

"The Right Path"

Matthew 7:13-14

Introduction: Today we are stepping away from our study in 2 Kings, and we are going to look at a message from the book of Matthew. I want to talk to you today about the path that you are on in your life. We have considered many times in our studies of the deception that is in our world.

Matthew 24:10-12

¹⁰ *And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.*

¹¹ *And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.*

¹² *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*

This deception that Jesus speaks of is in the Tribulation, but it has already started today, and you know as well as I do that it is difficult to know what to believe today. If we combine this thought with the fact that Satan is the god of this world and he has blinded the hearts of many then we can be sure that many in this world are living in deception.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

³ *But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:*

⁴ *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

There are so many people that attend church today who believe they are going to heaven but in reality, they have been deceived, and they are on a path that is leading them directly to hell.

In Matthew 5-7 Jesus gave the famous Sermon on the Mount. This sermon was given to the nation of Israel, and we need to keep that in mind. Many teachers want to make the Sermon on the Mount all about the church but that is incorrect. There is certainly application here for the church, but the sermon given to Israel and there are certain points that apply to the Jews and not to the church.

We are going to look at the crossroads that Jesus brought His listeners to.

Notice Matthew 7:13-14

In these two verses we have.

- ✓ Two gates.
- ✓ Two paths.
- ✓ Two groups of people.
- ✓ Two destinies.

I want to break these down and consider each one.

❖ **The Two Gates**

Notice Matthew 7:13

The first thing we see is the two gates are completely different. One is STRAIT and one is WIDE.

- **The Strait Gate**

The word "STRAIT" means narrow or tight. This gate is Jesus Christ.

John 10:7-9

⁷ *Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ± of the sheep.*

⁸ *All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.*

⁹ *I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.*

Jesus is the Door that leads to eternal life. But why does Matthew tell us that this Gate is STRAIT/NARROW? There are a couple of reasons.

1. **He is the only way to heaven.**

Acts 4:12

¹² *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

John 14:6

⁶ Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

2. It is difficult for sinners to get through the gate.

Luke 13:23-25

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.

²⁵ When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

We do not work for salvation, that is not what is meant by striving. For a sinner to come through the GATE they must be stripped of all self-righteousness. We can bring nothing to buy our salvation. We have nothing to offer.

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.

Here was a man who could not get through the Gate because he held in his hand self-righteousness. We can come to Jesus and get through the Gate only by faith.

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.

Let us consider the opposing gate.

- **The Wide Gate**

This is the gate of religion. This gate is wide because you can carry all your self-righteousness through this gate. You can bring your sinful practices and walk right through this gate.

❖ **The Two Paths**

Notice Matthew 7:13-14

1. The narrow way.

After we come to Jesus Christ the path to eternal life is narrow. The word "narrow" means "AFFLICTION." But what does this mean? After a person is truly saved the path that we walk is a path of affliction in that when we step off into sin, we can be sure that the Lord will chastise or afflict us until we get back on the path again.

Hebrews 12:6-8

⁶ For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

⁷ If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

⁸ But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

Psalms 119:67-68

⁶⁷ Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

⁶⁸ Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.

2. The broad way.

Those who are not saved but are religious and think they are on a path to eternal life can carry their sin with them and they experience no chastisement. You can go live in your sin on this path and there will be no discipline from God.

If there is sin in your life and there is no conviction and there is no chastisement then, you are not on the narrow path. You have entered through the wide gate and are on the broad path.

❖ The two groups.

Notice Matthew 7:13-14

1. The Few.

This is a very frightening statement. There are only a few who find the way to eternal life. There is a picture of this in those who survived the flood of Noah's day. There is believed to be billions of people and only 8 entered the ark.

2. The Many.

In contrast to the few on the narrow path there are many on the broad path. We see this same group deeper in the text.

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 religious people who have come through the wide gate and are living on the broad way. Using Jesus' own words, they WORK INIQUITY which means they live like there is no Bible. They live in their sin.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

⁹ *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,*

¹⁰ *Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

¹¹ *And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

I want you to see what is being said here. When you come to Jesus Christy He changes your life in two ways. Positionally and practically.

❖ **The two destinations.**

Notice Matthew 7:13-14

The religious path leads to destruction, and the narrow path leads to eternal life.

Conclusion:

Which path are you on?