Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Is Salvation Easy?
Scripture: Matthew 7
Code: BQ72011

Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it. (Matthew 7:13-14)

Enter is in the aorist imperative tense, and therefore demands a definite and specific action. The command is not to admire or to ponder the **gate** but to **enter** it. Many people admire the principles of the Sermon on the Mount but never follow those principles. Many people respect and praise Jesus Christ but never receive Him as Lord and Savior. Because they never receive the King and never enter the kingdom, they are as much separated from the King and as much outside His kingdom as is the rankest atheist or most unethical pagan.

Jesus' command is not simply to enter *some* gate but to enter **the narrow gate**. Every person enters one gate or the other; that is unavoidable. Jesus pleads for men to enter the *right* **gate**, God's gate, the only gate that leads to **life** and to heaven.

Jesus has repeatedly shown the narrowness of God's internal standard of righteousness, in contrast to the broad and external standards of Jewish tradition. The path to that narrow way of kingdom living is through **the narrow gate** of the King Himself. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me" (John 14:6).

When we preach, teach, and witness that Christ is the only way to God, we are not proclaiming our own view of right religion but God's revelation of truth. We do not proclaim the narrow way simply because we are already in it, or because it happens to suit our temperament, or because we are bigoted and exclusive, We proclaim the narrow way because it is God's way and God's only way for men to find salvation and eternal life. We proclaim a narrow gospel because Jesus said, "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved" (John 10:9). We proclaim a narrow gospel because "there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12), and because "there is one God and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). We proclaim a narrow gospel because that is the only gospel God has given and therefore the only gospel there is.

The person who enters **the narrow gate** must enter alone. We can bring no one else and nothing else with us. Some commentators suggest that a turnstile represents the idea implicit in **narrow gate**

. A turnstile allows only one person through at a time, with no baggage. People do not come into the kingdom in groups, but singly. The Jews had the mistaken notion that they were all in God’s kingdom together by racial salvation, signified by circumcision.

Furthermore, God’s gate is so narrow that we must go through it naked. It is the gate of self-denial, through which one cannot carry the baggage of sin and self-will. When we sing, “Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling,” we are testifying to the way of the gospel. The way of Christ is the way of the cross, and the way of the cross is the way of self-denial. “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it” (Matt. 16:24–25).

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