

JESUS: THE DOOR

WHO WILL GO TO HEAVEN?

We all want to go to heaven. What does it take to get there? How do we get there? When we watch TV, listen to our friends, or listen to some Bible teachers, it sounds like everyone is going to heaven. We presume that anyone who is not a murderer or rapist, and has led a reasonably wholesome life will see Jesus in heaven. This assumption is made regardless of their spiritual life. This assumption is made without regard to their relationship to Jesus. So, is it true? Will we naturally find our selves in heaven without any guidance and direction? Or should we be more attentive to what Jesus tells us to do. The only way to answer this question is searching the scriptures to see what Jesus has to say about heaven.

Before we do this, ask yourself: Am I willing to believe what Jesus tells me? Am I willing to ignore what I think, and accept the truth Jesus has to offer? If we are not willing to obey Jesus, than everything He tells us will be in vain.

ENTER THROUGH THE NARROW GATE

Is getting into heaven easy or hard? It is fair to say that getting to heaven is easy when we refer to Jesus' salvation. We could never go to heaven by our own work or effort. Jesus sacrificing Himself for the forgiveness of our sins makes it possible. So in truth, it is easy to get to heaven, when we compare that to getting into heaven without Jesus' help. However, Jesus has other teaching tells us getting into heaven is not a walk in the park.

The Narrow Gate and the Wide Gate: Mat 7:13-14

Describe the two gates:

Wide gate- broad, many enter by it, leads to destruction

Narrow gate- small, few enter by it, leads to life

Jesus commands us to enter the narrow gate. That means we need to do as He says

People can convince themselves that they will go to heaven "just because". They have no relationship with God or Jesus. They don't pray, they don't teach, and they don't "love God with all their heart, soul, and mind" (Mark 12:30). This is a dangerous thing to believe. Jesus tells us that **many** are going to enter the wide gate. Jesus tells us that **few** will even find the narrow gate. Can we expect to find the narrow gate if we aren't diligently seeking? Can we expect eternal life if we don't know anything about Jesus and His teaching? The way to eternal life is narrow. That isn't to say that only a few can fit. It tells us that only a few will be diligent enough to find it and journey through it. God wants to save the entire world, but the many will meander thoughtlessly to destruction. God doesn't want this, but He is willing to allow it. Does this sound accurate? Does this sound offensive? Regardless of what we think, it is the Christ's message.

STRIVE TO ENTER

Now that we know the gate is narrow, and we must seek to find it, we must now learn how to find it. Jesus tells us to strive to enter. Entering will take effort. Entering will take knowledge of the scriptures. Jesus is going to refer to some who strove to enter, but were unable. They were unable to enter because they were not obedient, and they didn't understand the scriptures.

1.) Strive to Enter: Luke 13:23-24

The disciples ask, "Will only a few be saved?" Evidently Jesus' teaching has led them to believe that a majority of the people will not be saved. How does Jesus respond? Jesus doesn't reply "yes" or "no". He commands them to strive to enter. When asking about salvation, Jesus commands us to strive to achieve it.

2.) I Know Ye Not: Luke 12:25-28

(25) When the gate is closed, will it be opened again? Are there outsiders who wish to come in? Will the master open the door?

(26) Did the outsiders feel as if they had a relationship with the master?

(27) Does the master feel the same way? What does the master call them?

(28) What is the reward they receive?

Does this passage intimidate us? Does this passage sound negative? Does this passage sound fair? It is not easy to think about God judging us. We don't want to consider God punishing us, or our loved ones. To help us, let's consider whom Jesus was teaching these words to.

Jesus was speaking to Jews that were not receiving Him as the Son of God. These Jews felt as though they were one with God, but they were refusing the messiah sent by God. These are the Jews that would soon hang Jesus from a tree. These Jews think they are doing what God wants, but because of the lack of understanding, they will soon kill His only son.

Will these people be saved? Not if they continue to refuse Jesus. What is the solution? "Strive to enter." How do we strive? Reading and studying the scriptures is one way. If we read and study, we will be seeking the narrow gate. If we seek, we will find (Mat 7:7). These Jews didn't understand the Old Testament passages enough to recognize Jesus as the Messiah. They need to continue striving to enter.

Can we think we are serving God, but still be in the wrong? I would hate to think I was saved, but actually be lost. How do we know whether we are truly saved or not? Let's go to more scriptures.

THE DOOR

Now that we know we need to enter the narrow gate, which we must seek to find, and we know that it is possible to think we are serving God, but in truth be wrong, let us try to find the true way to serve God. I don't want to think I'm serving God, but in truth be wrong. I am going to turn to Jesus to find the true way to please God.

I am the Door: John 10:1-5

What are the main characters in this parable? Sheep, Robbers, the Door, and the Door Keeper.

If someone tries to get to the sheep without using the door, what are they? A robber.

Do the sheep recognize the robber that entered over the fence? No.

Do the sheep recognize someone who enters by the door? Yes.

How do we get into heaven? How do we get Jesus to recognize us? We must enter through the door. Jesus is the door (vs. 7). We must go through Jesus to be recognized by God. Only the one that enters by the door will be saved (vs. 9).

How do we find the narrow gate? How do we know what we need to do to please God? Jesus is the door to all these things. We must do as He commands us. We cannot be saved by any other way.

Why is it that we need to listen to Jesus? Why is He the door? John 10:11-18 tells us Jesus' qualifications. He is willing to die for us. He is willing to save the whole world (including the Gentiles. This is what "other sheep" refers to.) He laid His life down by His own Will. He is given authority by God. No one else will be more qualified than that.

If you want to know how to get to heaven, or how to make God happy, turn to Jesus. He will tell you. Don't listen to me, or any other teacher. Listen to Jesus. Jesus is the authority. If we ignore Jesus' commands, and ignore Jesus' sacrifice, can we expect that God will be pleased? God gives us a choice. Don't meander down the path of destruction. Take responsibility and seek for the narrow gate, and strive to enter it.