

## Two Gates and Two Ways

Matthew 13:34 *“All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them.”*

### Two Gates and Two Ways

Matthew 7:13,14 provides us the Scripture for this study. This parable is spoken by Christ. In this parable, by using gates and roads, we hear the Lord explain the two ways we may walk life's pilgrimage. If you glean nothing from this study except that there are only two paths to walk in life, you have reached a Biblical understanding that 90% of the population of the world will never reach. The prevailing notion on this planet is “have a sincere relationship with a higher power and all is well in your soul.” Wrong- that notion will send you to hell.

### *Two ways*

Have you ever stopped to consider how simple God made things for mankind? He limited so many things to two: day and night, light and darkness, water and land, good and evil, life and death, male and female, God and Satan. And, in the lesson of this scripture, Jesus teaches other “twos”- heaven or hell, broad or narrow.

This parable unfolds a solemn truth. That truth is that there are only two pathways for humanity to choose- the way of righteousness and the way of unrighteousness. You may have thought I was going to say Protestant or Catholic or Baptist or Methodist. Psalms 1 says there are “blessed” and “ungodly” men. Which one are you? Please read Psalms Chapter 1. There may be 3000 religions around the world, but there are only two paths for a person to walk. No, there is not “good, bad, and neutral.” It is as simple as black and white. There is no grey.

In Bible times many cities were walled and gated. Homes were sometimes fenced and gated. In Acts 12, when the church prayed Peter out of prison, the accompanying angel lead Peter through the gate of the city. When Peter arrived at the house of Rhoda, Peter knocked on the gate and a damsel went to the gate and let him in. I

always marvel how Christ taught man using simple things man was familiar with. Do you know what a gate is?

The two gates we concern ourselves with bear the name “strait” gate and *wide* gate. *Wide* gate is a generous passageway. Have you ever been cramped or restrained entering a gate that was too narrow? Passing through a wide gate is easy. Anyone can go through a wide gate. The wide gate allows folk to pass through carrying their sins. You can get through a wide gate carrying an attitude. You can get through a wide gate carrying stolen property. One can get through a wide gate carrying pride, covetousness, revenge, pornographic magazines, a liquor bottle, and a lottery ticket.

The name painted above the *wide* gate is “*self*.” Self and his righteousness pass through a *wide* gate. Self and his darling sins pass through this gate. Self and his plan of salvation pass through a *wide* gate. *Wide* gate is broad enough for anyone to enter. No one is denied passage. If you desire to go to hell, the wide gate will welcome you and your sins.

*Strait* gate means narrow. You have likely noticed on the map those narrow bodies of water barely wide enough for the ship to pass. These geographic areas of a body of water are commonly labeled “straits.” *Strait* gate is narrow. *Strait* gate is only wide enough for the person- not a bunch of luggage. If you are going to heaven, you will leave your sins behind. If you go to heaven, you will leave your liquor bottle behind. They won’t pass through *strait* gate. It is too narrow. Far more people go through the wide gate than go through the narrow gate. More are going to hell than heaven.

Modern religion has tried for 6000 years to widen the strait, narrow gate. Luke 13:24 says “strive” to enter strait gate. It is easy for a soul to be saved. Jesus did the work on Calvary. However, it is difficult for the flesh to give up its pleasures and call Jesus to save them.

*True story:* Brother Bob is a dear friend of mine. He was a sinner, and a preacher came by his place of work to witness to him about salvation. Bob wanted to be saved. He knelt down and asked God to save him there in the office. He stood up. The wise preacher saw nothing had truly happened in Bob’s soul. He told Bob in a bold

manner “Bob, whatever is stopping you from getting saved, you had better get back on your knees and spit it out or you are going to hell.” Bob got on his knees and got gloriously saved. Bob never told me what he was withholding from God that stopped him from being saved the first time he prayed. Only he and God know. Bob tried to enter the narrow gate with his favorite sin or bad habit. Until he gave it up, he could not enter the gate leading into eternal life.

I am confident folk have prayed to be saved at the altar of the church where I pastor and nothing happened. Why? They asked God to save them, but let them keep their whiskey. God save me, but let me keep my pornography. God will not hear conditional prayers.

### ***An invitation***

Notice the words of verse 13 of our text; “*Enter ye in.*” “Enter” is an invitation. Matthew 11:28 is an invitation which says “*Come unto me...*” Revelation 22:17 is an invitation which says “*And the Spirit and the bride say come.*” You cannot enter strait gate unless you are invited. This sounds like bad news, but there is good news. The good news is John 6:37 “*him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.*” I am so glad the Holy Ghost came to me one day and gave me a personal invitation to enter the strait gate. Your destiny depends on personal choice- not fate or predetermination.

Previously, we said the name written above *wide* gate is “self.” The name above *strait* gate is “Christ.” Christ said in John 10:9 “*I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved...*”

### ***Two ways***

Just as there are two gates, there are two ways. The two ways, or paths, emanating from those gates bear the names *broad* and *narrow*. One Bible authority stated in Bible-times public passageways were roughly 16 cubits or 24 feet in width. Private passageways were 4 cubits or 6 feet wide. Therefore, the *public* way was four times the width of the *private* way. Perhaps for every person on the *narrow* way to heaven, there are four traveling on the *broad* way to hell’s destruction. We must get busy telling folk to be saved and leave the *broad* way. Get on the narrow way.

On the *broad* way there is plenty of room. There is room for the sinner and his sins. There is also room for many sinners. For anyone

who desires to go to hell, the devil will make it possible. He will, if necessary, widen the way to make room. Every time a new amusement park opens, Satan has widened the way to hell. Every time a new kind of illegal drug is developed, Satan has widened the path to destruction.

The *broad* way is comfortable and convenient. It is hassle-free. It is a path of ease. You are not required to pray, tithe, attend church, talk right, think right, or dress right on the *broad* way. It is a “do as you please” path.

The strait gate leads to the *narrow* way. It has few travelers for “*few there be that find it.*” Why is this way narrow? Because God’s law is straight, and thus, few desire to walk therein. God’s law is not attractive to man. Man has his own way which “*seemeth right unto a man*” Proverbs 14:12. As great a character as Jesus Christ is and was, He is not attractive to the majority. Those on the narrow way are walking in Christ for He said in John 14:6 “*I am the way.*” Only in Christ can we obtain the holiness that leads to eternal life.

### ***Two companies***

The strait gate and narrow way has few travelers. Millions upon millions had rather serve Satan than to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. Those on the narrow way have little company. Paul died a “loner.” John the Baptist died in prison with perhaps no friends. A life of separation is not popular. Yet, those on this path have Christ’s assurance “*Lo, I am with thee always even unto the end.*” That makes the narrow path a path worth walking.

### ***Two Destinations***

The wide gate that opens to the broad way leads to *destruction*. Destruction does not mean to burn up or be annihilated or cease to exist. It means to “waste that which is precious.” Sinner, if you never accept the invitation to enter the strait gate, your path leads to destruction, that is, hell.

*Life* lies at the end of the narrow path. It will be glorious to live where there is only *life*. Sorrow is gone. Sickness is gone. Sin is gone. Satan is gone. Oh, what a Savior!

Sinner, you ought to accept that invitation spoken by Christ in verse 13 where He said “enter ye in.” Romans 10:13 *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”*