrow gate. They travel the narrow and hard way and end up in *life*. Few experience the fulness of life in its highest ideal.

DEEPER STUDY #5

(7:14) **Salvation—Life—Decision**: there are two decisions, no effort vs. seeking to find. The wide gate requires no decision to enter. A person stands before it automatically by being in the world. Christ does not say a person has to enter it. To enter the gate requires no energy, no search, no commitment. A person is there, facing the gate already. All he has to do is to begin his journey in life and follow its broad and easy course.

The narrow gate requires a decision to enter. It requires (1) a personal decision, (2) a firm determination, and (3) a commitment of energy and effort to search out the entrance. And once the narrow gate has been found, an immediate and definite decision to enter is required: "Enter ye in" is the striking and clear decision that has to be made.

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15).

"Behold, I have set before you the way of life and the way of death" (Jeremiah 21:8; cp. Deut. 30:19; cp. Deut. 30:15).

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2).

The wide gate is *the world* and the narrow gate is *heaven*. The broad way is the *way of the world*, and the narrow way is the *way of heaven*. The broad way leads to *destruction* (perishing) and the narrow way leads to *life*. Many are entering the wide gate and perishing. *Only a few* are entering the narrow gate and living.

Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible - Commentary - The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Matthew.