**Enter Through The Narrow Door**

Luke 13:22-30

Key verse 24

“***Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.***”

**Introduction**

In the previous verses, 18-21, Jesus taught about the kingdom of God through two parables. In today’s passage, Jesus teaches the importance of entering the kingdom of God. Let's listen to Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God, and accept it in our hearts deeply.

1. Read verses 22. What was Jesus doing as he made his way to Jerusalem? Why was he going to Jerusalem? (9:51; 13:33)

1-1, Read verses 22.

Then Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem.

1-2, What was Jesus doing as he made his way to Jerusalem?

* Even though his heart was heavy due to his upcoming suffering and death on the cross alongside criminals, Jesus was teaching the word of God as he made his way to Jerusalem.
* According to the flow of the context, he must have delivered the message of repentance and the kingdom of God.

1-3, Why was he going to Jerusalem? (9:51; 13:33)

“As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.” - Luke 9:51

“In any case, I must press on today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!” - Luke 13:33

* Jesus was heading to Jerusalem to become the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world.
* Jesus begins what is called his Perean ministry. Perea referred to the region east of Judea, across the Jordan. There, Jesus spent about three months prior to his final ascent into Jerusalem.
* Among all the gospel writers, Luke gives the most attention to Jesus’ Perean ministry, devoting six chapters to it (13:22 - 19:27).
* Jesus did not perform many miracles in Perea. But he intensively taught about the kingdom of God. Jesus planted the kingdom of God in truth.

2. Read verses 23-24. What did someone asked him? (23) What was his answer? (24) What does it mean to “make every effort…”? What is “the narrow door”? (24) In what sense is Jesus the door? (Jn 10:7) Why will many who try to enter, not be able to? (24b)

2-1, Read verses 23-24.

**23** Someone asked him, “Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?” He said to them, **24** “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.

2-2, What did someone asked him? (23)

* Probably not many people repented though he warned them constantly. Jesus’ many warnings finally made an impression on at least one person.
* Many believed in Jesus, but committed followers were few. Moreover, opposition from the religious leaders was intensifying.
* The Messianic kingdom that many had expected was not materializing. In fact, sometimes Jesus’ ministry seemed to be shrinking.

2-3, What was his answer? (24)

***“Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.***



2-4, What does it mean to “make every effort…”?

* This tells us that salvation is not easy. It’s not automatic.
* We must make every effort. There are some who will fail to enter.

2-5, What is “the narrow door”? (24)

* Because the door is narrow, it takes effort and purpose to enter into it. A narrow gate also implies that we can not bring unnecessary things with us.
* Therefore, we must strive (the word is literally agonize) in order to lay these things aside and enter the narrow door.
* The Greek word for strive has the idea of a struggle, or a prize-fight which means “a boxing match fought for prize money.”

Mark 8:34 reads,

**“**Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.””

* Self-denial and taking up the cross is the narrow door. But this way is the way of life and it’s the only way that leads us to eternal life.
* The more we take up the cross of Jesus, the stronger we become.

1 Corinthians 1:18 reads,

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

* On the opposite side of the coin, there is a wide door. It is the wide door that many enter through but it leads to destruction.

Matthew 7:13-14 reads,

“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. **14** But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”

* An easy-going life is the highway to destruction. For example, if a student takes the easy way by always playing video games and attending many drinking parties, it will lead to disaster in his academic life.
* Many also come to the gate, but then decide they don’t like it for some reason. It’s too wide, it’s too narrow, it’s too fancy, it’s too plain. You can criticize the gate all you want, but it’s a terrible thing to refuse to enter into it.
* The call to strive to enter through the narrow gate isn’t a call to save yourself by good works. Good works are not the right gate.
* One may dedicate their life to strive to enter a gate, but if it isn’t the right gate, it will still lead to destruction. Jesus Himself is the gate; He is the door.
* It’s also necessary to strive to enter because there are many obstacles in the way. The world is an obstacle. The devil is an obstacle. Probably the worst obstacle is ourselves, especially our own flesh and its desires.

2-6, In what sense is Jesus the door? (Jn 10:7)

* The narrow door is Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only way of salvation that God has provided.
* Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (Jn 14:6).
* St. Peter taught, “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12)



John 10:7-9 reads,

**“**Therefore Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. **8** All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. **9** I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture.”

2-7, Why will many who try to enter, not be able to? (24b)

* You will see a considerable difference between seeking and striving. You are not merely advised to seek; you are urgently bidden to strive. (Spurgeon)

3. Read verses 25-27. What happened to those who tried to enter after it was too late? (25a) What was the owner’s answer when he was asked to open the door again? (25b) How did those who failed to enter appeal to the owner? (26) Why did he say, “I don’t know you or where you come from”? Why did he call them “evildoers”?

3-1, Read verses 25-27.

**25** Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, ‘Sir, open the door for us.’ “But he will answer, ‘I don’t know you or where you come from.’ **26** “Then you will say, ‘We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.’ **27** “But he will reply, ‘I don’t know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!’

3-2, What happened to those who tried to enter after it was too late? (25a)

* Here, Jesus warns of a shut door. Our Lord showed that there are limits to divine mercy, that there will be those who will not be able to enter.
* There will come a time when it is too late to enter; that is why one must strive with urgency to enter now.

3-3, What was the owner’s answer when he was asked to open the door again? (25b)

***you will stand outside knocking and pleading, ‘Sir, open the door for us.’ “But he will answer, ‘I don’t know you or where you come from.’***

* Many will seek to enter (in the sense of *wishing* to enter), but they will not be able to.
* When the door is open, it is open; when it is shut, it is shut.

Genesis 6:16 reads,

“The animals going in were male and female of every living thing, as God had commanded Noah. Then the Lord shut him in.”

3-4, How did those who failed to enter appeal to the owner? (26)

***“Then you will say, ‘We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.’***

* There is a real difference between a mere *seeking* and *striving* to enter. A casual wish to be saved is not enough, because there are too many obstacles in the way.
* Speaking of those who were excluded from God’s presence, Jesus said they would protest that they knew something of Jesus and had heard something of His teaching.

3-5, Why did he say, “I don’t know you or where you come from”?

***27 “But he will reply, ‘I don’t know you or where you come from.***

* Of course Jesus knows them in a sense; He knew who they were and of their life.
* Yet He did not know them in the real sense of having a personal relationship with them.
* His words stress the importance of our *relationship* with Jesus (I do not know you).
* Here we learn the significance of having a personal relationship with Christ. When we study Jesus’ story carefully, we learn that mere human fellowship with Jesus did not guarantee having a personal relationship with him.
* People can hang around Jesus and his people without ever receiving Christ personally as Lord and Savior.
* Such people are unknown to Christ. To be known by Christ is to have an intimate union. We can have this union when we repent and believe the gospel and receive the Holy Spirit.
* This changes us on the inside until we are completely transformed into the image of Christ.
* Then we can come to share Christ's sufferings, death, and resurrection in intimate fellowship. We can begin this relationship even now by simply calling on the name of the Lord.
* In our present generation, especially for the last decade, many of us have come to rely on impersonal connections made with other people through social media more than on the we rely on making strong connections through actually meeting and having fellowship face to face.
* “We’d rather email than meet; we’d rather text than talk on the phone.” We are often asked, “Please e-mail or text me instead of calling.
* Our interactions on social media tend to be weak—that is, we don’t feel as personally connected to the people at the other end of our communications as we would if we were face-to-face. “So while we’re communicating more, we may not necessarily be building relationships as strongly.”
* So we tend not to deepen our relationships—but remain at a very superficial level.
* Lastly, we tend to follow and interact with people who agree with our points of view, so we aren’t getting exposed to the same kind of diversity and viewpoints as in the past.
* May the Lord help us to increase our personal relationship through one to one Bible studies daily!

3-6, Why did he call them “evildoers”?

***Away from me, all you evildoers!’***

* Evildoers means “a person who commits profoundly immoral and malevolent deeds, or simply a person who does evil”
* This shows that it won’t be enough to profess him as our Master, only in word and with our lips. Rather, it is absolutely necessary to repent of sin, so that we would live a holy life through sanctification.
* Let everyone call Jesus Christ as our Lord.

4. Read verses 28-30. Why will there be weeping and gnashing of teeth? Who is verse 29 referring to when it says “the people who came from east, west, north and south”? What does it mean when Jesus says, “there are those who are last who will be first, and the first who will be last?”

4-1, Read verses 28-30.

**28** “There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. **29** People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. **30** Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last.”

4-2, Why will there be weeping and gnashing of teeth?

* People’s fortunes will be changed when the door is closed. Those who entered through the wide gate and enjoyed a sinful life on earth will weep and gnash their teeth.
* But those who entered through the narrow door will enjoy life eternal with Jesus.

4-3, Who is verse 29 referring to when it says, “the people who came from east, west, north and south?

* Many Jews will be excluded while, to our surprise, many Gentiles whom we didn’t expect will be included.
* These Gentiles will sit down in the blessed banquet table with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets.
* Jesus warns his Jewish audience about their rejection of his repeated invitation.
* We need not worry about full attendance at the table, for many others, coming from everywhere, will find a seat.
* The banquet in the kingdom of God will be glorious because we will see the patriarchs of faith and all the prophets who suffered entering through the narrow door..
* The heavenly banquet will be filled with joy and happiness because there will be no more sorrow and sin.
* We will enter through the pearly gate and will live with Jesus forever. The kingdom of this world will pass away but the kingdom of God will be forever.
* Our suffering will seem very small in light of the greatness of our future glory.



Romans 8:18 reads,

“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.”

4-4, What does it mean when Jesus says, “there are those who are last who will be first, and the first who will be last?”

* According to the flow of the context, it means that some Gentiles who are distant will end up near, while many Jews will miss the promised kingdom.

**Conclusion**

Jesus clearly said that some who heard him that day would be left out of the kingdom of God. They would see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the prophets eating at the joyful feast in the kingdom of God, but they would be left out. This is a warning to us. We must make every effort to enter through the narrow door when it is still open. Our present suffering is not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us!

**One word: Make every effort to enter the narrow door!**