

THE STRAIT AND NARROW WAY

BIBLE TEXT: Luke 13:23-30; Matthew 7:13, 14

LESSON 147 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate" (Luke 13:24).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Luke 13:23-30

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:

²⁶ Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

²⁷ But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

²⁸ There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

²⁹ And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

³⁰ And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

Matthew 7:13-14

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:

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

Teachings of Jesus

As Jesus went about from city to city, and from village to village, He taught those who listened the way of salvation and the way to eternal life. Sometimes Jesus spoke to them in parables. Sometimes the people had questions for Jesus. He always had an answer for the people and He always knew what they needed. Jesus is the same today. He can solve every problem, for there is nothing too hard for Jesus. He knows just what each person needs: whether it be comfort, encouragement, faith, or reproof. We may find it in the Bible or hear it in a sermon, a song, or a personal testimony.

In this lesson Jesus is asked the question, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" Jesus did not say just "yes" or "no." He began to teach what it means to be saved, and that each person can be saved if he will. His answer was not only to the one person who asked but to all who listened and to all who read the Bible.

Strait Gate

In Matthew 7:13 and 14, we learn that there are two gates, a wide one and a narrow one. There are two paths — one leads to destruction and the other leads to eternal life. Every person enters one gate or the other and is upon one path or the other.

Those who would be saved pass through the strait gate. Why is that gate narrow? A person cannot be saved until he humbles himself to repent and get rid of sin. Some people are too big to go through the narrow gate. They are not too tall, nor too large, but in their own eyes they are big. They must humble themselves and become as a little child. Jesus said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3).

No Burdens

Those who are not saved carry burdens. Some people carry burdens of self-righteousness, pride, and neglect, or burdens of other sins like greed, hate, anger, lying, selfishness, theft, or cheating. If they tried to go through the narrow gate to life eternal, those burdens would first have to be removed. Jesus will lift them when a person asks Him for pardon and salvation.

Perhaps you have tried to enter a small opening with a package in your hand or a bundle on your back. Maybe you stooped down or even tried to crawl, in order to get through without removing the bundle from your back. Through the strait gate there is room for only one. He cannot have any sin-burdens, not even a tiny little one. If the parcel you carried was long or big, you probably tried several times in different ways to get through with your package. If you wish to enter the strait gate, ask Jesus to take the sin burden from your heart.

The Two Gates

The other gate is wide and easily entered with all one's burdens and sins. Some people are lured to walk the broad way

¹⁴ Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

which has many wanderers. The strait gate opens into the narrow path where there are not so many travelers.

**"There's room for just two,
No more and no less,
Just *Jesus* and you."**

Can you picture travelers on these two roads? On the broad way one sees people with great loads of sin and despair. They cannot help one another, for every one has a load of his own. The broad way — much company and little help! On the narrow path are only a few people; their every sin is gone. Besides, there is Jesus to give them a helping hand and an encouraging word as they travel over the mountain and down into the valley. The narrow way — a clear conscience and companionship sweet!

Strive

Where do these paths lead? Some people seem to be following the crowd. Do they not even consider where they are going? Do they not know that the broad way will lead to death and destruction (Matthew 7:13)? Do they not know that the narrow way will lead to Heaven and life eternal (Matthew 7:14) ?

Jesus knew how important this is, for He said, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." Strive! What does that mean? To strive means to make an earnest effort and to do one's best. There are some who will seek to enter, but will not because they do not strive. Some will put forth some effort, but not enough to enter. Some will come short of the grace and glory of God because of lazy seeking in place of working and striving to enter. A person can afford to work and deny himself in order to enter the strait gate, for it leads to eternal life.

There is no other way to Heaven than through the narrow gate. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). Some people may try to climb up some other way (their own good works), but they are thieves and robbers (John 10:1) and shall not "inherit the kingdom of God" (I Corinthians 6:10).

Closed Gate

Although the gate is strait, it is not yet locked or closed. There is a time coming, perhaps very soon, when the Master will close the door. Those who have intended to get saved but have put it off too long, will seek but will not enter because the door or gate will have been closed.

Which path are you walking today — the narrow one or the broad? If you are not on the way to Heaven, enter the narrow gate. Do not delay! Hurry, before the door is closed!

Too Late

Jesus told the people that there will be some who will go to the closed door. They will knock and ask to be admitted, saying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us." Words of doom they will hear — "I know you not."

We understand from Jesus' teaching that some people will try to talk their way in. They will tell the Master of their good deeds and their own righteousness. They will tell Him how they heard His teachings, and some even ate with Jesus. The Master will not deny this, for it may be true; but that is not enough.

The Bible says that one must be a doer of the Word and not a hearer only (**James 1:22** ²² *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves*). We have read about Judas who had been one of Jesus' disciples. He had been with Jesus many times, heard His teachings, even eaten

with the Lord, and yet Judas betrayed the Son of God (**Matthew 26:20-21** ²⁰ Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. ²¹ And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. **Mark 14:18** ¹⁸ And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me). The Bible gives no hope that Judas repented and was saved.

Perhaps at one time these people who knocked had been saved and had walked in the narrow way. They, no doubt, took a bypath which led them off the highway to Heaven. Jesus will disown them because of sin in their lives. The Lord knows those who are His (**Nahum 1:7** ⁷ The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him. **1 Corinthians 8:3** ³ But if any man love God, the same is known of him. **2 Timothy 2:19** ¹⁹ Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity), and the others will be condemned.

God will gather His people from the North and South, from the East and West, into His Kingdom, and those who work iniquity and sin will be shut outside forever.

**"One door, and only one, And
yet its sides are two, Inside
and outside,
On which side are you?"**

QUESTIONS

- 1 For what did Jesus tell us to strive?
- 2 Why will some seek to enter and not be able?
- 3 What are the two gates and the two paths?
- 4 Where do these two paths lead?
- 5 How can one enter the strait gate?
- 6 Who will close the door?
- 7 Who will be left on the outside?
- 8 Why did Jesus tell them to depart?