

The Messenger



“... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans 10:15

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Our Two Choices

by Lynn R. Weseel

“Enter ye in by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate and straitened the way, that leadeth into life and few are they that find it” (Matt. 7:13-14).

These statements were made by Christ near the end of His “Sermon on the Mount”. In them He is talking about two different eternal destinies toward which all are traveling. One He calls “destruction” and the other, “life”. Each individual must choose which of these destinies is his. This choice involves:

TWO GATES

Since there are only two destinies, there are only two gates which are open to all. Each of us must choose which one we shall enter. There is no third choice or no middle gate to consider as an alternative.

Christ is inviting us to enter the “narrow” or “strait” (KJV) gate. The word “strait” doesn’t mean s-t-r-a-i-g-h-t (i.e. not crooked), but a gate that is narrow, compressed – hard pressed as between two rocks and hard to enter. Jesus tells us to “strive to enter” (Luke 13:24). To strive means to agonize, to exert real effort and toil to enter. He teaches that we must become as little children (Matt. 18:3), deny self (Matt. 16:24), forsake all (Luke 26-33), be born again (John 3:3-5), in order to enter this strait gate. We can’t just hear the word or say, “Lord, Lord”; but, we must enter through our faith and obedience to the gospel of Christ (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38).

The other gate is entered without invitation from Christ. It is the “wide gate” and is the entrance to a life of sin and selfishness. Most are going through this gate because it is the easiest to enter and the “baggage” one can take includes his own selfish desire, thoughts, plans, pleasures, and will.

TWO WAYS

Since there are only two gates to enter to travel toward two destinies, there are only two roads on which we can travel. Christ has invited us to travel on the “straitened” or “narrow” way because this is the road which leads to heaven. This way is called “narrow” because truth is narrow and excludes all error and every false way. The boundaries of this way are established by God’s word and He forbids us to walk in the “way of the flesh” (Gal. 5:19-21), or in the “way of this world” (Eph. 2:2). We can walk on the narrow way only by eliminating human reasoning, feelings, and sight as our standard of authority and walk as faith leads us (II Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:17).

The “broad way” is the road which leads to eternal destruction. It is the way of the world and is the pathway of self-will and selfish gratification of carnal desires. It is “broad” because there are no restrictions, easy because it requires no effort; and smooth because it is all “down-hill”. This is the way spoken of in Prov. 14:12: *“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death”*.

TWO GROUPS

In these statements, Christ also informs us of the comparative size of each group traveling on the two roads. Since one way is narrow and has a “strait” gate it will have only a “few” travelers. The other is wide with a broad gate and will have “many” travelers.

The idea of only a few is difficult for some to accept. They think that all will be saved or at least it will be the majority that goes to heaven. Not so! God has always had the “few”. When he destroyed the earth with water, only 8 people were saved (I Pet. 3:20). When it came time for the Israelites who came out of Egypt and were 20 years old and up, to go into the promised land of Canaan, only 2 entered (Num. 14:30). When it comes time for the saved to enter into heaven, only a few will enter.

The “Many” will have been on the road which leads to destruction. Hell will be a crowded place. It will be filled with the majority who thought their man-made doctrines were acceptable with God, who thought their life of sensual pleasure would have been overlooked, who thought their lies were not heard, who thought that peace and unity could be achieved with compromise of truth, etc.

Which choice have you made? Toward which destiny are you traveling? The answer to this is found in which choice you have made between two gates, two ways and two groups of people. Heed the Lord’s invitation: *“Enter ye in by the narrow gate”*.

News and Notes:

Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

“...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

James 5:16