**The Gospel of Luke**

**Lesson 9** Luke 13:22-30 The Narrow Door/Jesus’ Sadness!

**Questions:**

1. What important truth did you learn from the lecture, and how does it apply to your life?
2. Read Wiersbe pages 179-183.

What are some reasons people wait so long to respond to God’s gracious invitation to come? What is a deadly consequence of failing to submit to him?

1. Read Luke 13:22-30 along with Matthew 7:13-14 and the following article entitled,
“Just how narrow is the narrow gate?”

The narrow gate, also called the narrow door, is referred to by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 7:13-14 and Luke 13:23-24. Jesus compares the narrow gate to the “broad road” which
leads to destruction (hell) and says that “many” will be on that road. By contrast, Jesus says that “small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.” What exactly is meant by this? Just how many are the “many” and how few are the “few”?

First, we need to understand that Jesus is the Door through which all must enter eternal life. There is no other way because He alone is “the way, the truth and the life” (John 14:6). The way to eternal life is restricted to just one avenue—Christ. In this sense, the way is narrow because it is the only way, and relatively few people will go through the narrow gate. Many more will attempt to find an alternative route to God. They will try to get there through manmade rules and regulations, through false religion, or through self-effort. These who
are “many” will follow the broad road that leads to eternal destruction, while the sheep
hear the voice of the Good Shepherd and follow Him along the narrow way to eternal life (John 10:7-11).

While there will be relatively few who go through the narrow gate compared to the many
on the broad road, there will still be multitudes who will follow the Good Shepherd. The apostle John saw this multitude in his vision in the book of Revelation: “After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in
white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” (Revelation 7:9-10).

Entering the narrow gate is not easy. Jesus made this clear when He instructed His followers to “strive” to do so. The Greek word translated “strive” is *agonizomai*, from which we get the English word agonize. The implication here is that those who seek to enter the narrow gate must do so by struggle and strain, like a running athlete straining toward the finish line, all muscles taut and giving his all in the effort. But we must be clear here. No amount of effort saves us; salvation is by the grace of God through the gift of faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). No one will ever earn heaven by striving for it. But entering the narrow gate is still difficult because of the opposition of human pride, our natural love of sin, and the opposition of Satan and the world in his control, all of which battle against us in the pursuit of eternity.

The exhortation to strive to enter is a command to repent and enter the gate and not to just stand and look at it, think about it, complain that it’s too small or too difficult or unjustly narrow. We are not to ask why others are not entering; we are not to make excuses or delay. We are not to be concerned with the number who will or will not enter. We are to strive forward and enter! Then we are to exhort others to strive to enter before it’s too late.[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. Read Revelation 7:9-10. In Luke 13:23, Someone asked [Jesus], “Lord, are only a
few people going to be saved?” How would you answer this question?
2. In verse 24, Jesus says, “*Make every effort* to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.” It is from the Greek word, *agonizomai*, that we get the phrase ‘*make every effort.’* As stated in the article above,
the word picture is that of an athlete straining toward the finish line.
3. What does this phrase, ‘make every effort.’ imply about entering the narrow door? Why is it so difficult for many people?
4. How do many people incorrectly ‘make every effort’ to enter without realizing their striving is in vain (Ephesians 2:8-9)?
5. Explain what each of the following verses imply about a relationship with God and
what the key is to entering heaven at one’s death.
* John 17:3
* 1 John 5:20
* Matthew 7:21-23

When people speak of “knowing” Jesus, they refer to having a relationship with Him. Being a Christian is more than knowing *about* Jesus; being a Christian is *knowing* Him personally. Jesus spoke of the need to know the Savior when He prayed, “This is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent” (John 17:3).

It is one thing to know *about* a sports hero, and quite another thing to be a *friend* of that athlete. You can read every news article on your hero, memorize every stat, and collect every piece of memorabilia yet never really know the athlete *himself*. To truly know a sports hero, you would have to do more than watch him play. You would have to have a relationship with him, based on time spent together and regular conversation. When a person truly knows Jesus, it is on the basis of a relationship; they spend time together and talk regularly. And, when we know Jesus, we also know God. “We know . . . that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true” (1 John 5:20).

How can you know Jesus? Romans 10:9 says, “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” You must believe that Jesus is Lord and that He has risen from the dead. The reason He died was to pay for your sin (1 Peter 2:24).

When you trust in Christ, you receive Jesus and become part of His family (John 1:12). In addition, John 3:16 says that you have been given eternal life: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” This life includes eternity with Christ in heaven and is available to you and to anyone who believes in Christ.

Ephesians 2:8–9 explains how salvation is the result of God’s goodness: “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” Knowing Jesus in salvation is not based on what we do; knowing Jesus starts with faith in Him, and our continuing relationship with Him is always rooted in faith.

There is no special prayer you must pray to know Jesus and believe in Him. However,
the following prayer can be used right now to express your decision to place your faith in Jesus Christ:

*“Dear God, I realize I am a sinner and could never reach heaven by my own good deeds. Right now, I place my faith in Jesus Christ as God’s Son who rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Please forgive me of my sins and help me to live for you. Thank you
 for accepting me and giving me eternal life.”[[2]](#footnote-2)*

1. Do you know Jesus? If yes, how do you know? What gives you certainty (1 John 5:13)? If no, why not ask Him into your heart now and receive Him as your personal Lord and Savior (John 1:12)? (If you choose to pray the above prayer for the first time, please share this with your group leader as he will be delighted to share in your joy.)
2. Read the following article entitled, “Why did God make salvation such a narrow path?”

In Matthew 7:13–14, Jesus said, “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.” This passage causes some to question the goodness of God. After all, if He really wants to save everyone, why didn’t
He make it easier to be saved? Why doesn’t He simply let everyone into heaven?

When we read the word *narrow*, we tend to associate it with prejudicial selection. It sounds as though God has rated us all on some scale of acceptability and only allows a select few to enter His presence. However, a few verses earlier, Jesus had told the same audience, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened” (Matthew 7:7–8). Jesus made it clear: the path to eternal life is open to everyone who asks.

However, the gate to heaven is “narrow” in the sense of having a particular requirement for entrance—faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is found only in the Person of Jesus Christ; He is the only way (John 14:6). The “wide” gate is non-exclusive; it allows for human effort and all other of the world’s religions.

Jesus says that the narrow gate leads to a “hard” road, one that will take us through hardships and difficult decisions. Following Jesus requires crucifying our flesh (Galatians 2:20; 5:24;
Romans 6:2), living by faith (Romans 1:17; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 10:38), enduring trials with Christlike patience (James 1:2–3, 12; 1 Peter 1:6), and living a lifestyle separate from the world (James 1:27; Romans 12:1–2). When faced with the choice between a narrow, bumpy road and a wide, paved highway, most of us choose the easier road. Human nature gravitates toward comfort and pleasure. When faced with the reality of denying themselves to follow Jesus, most people turn away (John 6:66). Jesus never sugar-coated the truth, and the truth is that not many people are willing to pay the price to follow Him.

God offers salvation to everyone who accepts it (John 1:12; 3:16-18; Romans 10:9;
1 John 2:2). But it is on His terms. We must come the way He has provided. **We cannot create our own paths or come to a holy God based on our own efforts.** Compared to
His righteousness, we are all filthy (Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:10). God cannot simply excuse
or overlook our sin. He is merciful, but He is also just. Justice requires that sin be paid for.
At great cost to Himself, He paid that price (Isaiah 53:5; 1 John 3:1, 16; Psalm 51:7). Without the blood of Jesus covering our sin, we stand guilty before the God we rejected (Romans 1:20).

The way to God was completely closed, and sin was the roadblock (Romans 5:12). No one deserves a second chance. We all deserve to stay on the “wide road that leads to destruction.” But God loved us enough to provide the path to eternal life anyway (Romans 5:6–8). However, He also knows that in our self-centered, sin-saturated world there are not many who will desire Him enough to come to Him on His terms (John 6:44, 65; Romans 3:11; Jeremiah 29:13). Satan has paved the highway to hell with fleshly temptations, worldly attractions, and moral compromises. Most people allow their passions and desires to dictate the course of their lives. They choose temporary, earthly pleasure over the self-sacrifice required in following Jesus (Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23; Matthew 10:37). The narrow gate is ignored. Most people would rather create their own religions and design their own gods.
So it was with sorrow, not discrimination, that Jesus declared that the road to eternal life is “narrow, and only a few find it.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

1. Why is the path so narrow (Give at least two reasons)?
2. Why is the wide road so attractive to all of mankind?
3. What alternative to the wide road does God offer the world?
4. One must either choose the narrow road or the wide road in life. Which road are you on? How do you know for certain?
5. Read Luke 13:31-35 along with Matthew 23:37-39 and Luke 19:41. The Sorrow of Jesus!
6. Do you think the Pharisees were genuinely concerned about Jesus’ safety when they informed him that Herod wanted to kill him, or were they simply trying to get rid of him? Explain your answer.
7. Jesus responded by saying, “Go tell that fox, ‘I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.’ In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem” (verses 32-33). Wow. There is a lot contained in Jesus’ response.
8. Courage is required on the part of all missionaries, particularly those in dangerous countries. How does Jesus show his courage?
9. What was Jesus always busy doing (John 5:17)?
10. What should we, as followers of Christ, always be busy doing (John 4:34; Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 3:23-24)?
11. What was his sole goal, mission in life? How did Jesus show that He was not only determined, but that He would reach his goal in life?
12. In verses 34-35 we see the heart of God. What do you learn about Jesus from these two verses?
13. How does God feel toward the world?
* Ezekiel 33:11
* John 3:16
* Romans 5:8
* 1 Timothy 2:4
* 2 Peter 3:9
1. What is God’s desire for all of mankind (Matthew 11:28-30)? Have you come to Jesus to find rest for soul? If yes, will you share with the group how and when this happened? If not, why not come to him now?
1. “Just how narrow is the narrow gate?” Got Questions Ministries, accessed June 21, 2022, [https://www.gotquestions.org/narrow-gate.html] [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “What does it mean to know Jesus?” accessed June 21, 2022, [https://www.gotquestions.org/know-Jesus.html] [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “Why did God make salvation such a narrow path?” accessed June 21, 2022, [https://www.gotquestions.org/narrow-path.html] [↑](#footnote-ref-3)