

## The Narrow Gate

*In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. Amen.*

### Aim

- † What Jesus meant by the narrow gate?
- † Learn to go through the narrow gate, so we can inherit the kingdom of heaven.

### Key verses

*“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matt 7: 13-14)*

*“Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the father except through Me” (John 14:6)*

### ***Introduction:***

- Read Luke 13: 1-32.
- In the beginning of this chapter Our Lord introduced the repentance as being the way to enjoy salvation from the destruction (V3)
- Then in v 6-9, showing us his patience on us and that He cares for every person just like He did to the barren fig tree.
- V10-13, Showed us that He is the reason for our healing (woman who had spirit of infirmity)
- V 22, 32 Now, lest we think that our role in our salvation is passive, our Lord emphasizes that we have to strive so we can enter by His grace through the narrow door.
- In our Gospel lesson someone in the crowd asked Jesus if only a few people are going to be saved. Then Jesus made the conversation very personal and practical...and said to everyone **“Strive to enter through the narrow door”**. In other words, rather than speculating about how many people are going to be saved.....you’d better make sure that you are saved.

### ***Entering the kingdom of Heaven***

- ❖ There will be a judgment day where every human being will have to give an account to God for everything he has thought, said, and done... as we confess this in the Creed: **“and he will come to judge the living and the dead”**.
- ❖ On that day, some will enter into eternal life where they will live in the presence of God in a sinless world of joy and peace that will last forever. Other people will not share in eternal life, but they will be damned forever in hell where Jesus says there will be **“weeping and gnashing of teeth.”**
- **So what’s the difference between those two groups?**  
The difference is entering through the “narrow door”.

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- **And what is the narrow door?**

Jesus, just as He says “I am the door. Whoever enters through me will be saved” (John 10:9). Also He is the only way as He says also: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). In this world people might argue about this...whether Jesus is or is not the only way to God and eternal life. But on the judgment day there will be no arguing...only weeping and the gnashing of teeth, to those who did not believe.

### Now it is time to answer Why, What and How

#### *Why should we “strive to enter through the narrow door”?*

1. Because Jesus says that you never know when that door... will be closed.

**When is the door closed?**

The door is closed when we die. Our eternal destiny is sealed with our death. There are no second chances after death.

2. So we don't hear the word “I do not know where you come from, depart from me”

- Jews from Jesus' time who will say: “we ate and drank in your presence and you taught in our streets.” But during their life they didn't take Jesus seriously. They didn't “strive to enter through the narrow door” and Jesus will tell them ““ I do not know where you come from...depart from me””.
- Even some who were raised in the Christian church who will say “hey Jesus do you remember me? I was baptized and confirmed. I even came to church on Christmas and Easter. Surely you remember me.” But they didn't really believe in Jesus....they didn't take him seriously.....during their lives they didn't “strive to enter through the narrow door” for they were more concerned about other things than Jesus and his church. And Jesus will say to them ““I do not know where you come from...depart from me””

#### **What should we do to enter through the narrow door?**

- Have a spiritual relationship with God.
- Believe the wonderful good news that we are forgiven and have peace with God and eternal life because of Jesus Christ.
- Live every day of you life remembering the judgment day and that only Jesus Christ will make the difference between eternal life and eternal damnation. It means to live each day of our lives **repenting** of our sins and confessing them to God
- Seek a life worthy of his death on the cross.
- Maintaining a Clear Vision and Goal We need to be enlightened and acquire these gifts through prayer, honesty in fulfilling God's commands, whatever the sacrifices we must make to follow them.

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### *How can we overcome obstacles stopping us from entering the narrow door?*

#### A. Breaking the Habit of Sin

1. We should realize the dangers of sin
2. We can benefit from the stories in the Bible of those who suffered the consequences of their sin.
3. Although we sin and fall from time to time, we still work with our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us the victory over sin and death.
4. Read Matthew 11:28 to illustrate how Christ relieves the burden of our sin.

#### B. Meeting and Confronting Others with our New Life

1. Sometimes we are not courageous enough to meet the people closest to us with our new life, feeling they may cease to be our friends.
2. Acts 5:29 (We must Obey God rather than man)
3. Keep aside false emotions and replace them with love.
4. We learn from the examples of men of faith, who obeyed God rather than men. Ex. Noah, Abraham, Moses.
5. We must lead the life of faith. Then we will be able to master any affliction under any circumstance.
6. We learn from examples like Daniel and the 3 youth, who if they had pleased people or listened to the king, they would have not worshipped God and would not have been saved.
7. St Paul says it is the least thing to be judged by others (1Cor 4:3-4)

#### C. Insisting on our own opinions

1. Sometimes we insist on our own opinions even though we know that they are wrong or against God's will!

#### D. Laziness

1. Here we can make an analogy to stagnant water, which will soon be rotten. Or like iron that remains neglected and rusts.
2. If we do not maintain our spiritual life through prayer, fasting, receiving God's grace and love, etc., then our spiritual life remains neglected and begins to deteriorate. We must watch against this.

### Conclusion

The Christian message is not some ideological theory, but something that is to be lived. The "narrow road" and "narrow gate" has to do with one's everyday living—our relationship to God and to one another. It is works of the Spirit versus works of the flesh. St. Paul confirms the thoughts of our Lord Jesus Christ when he expresses himself to the Galatians: "So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature" (Gal 5:16).

**Glory is to God, forever. Amen.**