

"The Purpose of the Sermon on the Mount"

Part 2

Matthew 7:13-29

Introduction: In our study of the Sermon on the Mount we have come to the conclusion. I have entitled this last section "The Purpose of the Sermon on the Mount" because while it is the conclusion it also contains the purpose of Jesus preaching the sermon.

Now last week we started into this section and we will pick it up right where we left off but we need to review a little first of all. Luke gives us some insight which will help us to have the proper mindset.

Luke 19:10

¹⁰ For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Jesus had come to the earth to be the Savior of man. Therefore, in all He said and did He was pointing people to the Way of eternal life. It is no different here in the Sermon on the Mount. As He stood on the hillside that day and preached this sermon He was in a sense walking his listeners down a path and on that path they were able to see what it was that was required by God to be Kingdom people. The entire sermon was designed to bring them to **Matthew 7:13-14**. You see in the journey He has taken them on and taken us on we can clearly see how far short we are of God's standards. That is exactly what Jesus desired for all of His listeners to understand. Along the way Jesus was teaching them the standards of the Kingdom so as to strip away all self righteousness. As we then come to Matthew 7:13-14 He brings us all to

a cross roads where every person must make a choice as to which path they will walk in this life.

Last week I told you that throughout the Bible God presents man with the opportunity to choose the way of life or the way of death. God brings man to a cross roads.

Genesis 4:3-7

³ *And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.*

⁴ *And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:*

⁵ *But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.*

⁶ *And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?*

⁷ *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. **[This was the cross roads for Cain]***

Jeremiah 21:8

⁸ *And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death. **[This was a cross roads]***

This was exactly what Jesus did with the Sermon on the Mount.

Notice Matthew 7:13-14

In these verses Jesus contrasts 4 things:

1. There are 2 gates.
2. There are 2 paths.
3. There are 2 groups of people.
4. There are 2 destinies.

Jesus has brought His listeners to this cross roads and now they must choose which path they will walk.

Now again I say that we need to see the contrasts found within these verses in the proper context. The 2 paths which are picture here represent Christianity and all false religion. In the context the 2 paths represent Christianity and the teaching of the Pharisees because that is exactly what Jesus has been contrasting the entire way through the Sermon on the Mount.

The "broad" path is the path of false religion. The "narrow" path is the way of Christianity. Both paths are marked "This way to Heaven" because Satan is deceptive and he would never place a sign on the "broad" path which says, "This way to hell". We must understand that those who are on the "broad" path are "religious" people. The Pharisees were religious but they were on the "broad" path leading to destruction because they were trusting in their own self righteousness to gain them entrance into heaven. They were on the path of "false religion". The "narrow" path is the path of "grace" the "broad" path is the path of "works". There are many people today who are walking on the "broad" path because they believe their good works will be accepted by God.

Proverbs 14:12

¹² *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

I. The Narrow Gate

Part 2

Last week we started to look at the Narrow Gate and we considered 2 points:

A. The Urgency to Enter

Notice Matthew 7:13

The first word here is so very important. Jesus says, "Enter". It is a direct command from our Lord for all who are not on the "Narrow Path" are to enter without delay. Last week I gave you 3 reasons why this command is so urgent:

1. We have an appointed day to die.
2. When the rapture happens all opportunities are gone for the people who have heard the Gospel before the rapture.
3. When a person rejects the offer of eternal life they harden their heart more with every rejection.

B. The narrowness of the gate.

Notice Matthew 7:13-14

The idea behind the word "narrow" is "compressed". The gate which we must pass through to get on the path which leads to eternal life is very narrow and very tight.

1. **To get through the gate you must let that which you are clinging to on the outside.**

I told you last week you can picture a turn stile at an airport to get the idea. When you go through a turn stile you cannot have your arms full of baggage. The narrowness of this gate is an illustration of repentance. The word "repent" means "to have a change of mind" or "to change direction".

In order for a person to get saved there must be repentance which is a change of mind. This happens when the Holy Spirit convicts the person and they see the seriousness of their sin. It is then that a person changes their mind about sin. Before this they loved their sin but now they hate it and they desire to walk away from their sin. So they turn to Jesus Who offers to them eternal life. You cannot come through the Narrow Gate clinging to your sin.

No one can come through this Narrow Gate until they repent.

Mark 1:15

¹⁵ And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Matthew gives us a really good picture of how we must repent of our sins before we can enter through the gate.

Matthew 19:16-22

¹⁶ And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

¹⁷ And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

¹⁸ He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

¹⁹ Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

²⁰ The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

²¹ Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

²² But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

This man could not get through the gate because he held 2 bags in his hands.

- 1. Self righteousness**
- 2. Love for the wealth of this world.**

C. The difficulty of getting through the gate.

This statement may seem strange to many people. But when we look at some verses you will see what I mean by this statement. Luke will help us to get our minds wrapped around this statement a little better.

Luke 13:23-24

²³ Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

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**.

Let me show you the meaning of the word "strive" which Luke uses in verse 24. Here is Vines definition: "to put forth every effort, involving toil".

Jesus tells us in Luke 13:24 that many will seek to enter in but will not be able to do so. Now let me make something very clear: Jesus is not telling us that we must "do good works" to earn entrance through the Narrow Gate and onto the Narrow way. There are no works involved in salvation on our part.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

⁹ **Not of works**, lest any man should boast

So if salvation is not of works then what did Jesus mean when He said, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate"?

He was speaking of the spiritual battle which takes place when a person is under conviction and the Spirit is drawing him or her toward Jesus Christ and then there is the pull of the world, the flesh and the Devil which pulls them away from Christ. That very struggle can be seen in a passage which we already looked at.

Matthew 19:16-22

¹⁶ And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

This man did not "strive" to enter in. He surrendered over to the pull of the world and decided he would just go on down the path of false religion. He never even put up any kind of fight because he loved the things of the world far too much.

I have known many people who were in a very heated battle over the salvation of their souls. I knew a man years ago that was under great conviction but had a favorite sin that he held very tightly too and was not willing to let it go for almost a year. Praise the Lord he dropped the sin and walked through the Narrow Gate.

This is the very reason why Jesus said there will be few that will find the way of eternal life. You see if we contrast this with the other gate we can begin to see why many are on the path of destruction.

Matthew 7:13

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 gate which leads to destruction is a WIDE GATE. That means there is no need of repentance to enter this path. You can come with as much baggage as you like because this gate is very wide. Now I want you to listen to what I am about to say. This is why you see people today that "claim" to worship Jesus but are still living in their sin. They have entered through the WIDE GATE and are on a path which is marked, "THIS WAY TO HEAVEN" but it is a lie. They have never repented of their sins and the GATE they have come through is not the GATE that leads to eternal life. It is a GATE that is promoted by false teachers and is a GATE that leads to a path which makes them "feel" really good about the decision they have made to be "religious".

This path is full of people who go out and live in their sins then they go to their "church" and confess their sin then they go right back out and do the same thing again. That is not salvation.

Let me jump ahead for a moment.

Matthew 7:21- 23

²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

*²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, **ye that work iniquity.***

These are the people on the broad path but notice the statement which I bolded and underlined. The statement "Ye that work iniquity" could also read, "You that live like there is no law or no Bible". They had never repented because they had never come to hate their sin. Their lives had never changed but they talk like they know Jesus. They even serve within the church but they are not saved!

Conclusion:

All of this is exactly why it is so dangerous to just have people walk the isle, fill out a decision card, raise their hand, or pray a prayer to be saved. There must be a hatred for sin and repentance or the conversion is not real. If we do not explain to them the need to repent then we have just walked them through the WIDE GATE.