



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

Special Study:

THE NARROW WAY THAT LEADS TO HEAVEN

Matthew 7:13,14

“Enter ye in at the strait...because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Before Christ came, the religious leaders among the Jews assumed and assured themselves and others that they had already entered the gate of heaven through circumcision, and were already walking in the way that would lead to eternal kingdom through their religious activities (Luke 18:9-14; John 8:33-44; Romans 2:17-29). As the Jews thought that they were already citizens of God’s kingdom from infancy, likewise, many people erroneously think that they have already entered through the gate of infant baptism into the Kingdom of God. The Pharisees believed that they were on the right way, the way of self-righteousness, but it was a dangerous error. The Spirit of God called them a **“generation of vipers”**; the Son of God called them **“an evil and adulterous generation”** who were on their way to **“the damnation of hell”** (Matthew 3:7; 12:39; 23:33). The situation is the same today. Multitudes are religious and they troop to religious and Christian gatherings. Many of them think they are on the way that leads to heaven, but Jesus said “few there be that find” the way.

The multitudes who first heard the Sermon on the Mount were adults, not infants or little children (Matthew 5:1,21-24; 6:2; 7:11,28,29), yet He said, **“Enter ye in at the strait gate”**. He was calling them to adult decision and conversion. Here, conversion is likened to entering a gate; so conversion is an instantaneous experience, not a gradual process. **“Enter ye in at the strait gate”**. It is not enough to listen to preaching about this **“gate”**, nor to study its structure or admire its place and position: each of us must “enter”. Sermons on repentance and faith in Christ avail us nothing unless they move our hearts to truly repent and believe in Christ.

THE NECESSARY GATE TO ETERNAL LIFE FOUND BY FEW

Matthew 7:13,14; Luke 13:24-30; Mark 1:14,15; Acts 2:38-40; 3:19,26; 17:30,31; 20: 20,21; 26:18-20; Luke 24:45-47; Matthew 18:2,3; John 3:3-5; 10:9-11.

“Enter ye in.” This definitely implies that those Christ addressed were yet outside - they were still unsaved. They were not pagans or heathen idolaters; they had heard sermons and messages from preachers who sat in Moses’ seat (Matthew 5:21,27,33; 7:28,29; 23:1,2). Many of them had also gone with the multitudes to hear the message of John the Baptist who was to **“prepare the way of the Lord”** and **“make ready a people prepared for the Lord”** (Matthew 3:1-9; Luke 1:13-17). These multitudes who were being instructed to **“enter in”** had seen and received great and spectacular miracles of healing and deliverance (Matthew 4:23-25; 5:1). Yet they were outside the Kingdom of God and the Lord now called on them to “enter in” so that they would be saved. He also wants them to begin to walk in the narrow way that leads to heaven. Attending a good church, worshiping with multitudes of worshippers, listening to good, sound, spiritual preachers, receiving great miracles of healing and deliverance - all these good and wonderful things do not save anyone, they do not guarantee a place for anyone in heaven unless he **“enters in at the strait gate”** and walks in the narrow way, the way of truth, life and righteousness, till the end.

“Enter ye in at the strait gate.” All who do not enter in through this gate will be eternally barred from the presence of God and will be denied the eternal joy and happiness of the blessed forever. What does it mean to **“enter in at the strait (narrow) gate”**? It means to come out of the city of destruction, and then come in through the gate of repentance into the way or life of righteousness which leads to the eternal city **“wherein dwelleth righteousness”**. The gate is strait, that is narrow. None can go in through the narrow gate except he drops all his sins. He must **“lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset”** him (Hebrews 12:1). True repentance is necessary and is not possible except we see sin to be deeply sinful indeed and hate every sin and detest all sins as deadly poison. True repentance includes genuine sorrow for

all the sins we have committed, **“for godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation”** (2 Corinthians 7:10). Turning away from sin, we turn to Christ in faith, believing and receiving forgiveness and salvation from Him.

THE NARROW WAY TO EVERLASTING LIFE, FOLLOWED BY FEW

Matthew 7:14; Psalms 119:30-33; 143:8,10; Proverbs 15:24; 12:28; Isaiah 35:8-10; Jeremiah 32:38-40; Matthew 22:16,37-40; 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:7; Luke 1:74-79; 2 Peter 2:20-22; Isaiah 30:20,21.

We enter in at the gate in order to walk in the way and keep walking until we reach our final destination. We do not stand still at the gate after entering in, neither should we stop our journey halfway. **“He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved”** (Matthew 24:13). Getting saved is the beginning not the end of the Christian life. Entering in at the strait gate is not the climax of our decision to follow the Lord; it is important but we have to take His yoke upon us and learn of Him, living by the teaching of His word if we are to inherit **“life”** at the end. This narrow way that leads to life has no attraction for multitudes in the world who are given to worldly pursuits and fleshly pleasures. So, our companions on the narrow way will be **“few”**. The vast majority of those who profess to have received Christ as their personal Saviour but who love the world and are carnal and worldly-minded will not want to keep company with the few on the narrow way. They prefer association with their dishonest and fraudulent business partners on the broad way that leads to eternal doom and damnation. With a miracle of grace performed in the heart of the true believer, he denies self, he loves the narrow way, he delights in the word of righteousness, he perseveres in times of trials and temptations, continually receiving grace from God to live an overcoming life. Walking along the narrow way implies a steady perseverance in faith, obedience to God, crucifixion of the flesh and submission to God's will in all things. It means also that we reject all temptations to turn away from the highway of holiness to follow the way of the world. To get to heaven, which is the chief aim of all pilgrims on the narrow way, our minds, our affections, our wills, our motives, our prayers, our desires, and our actions all have to be brought under the control of God's Word.

THE NEVER-ENDING WONDER IN ETERNITY FOR THE FAITHFUL FEW

Matthew 7:14; 5:10-12; Psalm 16:11; John 17:6, 14-17,24; John 12: 23-26; 1 Corinthians 2:9; Daniel 12:2,3; 1 John 3:1-3; Matthew 13:43; 1 Peter 1:3,4; Revelation 21:4-7; 22:3-5.

“Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto LIFE.” In that single word **“LIFE”** our Lord includes all the joy, glory, inheritance, state, bliss, happiness and perfect rest for believers when we get to heaven. He came from heaven, He went back to heaven, He is now in heaven, He is preparing mansions for His people in heaven. He knows what no man on earth knows about heaven and He has revealed much about our **“life”** in heaven when we get home (John 3:13; Acts 1:9-11; Luke 24:50,51; Mark 16:19; John 14:1-3).

The future destiny of those who persevere on the narrow way till the end is glorious beyond what human tongues can tell. In heaven, we shall be in a **“far better”** state (Philippians 1:23), we shall be **“present with the Lord”** (2 Corinthians 5:8), we **“shall shine as the sun”** (Matthew 13:43; Daniel 12:3), like the radiance of Christ on the Mount of transfiguration (Matthew 17:2). In heaven, we shall be **“as the angels of God”** (Matthew 22:30; Luke 20:36) and we shall be with Christ where He is (John 14:3). We shall behold His glory (John 17:24) and we ourselves shall have His glory revealed in us (Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17).

Heaven is a better place than the most beautiful place on earth (Hebrews 11:10,16) and the Lord has gone to prepare a place for each pilgrim who endures to the end (John 14:2). It is a place of perfect security (Revelation 21:25) and perfect rest (Hebrews 4:9). We shall be like Him (1 John 3:2) and be with Him (1 Thessalonians 4:17). In heaven, there will be no sorrow, no tears, no hunger, no thirst, no more curse, no pain, no death (Revelation 7:13-17; 21:4; 22:3). We shall forever be in the presence of God, in the company of shining angels and dazzling saints, everyone loving and holy, living and worshipping, beholding endless wonders of glory in heaven through endless ages.

If you are blessed by these bible study outlines, we'd like to hear from you.
You can email the pastor@dclm-liverpool.org.uk with your comments