

Mathew 7:13–14
Two Gates, Ways, Destinations

Saturday, April 27, 2024 ▫ **Read Matthew 7:13–14**

Questions from the Scripture text: With what command does v13 begin? By what must they enter? What is the other gate like? What sort of way does it open? To what does the broad way lead? Who go in by it? But what sort of way does the narrow gate open (v14)? What does it lead to? Who find it?

What is the great choice of our existence? Matthew 7:13–14 prepares us for the morning sermon on the Lord's Day. In these two verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **there are only two ways to live—one that leads to life, and one that leads to destruction.**

Two Doors. Christ is the narrow gate (v13). You can't enter some other way and merge into the path that leads to life. You have to begin with Him. You have to begin with nothing but Him. You have to give up everything else to follow Him (cf. Luk 9:23–24). You don't get to keep either what good or meritorious works you once thought that you had (cf. Php 3:7–9; Heb 6:1, 9:14), or your former identity, allegiances, or sinful desires (cf. 1Cor 6:11; Titus 3:3–7).

The wide gate is literally anything but "Christ alone" (even a wide assortment of "Christ-plus"-type hopes). It is wide indeed. We may never comfort ourselves with the idea that we must be ok because so many people believe like we do. Wide is the gate that leads to destruction.

Two Directions. The Lord has been describing to the few in front of Him the transformed life that God gives to those who will be entering the kingdom. This transformed life is the narrow path of v14 (cf. 5:20). Jesus is the only way into it, and it is the only path that leads from Him. If you are not on the narrow path—if you do not have a new life in pursuit of holiness—you need to go back to the gate.

In pursuing holiness, the believer must not *desire* approval of men because then you would "have your reward." And he also must not *expect* approval of men because there are comparatively few with you in the confined path. Jesus gives us a wide invitation to Himself and speaks of the rest in Him and the lightness of His yoke (cf. Mt 11:28–30; Jn 6:35–37; Jn 7:37–38). But at the same time, He warns us that we have to count the cost of giving up everything and offering ourselves as a living sacrifice (cf. Rom 12:1).

Two Destinations. Those on the broad path do not think much about their destination. They are too busy living their best life now. When they do think of their destination, it is mostly to assure themselves the opposite of the reality, to tell themselves that the destination will be like what they enjoy now, but even better. Truly, they have their reward, and they are destroying themselves already.

But how great is the destruction to which they go! Thus far, God spares them in kindness and mercy which are meant to lead them to repentance (cf. Rom 2:2–4). But they assure themselves that this means their path is fine, and their destination is good. They refuse to consider that they are storing up wrath against the day of wrath (cf. Rom 2:5), when they will arrive at their destruction—everlasting destruction in flaming fire that comes continually from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power (cf. 2Th 1:8–10).

Those on the narrow path have entered through a glorious door and are enjoying an increasingly glorious (though confined) path, but they think much about the destination: life. Here, "life" is a synonym for "the kingdom" in the sermon (cf. 5:20). "Life" is the comfort that ends their current mourning (cf. 5:4), the inheritance enjoyed as co-heirs with Christ (cf. 5:5), the filling with righteous character and conduct (cf. 5:6), the final/full/forever enjoyment of mercy (cf. 5:7), the full enjoyment of God Himself (cf. 5:8), and the unimaginable honor of being displayed as His children forever (cf. 5:9).

The text refers to it all under the one word: "life." Life as we were created to have it. Life for which we were redeemed. Life as Christ Himself has had from all eternity as the Son of God. Life as Christ Himself perfectly and increasingly enjoyed in all of His humanity. Life! When others scoff at the exclusivity of the door, we heed them not; our destination is life! When others frown or scold as the confinement of the way, we rejoice that the confinement compels us forward to our destination—life!

What is your worthiness before God? From where does any strength and goodness in you come? What else are you tempted to trust in? What else are you tempted to live for? What is your heaven? How often do you think about it/Him?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for giving Your own Son as our gate to enter the way. Grant the ministry of Your Spirit to grow in the holiness we must have in order to see the Lord. Give us to know you now, and bring us to glorify You and fully enjoy You forever, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP6 "Be Gracious, Lord" or TPH459 "My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Matthew 7 verses 13 through 14. These are God's words. Enter by the narrow gate for wide, is the gate. And Broad is the way. That leads to destruction. And there are many. To go go in by it. Because narrow is the gate. And difficult is the way. Which leads to And there are a few.

Who find? So far. Reading of Gods inspired and In Aaron toward

The Lord Jesus has been talking to us about being. Children of Our Father in Heaven children. For whom he knows what is good before. We ask children of him, who knows how to give good gifts to us. And of course, the great gift that he is giving to us.

Himself. his kingdom. All of the wonderful things that He announced to us that come along with having God himself as your father Christ, the son as your savior. His Spirit dwelling in you. as your companion and helper. a wonderful thing to have The Triune God and So, the Lord Jesus now.

Talks about how to enter. And this language of inter actually reminds us. Of the entering that is at the end of the way, what he calls life. In our passage. The way that leads to life. How about the language of entering reminds us? Of chapter 5 and verse 20, when he says, I say to you that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness, to the scribes and Pharisees, you will, by no means enter.

The Kingdom of Heaven. Well, certainly the To Heaven then is the Highway of Holiness this process of God making us. Holy as he is so that we enter the kingdom. But the only way to get into the narrow way, the only entrance by which to come into the narrow way.

The narrow gate. and so it is vitally important. That we enter by the right gate. Or we will find that we are not actually Children of the father. we are not actually known by. The Lord Jesus Christ. As we'll hear Lord willing. Next. Lord's Day. We a dreadful thing for many who thought That they were in the way but they didn't enter by the gate.

And the way that they were on was not the confined and difficult way that is described in this passage and they go merrily along thinking that they are going. to heaven that they're entering the kingdom. And the Lord Jesus will tell them on the last day I never Knew you, you workers of lawlessness.

or your workers without the law. And so you have there, both the gate. the Lord Jesus himself, I never knew you. And, how should it have been plain to them? That they did not know the Lord Jesus, they were not. The narrow way, the confined way.

you workers of lawlessness. And so it is immensely important. That we know that we have entered by the narrow gate. And it is immensely important. That we know that we are on. The confined or difficult way. Because there's only Destinations. There's either the destination which is called destruction in verse 13.

Or the destination, which is called life. In verse 14. so all of humanity is divided into these two groups. The one group. Enters by the narrow gate, the Other group enters by the wide gate. The one group is on the confined difficult, The other group is on the Broadway.

Which actually isn't always that Pleasant, but it's broad. Easy to stay in, because Of how wide it is, and how many people there are on it. There's the Broadway. The one group is heading to life. And the other is heading to. Destruction. Those are the passage easily. Opens up to us.

Those three ways. Two doors, two directions. To destinations. First, the two doors he says, enter by the narrow gate. And then he talks about the wide gate in verse 13 and returns to The narrow gate. In verse 14. In other words, there's no other entrance. Into the way that leads to life.

There is just the narrow gate. you can't. You can't jump into the Christian Life in the middle. you can't make some progress somehow without having entered the gate. And so, This is the same idea that Jesus was using when he answered the disciples when he said that he was going to the father And, that they would come.

eventually where he is? He was preparing. a place for them. that where he is they may also be and They say we don't even know where you're going. How can we know the way to where you're going? And Jesus says, I am the way.

The truth and the life. And just in case you didn't catch the narrowness of the I am that way. He concludes. No one comes to the father. Except through me. And so Jesus is, is the way he is the only way. Praise God. He is very welcoming way. He says.

any who is weary and heavy laden? Anyone who labors and is heavy laden. Come to me and rest. He says anyone who is thirsty, come to me to drink, he gives us living water, makes Living Water to flow from us. He says all that, the father gives to him will come to him and he who comes to me, he says I will in no eyes cast out.

No one has ever come to Jesus and been rejected. This is one of the Hang-Ups that people sometimes have about the doctrine of election, they don't realize how wide and free, and true is the invitation of the Lord, Jesus. He tells you to come to him. He welcomes you to him.

He doesn't say, figure out if you're elect and then you can come. He doesn't say. I know you can't but try anyway. He just says come. And in his invitation to come. Is also the power. for you to come. His word comes home. And if you hear his word you and you respond, and you come to the Lord Jesus.

Yes, you will know later you perhaps you will know now. That it's by the fathers giving it to you and by the spirits giving you life from Christ to be able to but you don't have to be aware of all those things. You just hear him say come and you come.

And no one who has ever come to him. Has ever been cast out? And so yes, the way is narrow. But that doesn't mean. That. That there is a risk. of being rejected. When you come to him, so enter. Enter by the gate, but know that you have to give up everything else to come through it.

Many people want to come into heaven, holding on to Some idea of their former Worthiness and righteousness. The the good works that they think they have done or the good intentions. They think that they have had and one of the things that keeps people from resting only on who Jesus is God, the son become man for us and what Jesus has done obeyed the law perfectly in our place and given himself up and endured the wrath of God, atoningly for our sin.

one of the things that keep people From receiving Christ alone that way is the idea that they can. That they have been good. to some extent and they want to cling to the idea of the goodness that they have done, or the goodness that they have intended.

But you can't do that the gate's too narrow. The only thing that can come through is, Is Christ alone and you in Christ alone. he tried. If you are trying to cling to anything else and you come through the gate, it must Shear off. Whatever good works you thought you had whatever?

Worthiness and righteousness you thought you had. So that Christ alone is all of your worthiness and Christ alone is all of your righteousness. That's what, Hebrews 6, 1 talks about the elementary things of Christianity, including repenting from dead works. And that gets right to the nub of it, doesn't it?

You no longer get to judge whether they were good or they were bad when you did them. You were dead. So obviously they weren't good. You were dead in your trespasses and sins. Anything you did outside of Christ was a dead work. And he repeats the same thing. in Hebrews 9 verse 14 as well, that's what the Apostle Paul is talking about.

Who had been so zealous for the law and he thought for God, When he was murdering Christians, he really thought He was doing it for the love of God. But everything that he had ever done. That he thought was according to the law of God and all of his carefulness and all of his meticulousness and much of which he wasn't incorrect about as far as what the law taught and required.

But he says, in Philippians 3. Verses seven through nine. And particularly verse 8, That that anything that he thought was to his credit before? When he found Christ, when he laid hold of Christ. And when Christ really he says laid, hold of me. And when Christ laid, hold of him, he gave it all up as refuse.

as dung for the garbage heap, or the waste Heap, no, the the door is narrow We can't bring in our Formerly perceived self-righteousness or worthiness. We also can't bring in Anything else that we had as the core of our, our identity Anyone who makes you wants to make their ethnicity, the core of their identity, many people, Either in Pride, or in Self-Loathing want to make their sin, the core of their identity.

well you can't bring you can't bring being gay in or alcoholic. you, you can't think of yourself first as an American and second as a Christian Now, the core of your identity has to be Christ alone. anything else you you have to Shear off you Jesus says, leave.

And he even uses the word hate. Father and mother and brother, and sister, and even your own life. He says, on account of me. And then anybody who doesn't do that? Is not ready to enter. The narrow gate. Now that doesn't mean that you stop being an American. But it does mean that that's not at the core of your identity.

Or Caucasian, or Whatever. Your people now. When you become a Christian or Christians, You know, whatever that your people was from before your Affinity groups, they're secondary and infinitely behind The first one. No, there's a narrow gate and of course, the narrow gate does not Permit, any clinging to any sinfulness?

You cannot come in saying. I'd really like to keep committing and you have the list of the sins that you enjoy or feel aren't so bad and want to tolerate. you you must come

repenting of all of those things. you must come. Clinging to Christ alone and Having Christ alone as the Lord of your life.

So, that's the, the one door. The other door is literally everyone and everything else, so it is wide indeed, isn't it? wide is the gate and Broad. Is the way that leads. To destruction. And so, we can never. Comfort ourselves about the way of Salvation by thinking.

Well, there are so many people Who don't hold to Christ alone, who aren't resting on Christ alone. You know, maybe even people who use the words Christ alone, but quite evidently are trusting in how right they are about their theology. no, we can never Look at how many people are holding to a position or Doing a certain behavior and say, you know, they Godly enough.

It must be okay if they are doing it.

wide is the gate and Broad is the way that leads to destruction. So, two doors, two directions. One way to know that you have entered by the Jesus gate. Is that you're on the confined path, it's not just narrow, it's not just difficult. the, the word really means confined.

Now the people on the confined path are not sinless but they do not get away with their sin. Their Father in Heaven chastens them. The thought of, Sinning against Christ, their Savior, their beloved, their lord. Their purpose, their help. The one to whom their life is United, the thought of sinning against him.

Is painful and hateful. We don't want to. excuse, what we are doing, and come up with theological categories, to, to do. So we want to know everything that we're doing wrong. In fact, we want to do everything that we're doing, foolishly everything that we're not doing as Wiley wisely, and diligently, and zealously, and purely unto Jesus as possible.

we want all of the logs gone from our eyes. We want all of the specs gone from our eyes, we are asking and seeking and knocking from the Lord, to To have him produce in us that Holiness without which no one will see the Lord that righteousness, that exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees.

And so, One way to know that we've entered by the gate is if we're in that path. And if you're not in that path, The answer is not. try to convince ourselves that we're okay or can emerge our way back and it's to come to the Lord Jesus.

The gate. And to repent and believe. And maybe we were in the path and we're just confused and we lack assurance. And we've been backslidden and And we're stuck in an unhealthy spiritual immaturity. All these things are things that the scripture talks about. But whether it's the first time or whether it's the Thousandth time, Nothing keeps you from coming to Christ?

And rejecting everything else but him and who you are in him. And laying hold of him having him alone as your righteousness him alone as your atonement. And him alone as the purpose and way and power and pleasure. Of your life. Praise God. We may do that every Lord's day as we hear the preaching and you don't have to wait till the Lord's day.

You may do it in any moment. Remembering what he says to you and the welcome to himself, that he gives you in the scripture. And so one way to know that we've entered by the gate is if we're in the correct path, and if we're not in it, we should go back to the gate.

One of the things again, that this reminds us of is that we should not expect the approval of men. I guess that's what it's teaching us. It reminds us. We shouldn't desire. The approval of men. Now in the beginning of chapter six, there were several points at which he said, you know, don't do your Works of Mercy to be seen by men.

Don't pray to be seen or heard by men, don't fast in a way that you hope men will notice. So, don't desire. The approval of men. Well, now he is also adding to that isn't he don't expect the approval of men. Because the vast majority of them are not in the same way as you.

And have not entered by the same gate as you. And Jesus is talking in the context of the church. He's talking in the context of an Israel in which there has been a pharisaical religious Revival. And in which there is a fanatical Jesus Revival, the majority of whom are at the bottom of the mountain while he preaches this And so the ones who first hear this, sermon are the few who are gathered with him up the mountain.

When he sat down to preach, And they can see. The distinction that Jesus is talking about when he says few are those and they look around. And he says, many are those and they can look down and see many many more. They understand. That there are going to be those who are near to them.

And as we have learned, For the last 2000 years. Of church history, many within, even the church in the visible. Have been. On the Y Broadway. having entered through the wide gate. And so not only shouldn't we desire, the approval and we shouldn't expect it. There are few who are in the confined and difficult path.

I praise God. Then when you have fellowship with those for whom Christ is all and you love to talk to one another About who he is and what he has done and his patience with you and his powerful working on you and the great things you have seen him do in response to prayer and In spiritual things, saving sanctifying so forth.

They're the ones who are with you in repenting You each feel that you're there's a sin in your life is like, foreign object in your eyeballs. And neither of you feels like he's the solution to the other, but you're grateful for whatever, extent God gives you to be helpful to your brother and whatever extent God gives your brother.

It gives to you for your brother to be helpful to you and what a wonderful Fellowship there is And you can see that in the illustration, can't you. You know, if there's this Wilderness and there's a broad path through it and everybody takes that path. but there's lightly trodden narrow confined difficult path through it.

One leads to a wonderful destination in this life. The other one, you know, leads to the tourist trap where everyone is destroyed And there's a companionship and being on the narrow way together. And that's fine. That's good. But don't expect the majority. In the world and certainly and or in the church.

Especially in an age in which church discipline is not well practiced. One of the things that church discipline practiced according to the Bible does for us Is it helps us have this community of those in the narrow way? Rather than making it all too easy for those who are headed to destruction.

To think that they are. Headed to life and they Comfort one another looking around in the church and saying, well, there are a lot of other people like me here. I must be okay, don't you dare do that? There are a lot of other people like me here. Either means you are in one of those rare.

Reformations, and revivals in which God mercifully has purified. Your your church or You are headed to destruction. And so we mustn't judge where we are by Number of people who are with us or we mustn't Comfort ourselves. At least by People with us. the path itself. Of course, is confining just like the gate was narrow.

So, the path is confining and it keeps making us. Drop things. Anything that we are trying to keep or retrieve from our former life.

No, we don't have room. For being our own. We don't have room for serving our own flesh. If you enter by Christ, by the mercies of God, Christ Alone. Like we hear in the first 11 chapters of Romans, if you have entered by the narrow gate, then the path that you're on is the one of being a Living Sacrifice.

It's just pretty confining. To be a living sacrifice. It's pretty constraining. But as it confines and constrains that squeezing, actually, compels you forward. To the destination. To Method by which it's the path by, which God is bringing you to life. And so, you, you know, the, the believer doesn't view the constraints of the Christian Life.

As an impinging upon their Liberty. No, the more confined by Christ and directed by Christ. They are the more freely they run to glory. Unhindered unencumbered. Getting to do things that entangle you getting to do former sin. That actually bogs us down in running our race, that's the stuff that Hebrew says, get rid of those things so that you can run.

Christian Liberty. To be stripped of those things that we wanted to hold on to Not to be free to do. I brought a range of them. So those are the two directions. We've got the two direct doors in the two directions and the two. Destinations. Yeah, the broad path goes.

Probably, you know, Finds the way wide he finds many along with him in it. He thinks he's okay if he ever has a view or a thought about his destination, he assumes, That his destination is going to be comfortable and easy. In fact, many of them when they think about heaven, They think that it's going to be.

Like I am now and like what I enjoy now but more of it. So, You know, whether it's fleshly things or the admiration of men, Or. or possessions, or whatever it is. You know their particular Hobbies. The thing that they love to do on the weekend, not meaning.

Gather unto God in Christ on the Lord's day. The the Broadway people, you know, they have the the weekend thing that they can't wait to get off. Of the week's work to go do or the retirement thing that they can't wait. to be done with. The working part of life that they get to go do and kind of Heaven, is this glorified weakened retirement hybrid to But they're greatly deceived.

They assume that since God has not yet destroyed them that the path can't possibly end in destruction, it's not occur to them.

That the riches of his goodness forbearance. And long-suffering. Is meant to lead them to repentance. And so they just keep on doing what they're doing. But the next verse in Romans 2 says, but in accordance, With your hardness and your impenitent heart. You are treasuring up for your self-wrath.

In the day of Wrath and revelation of the righteous Judgment of God. So, the Broadway people are storing up, destruction. Against themselves as a head for Destruction. And they feel they must be okay because there are so many On the same road with them so many who live in the same way?

So many who tolerate the same sins. And yet. Heaping up, what's on the other side of the dam? So that when the dam breaks, There will be. Drowned in the wrath of God. How great is that destruction? As great as. The Lord Jesus himself. And the second Thessalonians chapter one.

Talks about the Lord. Jesus revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels. Verse 8. He says, inflaming fire. Taking Vengeance on those who do not know God. And those who do not obey the gospel. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with Everlasting destruction. From the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, When he comes in that day to be glorified in his Saints, And to be admired among all those who believe And so whether they Even though they have not entered, By the gate.

They will still spend eternity. In the presence of the glory. Of the Lord Jesus. It's just that the greatness of his glory. And, Other penetration of his presence into all reality. Will be a hell to.

Like being on fire.

So broad path goes. Ignore their destination. Or at best, they're ignorant of it. But the narrow path. Goes prizes. His destination. That's wonderful to him. That not only has the gate been wonderful. To come and have Christ. himself as your life and your worthiness, your new identity. Now, all of your righteousness atone for your sin, And the path.

The confining narrow difficult. Path is wonderful. As it pushes us forward in Holiness, and frees us, more and more from planks and specks in our eyes, and Brings us nearer and nearer to heaven. But when he says, Narrow is the gate and confined is the way which leads to life, the word life.

There is a synonym for the kingdom. Of chapter 5:20 and we've heard many. Aspects of it. It is that Comfort? For those who are mourning verse 4, When we shall be sinless and have nothing left to mourn over, Will be freed completely from that. Which so, so grieved us when we Inherit.

The. Not conquer. The We receive it as an inheritance. The Lord. puts it under Christ's feet. And we are joint inheritors with the Lord Jesus. And it's it's that inheritance to which those who know we are Meek and lowly but Christ is exultant. And we inherit together with him life is that filling?

For. So right now, we're hungry and thirsty for righteousness, and it feels like we can never be full. And it feels like we can never slake our thirst. Quench, our thirst But we will be filled in that day, that's the life at which the path ends. The full obtaining of the mercy of God.

Or that blessedness that comes to those who are pure in heart. So they shall see God, God himself. Not just glorifying him but fully enjoying him forever. As the larger, catechism answers that that sweet word fully. the full in Fully enjoy him. And not only will we enjoy him himself and What is called the beatific vision?

Being able to behold and Delight in the glory of God himself, we'll have the privilege of being presented. As his children as the many Brethren. Of Jesus Christ. Who is the firstborn and he, of course, is the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth. But in the last day, those who are the peacemakers chapter 5 verse 9 will be called sons of God.

For they will reflect perfectly. Grace and Truth. Not now as only begotten that belongs to Jesus alone, the firstborn But as his many Brethren Children of the heavenly father. So it's it is well that those who are going to such a destination Would think much on it and Would be much encouraged by the goodness of where they are going and the certainty that they will get.

For they have entered by the gate and they are walking the way. That goes there to life. All those things that are summed up in this one word in verse 14, life, And so if you have entered by the gate, and if you are in the way, I encourage you, To think much about your destination.

It's not morbid. It's actually the opposite. Morbid is to be consumed with death. But if you are resting in Christ and you are coming into all these things, you do well to be consumed with that to, which he is taking you Because it is life. And so, let's not allow any difficulty or Opposition to discourage us or deter us.

As we walk the way that began in Christ, When Christ is the gate as our righteousness and Christ's life in us, more and more is the way. with him as our Holiness. And we know that Christ himself and God the Triune God in him. Is our reward at our destination.

It is worth walking in the way. Even if there are a few of us. And were not approved. Let's pray.

Our gracious. God, we thank you. That you have given your son. Our Lord Jesus. To be our entrance. To be our way. To be our reward. And we pray for the help of your spirit. That we, he would abide in us. Give us fellowship with you with the sun.

Stir up our faith in Christ and apply Christ to us more and more. And that we might not be. Discouraged. By how comparatively many? do not understand or approve. Book, grant, that we would rest in you. And Rejoice in you. In Christ, in his name, we ask it.

Amen.