

Luke 13:22-35

We are going to take two weeks to look at this passage of Scripture because I cannot overemphasize how important it is that we understand this very clearly.

1. This interaction with Jesus will hopefully cause us to get a firmer grasp on our salvation.
2. This is so important we are going to deal with this text over 2 weeks.

READ/PRAY

Before we get into the meat of the text, I want to make sure we see the absolute sovereign calm of Jesus.

22 And He was passing through from one city and village to another, teaching, and proceeding on His way to Jerusalem.

Look at how “in control” Jesus is. In verse 22 He is making His way to Jerusalem.

1. He is in complete control of his schedule. He is in charge
2. Luke 9:51 *When the days were approaching for His ascension, He was determined to go to Jerusalem;*

In verse 31-33, Jesus was in complete control of his life and death.

Just at that time some Pharisees approached, saying to Him, “Go away, leave here, for Herod wants to kill You.” 32 And He said to them, “Go and tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I reach My goal.’ 33 Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet would perish outside of Jerusalem

He isn’t threatened by Herod or the Pharisees.

1. He will be in Jerusalem for His scheduled (predetermined) death
2. by the (predetermined) hands
3. at the (predetermined) time.
4. Acts 2:23 *this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.*

Jesus is in a state of sovereign calm...completely in charge, but the heart of the message here is found in verses 23-30.

23 And someone said to Him, “Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?” And He said to them, 24 “Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

How many will be saved Jesus?

1. Jesus skillfully sidesteps this individual’s wrong question, with a right answer: don’t worry about how many will or will not be saved....make sure you get in!
2. Now, with that said, we need to remember that Jesus has answered this question elsewhere.

Matt 7:13-14 *Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 14 For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

1. Jesus makes it clear...many enter through the wide gate and take the broad way that leads to destruction.
2. Few enter through the narrow gate and travel the narrow way that leads to life.
3. It doesn't take a math major to know that many is more than few...and the two are not even close in comparison.
4. This should cause us to stop and think. Are we part of the many or the few?

Jesus reveals Two Gates

A. The Wide Gate

1. It is not hard to find this gate. It is wide.
2. It is popular
 - a. You can stand at this gate and see famous actors, singers, athletes, and politicians pass by
 - b. You can stand at this gate and see co-workers, class mates, and even church members pass by
 - c. You can stand at this gate and see friend and family members pass by
 - d. Many there be that go in this way! It is popular!

B. The Narrow Gate

1. This narrow gate is difficult to find. It is narrow...small.
2. It is easily obscured by the busyness of life, by the world, and by our flesh.
3. It is often hidden by the church as we get sidetracked from the biblical gospel.

C. These are the two gates...the ONLY 2 gates.

Jesus Reveals Two Ways

A. The Easy Way

Ephesians 2:1-2 *And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,*

- a. This is the easiest way for a dead man to travel: with the current.
- b. Our rotting flesh compels us from within to enter this gate and travel this way because it is easy

2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world,

- a. The world pushes us right along to enter
- b. You can walk in stride with the actors, singers, athletes, etc.; those very people that the world admires...you might even get to be one!
- c. And if not, you can travel along with others who idolize them.
- d. You can at least be part of the crowd: that's easy.

according to the prince of the power of the air; of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

- a. There is nothing to fight against, strive against, or struggle against.
- b. The devil is clearing the way...he is making it easy!

It is easy to go right in!

1. It's funny to me how teens and young adults try to be rebellious
2. But they rebel by doing what Hollywood and social media platforms tell them is cool and acceptable, so basically they do what everyone else is already doing!
3. They go with the flow and miss the fact that they aren't rebelling...they are conforming!
4. If you want to be a rebel, instead of conforming, choose the difficult way.

B. The Difficult Way

1. Jesus doesn't hide the truth, even from the very beginning. This way is hard.
2. Luke 9:23-26 *And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. 25 For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? 26 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels*
3. It is a difficult way...narrow and there are enemies on every side and at every turn.

These are the two ways...the ONLY two ways.

Jesus Reveals Two Destinations

A. Destruction

1. The wide gate and the easy way leads to destruction.
2. If you are traveling the easy way right not, you did not enter the narrow gate and you are headed for destruction.

B. Life

- 1 The narrow gate and difficult path lead to life eternal
2. John 4:13-14 *Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty forever. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.*

These are the two destinations...the only 2 destinations!

Are there just a few who are being saved?

1. As a matter of fact, yes...only a few.
2. Because many choose the wide gate, many walk the easy path

The right question is not how many will be saved, but will I be one of them?

23 *And someone said to Him, “Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?” And He said to them, **24** “Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.*

1. Will I be one of the few?
2. Are you going to enter the narrow gate or not? Are you going to enter that narrow gate to get onto and travel the difficult way?
3. But what is the narrow gate Jesus?

4. John 10:1-9 *“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. 2 But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.” 6 This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which He had been saying to them. 7 So Jesus said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.*

How do we get in? We strive!!

1. Many will seek, but that is not enough! We don't need to be seekers. We need strivers!
2. Those that would enter in, must strive to enter.

The term strive indicates that entering the door to God's kingdom takes conscious, purposeful, and intense effort.

1. The word carries with it the idea of contending for a prize.

a. 1 Cor 9:24-25 *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.*

- b. To strive is to run, not just to cross the finish line, but to win!

2. It carries with it the idea of contending with an enemy.

a. 1 Tim 6:12 *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses*

- b. These are strong words from a man of God, to a man of God: fight.

3. It implies a struggle

- a. The greek word for strive is the root of the English word agonize, which is also hard for us to understand because we don't do much agonizing either.
- b. We replaced agonizing with organizing a long time ago.

4. John Bunyan said this, “*Therefore, when he says strive, it is as much as to say, ‘Run for heaven, labor for heaven, wrestle for heaven, or you are likely to go without it.’ People are prone to think they can get into heaven by lying, as it were, on their elbows.*”

Strive to enter through the narrow door.

25 Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, ‘Lord, open up to us!’ then He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know where you are from.’

1. A door has 2 purposes
 - a. To be opened in order to let in but also to be shut in order to keep out
 - b. Once the door has shut, it will be too late. Your fate will be final
2. Are there many who are saved? No, only few...so strive! Run, fight, labor for heaven.
3. Come to Christ today before it is too late...enter at the door before it is too late!

Conclusion:

So, in process of time, Christian arrived at the narrow-gate. Now, over the gate there was written, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

He knocked, therefore, several times, saying, "May I now enter here—though I have been an undeserving wretch? If so, I shall sing His everlasting praise!"

At last, a serious person came to the gate, named *Good-will*, and asked who was there—from whence he came—and what he wanted.

Christian responded, "I am a poor burdened sinner, coming from the City of Destruction. I am going to the Celestial City, that I may be saved from the wrath to come. I have been informed Sir, that the way to the Celestial City is through this gate. Are you willing to let me enter?"

Good-will replied, "I am willing with all my heart!" And with this, he opened the gate.

As Christian was stepping in, Good-will gave him a sudden yank.

Surprised, Christian asked, "Why did you do that!"

Good-will then explained, "A short distance from this gate, there is a strong castle erected, of which Beelzebub is the prince. From there, both he and his minions shoot arrows at those who come up to this gate—hoping to kill them before they can enter in!"

Then Christian said, "I both rejoice and tremble!"

4. Come to Christ today before it is too late...enter at the door before it is too late!

5. 2 Corinthians 6:2 Behold, now is “*THE ACCEPTABLE TIME,*” behold, now is “*THE DAY OF SALVATION*”