

How to Enter, Approach, and Arrive at Life

2024.04.28 Morning Sermon in Matthew 7:13–14

¹³Enter 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. ¹⁴Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Main idea: there are exactly two ways to live, and yours is either headed to destruction or to life.

Introduction: you are headed either to destruction or to life. Christ alone is the entrance, the One Who baptizes with the Holy Spirit, to bring us into Himself and puts us on the way in which we bear good fruit (3:7–12). If we have entered by Christ, we are already blessed (5:1–16). And “the way” is one in which [i] we approach holiness with Christ’s approach, rather than the scribes’ approach (5:17–48); [ii] we pursue this holiness not to be seen by men but to enjoy God as our Father (6:1–24); [iii] and we trust our Father to do everything good for us, especially to give us this holiness in which we still need to grow (6:25–7:12).

1. Two Doors

1. You can’t enter by some other gate (cf. 3:1–12; Jn 14:4–6 ⁴And where I go you know, and the way you know.” ⁵Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.).
2. You must give up everything else to enter through Him (cf. Luk 9:23–24 ²³Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. ²⁴For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it).
 1. You can’t bring your works (cf. Php 3:7–9 ⁷But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; Heb 6:1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through

the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?).

2. You can't bring your former identity, allegiances, or sinful desires (cf. 1Cor 6:9–11 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God, Titus 3:3–7 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. ⁴But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, ⁵not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life)

3. The wide gate is anything but “Christ alone.” Never comfort yourself by thinking that there are so many like you.
4. But Christ welcomes you (cf. 11:28–30 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”; Jn 6:35–37 And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. ³⁶But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. ³⁷All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out., 7:37–38 On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”).

2. Two Directions

1. The wide gate leads into the broad way (v13), and the narrow gate leads into the confined/difficult way (v14). One way to know you entered by the gate is if you are in the correct path. If you are a “worker of lawlessness,” then you can be sure that He has not known you (v23)! If you're not in it, go back to the gate.
2. The path itself is confined/difficult (v14), but the method of living it is Christ, the gate, and He carries you (cf. 11:28–30 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take My yoke upon

you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”). He Who is the gate carries you all along the way!

3. So the Father, Who gives you holiness and righteousness, gives it to you by a shared life with Jesus Christ, by communion with Christ. Faith into union with Jesus is the gate, and progressing in holy character and conduct by communion with Jesus is the way. The whole Christian life is one of repentance and faith, and by Christ’s life in us, this repentance and faith bear the fruit of holiness.
4. Just as you must give up everything to enter the path, you must walk it by offering yourself as a living sacrifice (cf. Rom 12:1). The gate is trusting in nothing but Christ; the way is living for nothing but Christ.
5. Not only shouldn’t you desire the approval of men; you shouldn’t expect it. Few are in the confined/difficult path. Even if you get some recognition from men, but do not take their praise to heart, and do not expect that it will continue. Exactly at the points where the way is confining, they will abandon you and condemn you.

3. Two Destinations

1. The broad way leads to destruction (v13). Broad-path-goers either ignore their destination or are ignorant about it (cf. Rom 2:4–11 ⁴Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? ⁵But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, ⁶who “will render to each one according to his deeds”: ⁷eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; ⁸but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, ⁹tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; ¹⁰but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹¹For there is no partiality with God; 2Th 1:7–10 ⁷and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, ¹⁰when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be

admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.)

2. The narrow way leads to life (v14). Narrow-path-goers prize their destination: the reward, the kingdom (cf. 5:20, 5:4–9 ⁴Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. ⁵Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. ⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. ⁷Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. ⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. ⁹Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.)

Conclusion: Let no difficulty or opposition discourage or deter you, when Christ is the gate as your righteousness, the way as your holiness, and the reward as your destination.

(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 chapter 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. Who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate. And difficult is the way. Which leads to And there are few.

Who find it? Amen. Thus ends this reading of gods inspired and denerrant word. We look to him now to add his Blessing to the preaching of it, please be seated.

You will not be here long. You will not be. In this world. Very long. Those who are Most obviously coming to the end of their time in this world. We'll tell you how fleeting a thing. Their life in it has been They may describe to you. Much that the Lord has done much that the Lord has given them to do and to experience if they are believers.

They will describe to you much, that they wish they would not have left undone. Much that they did that, the Lord patiently bore with them. And has forgiven them for, for the sake of Christ. But you will not be here very long, you are. You are in a way and it's one of two.

There are only two entrances. There are only two doors. There are only two ways. Only two paths. Two directions. And there are only two destinations. And so, if you are not in, The way. Now, that leads to Then you must enter. The other way. By the only gate that you can.

If you are not in the way that leads to life, then you must enter that way by the Lord Jesus Christ because The other way. Leads to destruction. In destruction. Now, Christ alone is the entrance. You remember, back in chapter 3 and his cousin John was preaching as the one who prepares the way for Yahweh himself, the Lord of Isaiah 40.

To come. And his cousin, John was identified as the one who prepared that way and of course Jesus identified as the Creator. The Lord God of Israel, who has now come in the flesh. And as John was preaching. The need for repentance. Pharisees came. Scribes and Pharisees, the

very ones about whom in this sermon on the Mount, which is starting now to draw to a close where we are in chapter seven.

The very ones about whom. Jesus has warned that your righteousness must exceed theirs. And when they came John the Baptist called them a brood of vipers. I said, who warned you to flee from the Wrath to come? They were in the way. That leads to destruction. But John then said something marvelous.

So don't Don't think that you can say we are children of Abraham. God is able to raise up from these stones. Children of Abraham. And then he proclaimed to them Christ. Who would baptize not with water? The water of baptism, can't turn a Heart of Stone into a heart of Flesh.

The water of baptism can't give repentance new life, a new mind, a new nature. And faith in Jesus Christ. He proclaimed to them that the Lord Jesus was coming. Who would pour out his? His Spirit who does. Exchange the Heart of Stone for the heart of Flesh and gives the very repentance that John had been preaching.

Christ Alone, then is the entrance is the gate. When he says, enter by the narrow gate, he means himself That's what he's talking about here. He is the only one who can give you his Spirit as Spirit, being the only one who can give you an entirely new heart.

Nothing that you do from your old heart. Is acceptable to God. And so only, Only resting in Christ alone. As your righteousness brings you into the way. To begin with Christ Alone is the entrance, the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit to bring us into himself and then to put us on the way where, in which we bear good fruit.

And that's what he told those Pharisees wasn't it. That they would bear good fruit that they needed to Bear. Good fruit and Jesus giving new life in himself. By his Spirit, is the only way that you bear. Good fruit. And because of the, And desire to preach. This passage fully.

We have cut down to just verses 13 and 14 but that's exactly what Jesus now is going to do. In the passage that we hope by God's help to have next week, Lord willing. That there are, there are prophets. There are preachers. Who themselves have not entered by the gate who themselves are not in the way.

And so, what they preached to you is not going to save your life. It's going to devour your life. And you can tell them by their fruits. And, On that next week. So Jesus has started, this particular sermon by announcing to those who have entered by himself. That they are blessed in Christ.

Before he ever gets to talking about the difference in the fruit. Between what they have heard in their synagogues. And what Jesus says to them authoritatively perfectly interpreting his own law that he has given in the Old Testament. Before Jesus. Announces, uh, that to them, he is already telling them that they're blessed.

They're blessed in him. They're the ones who when there was that. Great crowd. His Fame had gone throughout all Galilee, as he taught in the synagogues and preached. The gospel of the Kingdom and healed, all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. Among the people chapter 4 verse 23, and his Fame went throughout all Syria.

And they brought to him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments and those who were demon-possessed epileps, epileptics and paralytics, and he healed them. Verse 25, great multitudes followed him from Galilee and from decapolis Jerusalem Judea and Beyond the Jordan And seeing the multitudes. He went up on a mountain.

And when he was seated, his disciples, Came up to him. Then he opened his mouth and taught them saying and so forth. And now he's preaching to those few disciples who saw Jesus not just up on the mountain but take the take his seat. That position they had seen in the synagogues.

You remember when Uh, when Jesus, preached in the synagogue, he would read. And then he would sit down to preach. And so they saw Jesus is going to preach a sermon And although there was this great multitude of religious fervor even excitement over Jesus himself and what Jesus does.

Yet those who were poor impoverished in their spirit and those who grieved over the remaining sin, those who are still hungry and thirsty for righteousness. Those who knew that, Jesus was all that they could have before God, they left the great religious Festival. At the bottom of the mountain.

And came up to him. Christ Alone. Is the And he's been preaching. He's been preaching about the way ever since he concluded those blessings. If you Uh if you go up through maybe verse 16 of chapter 5 and then there's a little bit of a shift and he says, do not think that I came to destroy The law of the prophets.

Because those who are up there, those who know that Jesus is, is the gate now, what is going to be their way, how by, what sort of life does? God bring them all the way into his kingdom? And and is it a very different life is it? Less carefully righteous and holy life.

Then the scribes and Pharisees. Many of whom are probably still in that multitude down there at the bottom of the mountain. Jesus says, It's, it's not less carefully righteous or holy. It's way more. Way more unless your righteousness exceeds. That of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom.

And then he started telling us, didn't he? About what the law of God actually requires. Not just in outward performance but in Our intentions, in our thoughts and our desires in our priorities, in our character, And our heart towards God and our heart towards men. And so we, we must approach Holiness with Christ's approach, not that of the scribes.

Taking a sup through. The end of chapter five. And then beginning in chapter six, Even as we do this, Uh, we do it especially to have God himself a reward. God himself is our reward. That we pursue this Holiness. Not to be seen by men. But to enjoy God as our father.

So, not even so much. To be seen by God, although we love to please him. And we want to glorify him. But to have that reward in our soul. And at the last day, That is God himself as our father. Our Father, who sees in secret, And the. So this life of Holiness that was beyond anything that the scribes or Pharisees had ever told them.

About, even though they were using God's word, The the same word that is Christ's word about Holiness. Uh, it was a Holiness that was Far beyond anything that Had heard those men talk about and pursuing it. Uh in fellowship with the father and to enjoy him as the reward.

And then really starting about verse 25 of the last chapter coming right up until Well, the end of last week's portion in verse 12 of chapter 7, We must trust our father to do everything good for us. Especially to give us this Holiness. So not just that he will give us whatever we need to eat and whatever we need to drink and whatever we need to wear.

But that he will give us his kingdom and his righteousness, that he will give us even a sufficient amount of trouble for each day to bring us into that Kingdom. And that righteousness, a sufficient amount of fatherly discipline, like Hebrews 12 says, To produce in us the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

So that we would pursue peace with all men and that Holiness without which We would not see the Lord. And we trust our father. To do that for us. And so we view Holiness, not as something that elevates us above others. But it's something that every single one of us still needs greatly.

Because every foreign object left in our eye is a foreign object in our eye. And we're grateful to Father. Who keeps sanctifying Us by applying his son to Which is the great work of his holy spirit. And And as we in humility and thankfulness receive that from father, Then in Mercy and compassion.

Desire. That our brothers would have the same. And that all the law and the prophets are showing us this God, who has this Mercy to us, to produce this Holiness, which we receive as a gift in humility and thankfulness and makes us desire to do to others what we would have them.

Do unto us that they would be used of God. In bringing us into a greater knowledge of him and a greater Faith into Christ and a greater devotion. And and Holiness unto the Lord. That's the Golden Rule of verse 12. And so, as Jesus comes now and begins, Concluding the sermon.

He commands us to enter. By himself. Enter through him himself. Enter. By the narrow gate. That's the that's the command that governs. Uh, grammatically literally the entire passage verse 13 through 14. Next week, beware of false prophets, but this week Enter. By the narrow gate. And he tells us about the two gates, the two doors, And he tells us about the two ways.

Two directions. And he tells us about the two destinations. And so, we'll consider this passage. By God's help under those three headings. The two doors. The two directions. And the two destinations. First, the two doors you can't enter by some other gate. John didn't say Rejoice for the Kingdom of Heaven, as at hand.

He said, repent be converted. Have your mind, have the nature, the character of your mind changed because the kingdom of Heaven is at hand. And then he went on, as we have already uh refreshed our memory a little bit through his interaction with The scribes and Pharisees. He went on to announce that Jesus is the only hope of repentance.

And so repent for the kingdom of God is at hand, is also to say, come to the Lord, Jesus alone, who alone can be all your righteousness, which Jesus himself. You remember by himself receiving the baptism taught even John Because Jesus came, you remember to be baptized and John didn't want to baptize him.

And Jesus said, in this way, it is necessary for us, not just me, but us to fulfill all righteousness. That John was not going to be saved by preaching, clearly John was not going to be saved by. Recognizing that we are helpless and sinful although that is true. John was not going to be saved by fulfilling his office as a prophet.

Well, John was not going to be saved by baptizing others with water. Any more than they were going to be saved by being baptized with the water. John was going to be saved by Jesus being righteous. And so, when Jesus came to receive that baptism for Jesus, a ceremonial washing as he is entering in on the public Ministry of his priesthood at the age of 30, But in

conjunction with everyone else, whom John was baptizing, Jesus's baptism and identification with them.

That this was necessary for us. And you yourself are in that us. If you believe in Jesus Christ to fulfill all righteousness, he has identified himself with his people, he lived, and obeyed and died. Suffered the wrath of God on the cross. Not merely for himself. But as the one who's identified.

With everyone who had ever believed in him. And would ever believe in him.

And so this is the only gate. You remember the disciples confusion? John chapter 14, Jesus says, I go to prepare a place for you. And I will return for you. And, you know, I go and and you know, the way, And the disciple said, We don't know where and how could we know the way.

You remember what Jesus answered? He said, I am the way. The truth. And the life. And he makes it very narrow at that point. Saying the same thing as he does here, right? When he says, narrow is the gate in verse 14. Says, no one comes to the father.

Except for me. That's as narrow as it gets. Or to use the words of unbelief. Which they will use. To shake your hope in Christ. To call that, which is good calling Jesus. The only way evil, It's very intolerant. Well, praise God. You must be intolerant of any other way to of any other gate to enter the way.

You must be intolerant of any way to come into life or you will come into destruction. It is not merciful to be tolerant of religion. It is the most hateful thing you could do to an individual. Is to tell them to enter by the wide gate. No Jesus in love.

Jesus in Mercy. He says, enter by the narrow gate. Be religiously intolerant, come only through him.

In The Nearness of the gate means that you must give up everything else. In order to enter through him. And Luke chapter 9, he puts it this way. If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me for whoever desires to save his life, will lose it.

But whoever loses his life for my sake, We'll save it. This means you can't come into the way with anything, but Jesus. You cannot bring. For instance, your former Works into the way. If you think that you have done anything, that is worthy of approval by God, you are greatly mistaken.

Even if you're a Christian, any good that you have done, has not only been done in Union with Christ but has also been mixed with your remaining sin. There's genuine good in it. That is all from Jesus. But the doing of it is not worthy of God's approval. Because it's still mixed with that which is from you.

He rewards your good works as on the principle of Grace on the rewarding of Christ from whom any goodness in, you has come And with Christ's sacrifice. Taking all of the guilt and all of the Wrath that, that, which is from you in the works. Has produced. So you can't bring your Works.

In fact. The greatest of the scribes and Pharisees. Of his own day. And you remember, Paul didn't just say that. And think that when he was still persecuting Christians, He's still in the honesty and really the shame, when he looked back on it, calling himself, the chief of Sinners, when he was a Christian, he described himself.

As the most elite among the Pharisees. As to the righteousness, which is through the law. He says, Through The Obedience to the law blameless. What does he say about that blameless righteousness? Philippians chapter 3. He says what things were gained to me? These I have counted loss for Christ yet.

Indeed, I also count all things loss for the Excellence of the knowledge of Christ. Jesus, my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish. That I may get in Christ and be found in him. Not having my own righteousness, which is from the law.

But that which is through faith in Christ. The righteousness, which is from God. By faith. You see the gate is too narrow. If you try to bring anything good that you have done any good that you think is in yourself, whether it is good works or whether it is good Doctrine.

Not that you, if your Doctrine is good, you wouldn't have it on the other side. But you can't enter by your Doctrine. You don't trust in your good theology. In fact, if your theology is good, it tells you not to trust And how good your theology is. You can't come hoping that all of your sincerity, your meaning to turn over a new Leaf, this time, your your hatred of sin, your love for God.

If he's given you any of that, he's given that to you, but it is Jesus's hatred of sin. That is your righteousness and it is Jesus's love for God. That must be your righteousness. The gate is too narrow to bring anything but Jesus, this is why you don't repent.

In the first place in the elementary things of Christ. Remember Hebrews 6 verse 1, therefore leaving the discussion of the elementary things of Christ. Let us go on to Perfection, not laying again, the foundation of repentance from dead works. And Faith toward God. Let that end any hope that anything you have ever done?

We'll get you into the way or we'll get you to the destination. Because anything that you did outside of Christ, anything that did not come from his life in you, through faith, in which you were joined to him, and forgiven and Justified already. However, much outward Conformity. To the law of God.

There was it was a dead work. It came from you, while you were dead. It was done from you from your flesh. God justifies the ungodly. He counts as righteous. Those whose only righteousness only worthiness is the Lord Jesus Christ. Is the gate. So, he says, The same thing in Hebrews 9 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ?

He's talking now about when we come and we worship and we're offering these things that God has commanded but even our worship. Must be consecrated cleansed by the blood of Christ, even as we've been seeing in Leviticus and Numbers in the evening sermons, these last several months, That the holy things of Israel had to be cleansed by Blood.

Had to be consecrated by Blood. And so he he uses that same phrase that dead works. How much more shall the blood of Christ? Who through the Eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God? Cleanse your conscience from dead works. To serve the Living God. So that you come to God, even now As we sing and read and hear and pray and hear preaching, and you come to the table.

That you come with, Christ's blood cleansing, whatever is from you in it, and Christ's life and Resurrection producing in you that which is from him. So you can't bring your works. You also can't bring your former identity. Or allegiances. Or sins or sinful desires. First Corinthians 6 9-11, do you not know?

That the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God. Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters nor adulterers, nor homosexuals nor sodomites, nor thieves nor covetous nor drunkards, nor revilers nor extortioners. Will inherit the kingdom of God, and such were some of you. But you were washed but you were Sanctified but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of your God.

Because you you can't enter the narrow gate saying I want to come through Jesus. I just want to bring my sin with me. No, you must. You must turn from all your sin to turn to Christ. It's not something repentance. Is not a preparation unto Faith. But it always necessarily comes with.

Because you're laying hold of Christ, out of a view of the, the hatred of your sin and the mercy of God, that is in Jesus. That's repentance. And you receive Christ as he offers himself to you as he offers the Triune God in himself to you. And his righteousness to you.

Titus 3 verses 3 through. 7 for we ourselves were also once foolish disobedient, deceived serving, various lusts and Pleasures, living in Malice and envy hateful and hating one another You say, well, I don't feel like I've been hateful or hating others. Yeah, well you don't get to Define What love is and what hate us?

Isn't that what we just heard in? Romans 13, love keeps the Commandments because God is the one who defines? What love is and what hate us? For we ourselves were once all those things. But verse four, Titus 3 verse 4 when the kindness and the love of God, our savior toward man appeared Not by works of righteousness but which we have done.

Sorry, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his Mercy, He saved us. So Jesus. The kindness and love of God, our savior. He appears and he saves us and then he applies himself to us, Going on in Titus, Chapter 3, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit whom he poured out on us.

Abundantly Through Jesus Christ. Our Savior So, having been justified by his grace, We should become heirs according to the, Of eternal life. So God pours his Spirit On Us by his son, his Spirit, who proceeds from the father, and from the son, and the Lord Jesus, pours, at his Spirit on.

And he applies Christ to us. Which means you should not use the language or the idea. Of gay, Christian. Or Christian Thief. Or Christian alcoholic. Anything from that list in First Corinthians 6. Anything that is sinful. It is not your identity anymore. You do not bring your former identity with you.

The gate is too narrow. It's too narrow for your works of righteousness. It's too narrow for your former sinfulness. It's too narrow. Now, it's too narrow for your former identity. You can't bring with it and this is a sticker for many people. You can't bring with it your companions.

Because just, as your new identity is first and foremost in Christ, your new people are first and foremost Christians. And praise God, if you're in a Christian household, But if not Jesus says you have to hate father and mother, and brother and sister. He's not saying, Hit them with hatred.

What he's saying is that your new identity with him and allegiance to him means unless they are in him? They are no longer your people. They're still your people in the household, they're still your people, in the family, all of the, all of the Commandments of God. You know, of a, of a wife to honor, her husband and a husband to love his wife.

Apply, not You can do it before God. So honor your parents, if you're, if you were a child of unbelieving, parents and so forth. But this applies to other things. It applies to ethnicity. There are many in our culture especially where it has become so stratified and and the distinctions and the lines.

Have been sharpened and The Strife has been increased. But a Christian no longer says, my people about his ethnicity. Because he says, His prime. His primary people are not any longer, his ethnicity. His people are the Lord's people. And if you have really good friends and really close friends, Who are unbelievers and and you get saved, they are no longer the companions of your life.

They are dear acquaintances and neighbors whom you love and desire to be converted. But the companions of your life, need to be those who are in Christ, those who are in the same way that you are. Those who have entered by the same gate. You see the wide gate.

Is everything else but Christ Alone She says, for why does the gate and Broad is the way that leads to destruction? So anything other than Christ Alone, as the wide gate, which means there are a lot of people on it. And even a lot of people on it, who are in the churches.

A great multitude of them at the bottom of the mountain at the time that this was being preached. And even a lot of people in the wide gate, in the wide way, who are in the pulpits, Which we're about to hear in the next portion. In the next few verses of the psalm, the sermon

And so we must never think about something that we're doing or something that we think, or we feel well, it's okay, because it's normal. Or it's okay because so many people in the churches do it. Or it's okay because so many people in the pulpits, do it. No broad is the way.

That leads to destruction and there are many who go in by it. You see what he's saying here? He's saying, don't take comfort in numbers. You take comfort in entering only by Christ. You take comfort in Walking in the way that Christ brings you into that. He's been describing in this sermon

And so, Narrow is the gate, but praise God. The one who is the gate? Welcomes you to himself. So stop turn your attention away. From what men will think and what men will like Because, There are many on the Broadway, that leads to destruction. Turning your attention from them, turn your attention to him.

Who is the gate? Who says come to me? All you who labor and are heavy laden. And I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. Jesus says, for I am gentle and lowly in heart. And you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

The yolk is easy, and the burden is light, haven't haven't? We heard Of the greatness of the Holiness that is required to enter to the kingdom. That doesn't seem easy and light. But you're yoked. With Jesus. He carries the burden and he carries you. I still remember. Moving from one house to another.

Our former congregation. And, Um, a child helping carry Furniture by Hanging onto it with his feet dangling. As two men on either end, carrying it into the house. Praise God. For the help of children, But that child's yoke was easy. This burden was light. Despite the insurmountable heaviness of what he was carrying.

And has not the Lord Jesus been preaching to us. From the middle of chapter six up through last week's portion. Of how our father knows what we need. And our father knows how to give good gifts to us, and he defines what those gifts are and that good gift is especially himself.

Which he is giving us as he sanctifies us as he grows us in Grace and Faith as he makes us more and more. Holy Christ, welcomes you Oh, enter by this gate. Don't be dissuaded by how few people enter don't be dissuaded by how narrow it is, how intolerant?

The Lord Jesus. It says, in John 6, I am the bread of life, he who comes to me, shall never hunger. He who believes in me shall never thirst. I said to you, you have seen me yet. You do not believe all that. The father gives me will come to me and the one who comes to me, I will by no means cast out.

You hear that? No one has ever come to the Lord? Jesus Christ, hungry, for forgiveness, hungry, for righteousness. Abandoning all other entrances saying, I can only enter by you. Lord Jesus. Please receive me. Bring me into the way. Bring me at last unto life. No one has ever come to the Lord.

Jesus Christ. And Ben refused.

John 7, the last day of the great day of the feast Jesus stands and cries out saying. If anyone thirsts? Let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me. As the scripture has said out of his heart, Will flow rivers of Living Water blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness?

For they will be filled. So there's the two doors, the two ways. There's also the two directions. Now, the wide gate leads into the broad way. Verse 13 says, and the narrow gate leads into the confined. Really is.

The sense of the word and it's difficult because it's confined, it presses you into a particular direction.

Therefore, one way to know that you've entered by the correct gate is if you are on the correct path. There are many who give lip service to entering by the Gate of Jesus. But as they live, they are not on the narrow way. They are not confined compelled by love for God to hate their sin.

We're not talking about Uh, perfect, sanctification. We're talking about no evidence of life. No life science. No sorrow over sin. No love for father. No, love for Christ. No rejoicing that you have him despite everything else you have lost in order to have him counting whatever was lost whether it was your good works or your former identity or that sin that you used to enjoy so much and your flesh still would enjoy.

Counting it, all worth it, all to lose it all. If you could just have Jesus,

You know. Desiring. That you do now, desire. The, the The the, to please your father and to imitate him to be a child with his increasingly increasingly in his family resemblance. All of these things that Jesus has been describing of the way, if you are not in the way you didn't enter by the gate, Entering by the gate is not saying a particular prayer.

You can't tell that you've entered the gate by a sticker that's in your Bible with a date on it. The two gates and the two ways. Are lined up with one another. They're mutually exclusive if you enter by the gate, then you're on the narrow way. If you're on the Broadway, you didn't enter by the narrow gate.

And so, if you are a worker of lawlessness, you've got a bigger problem. Then then then that you're working lawlessness. And this comes and still haven't figured out if we're, if we're going to get all the way to the end of 23 next week, this comes from verse 23.

When Jesus says, I tell you the truth, I never knew you. You worker of lawlessness or your you worker against the law or without the law there at the, at the end of verse 23,

Everyone who works lawlessness is going to perish and they will be judged for their law breaking. Don't listen to talking reformed heads. On talk shows. If they get interviewed about things like, The perversion that is more and more tolerated in our culture, and they say stupid things. Well, nobody goes to hell for being a homosexual.

They only go to hell for not believing in Jesus. If you're a worker of lawlessness, if that's your identity, if your sin is not something that you hate and something that father is helping you with and something that the life of Jesus in you is helping you so that By by the Sun.

And by the law of the spirit of life has set you free from the law of sin, and death. And and so, you're not walking according to the flesh. But by the spirit, you're putting to death, the Deeds of the body. If that's not your life, it's because you don't know Jesus or More.

Exactly, if you look at verse 23 for which, you'd have to have a copy of the Bible open, This is because Jesus doesn't know you. He will say to them. I never knew you. You worker of lawlessness, what's he saying? You should have known the whole time. Because you were on the broad way.

That you had not entered by the narrow gate. I never knew you.

And so, if you are Not living in hatred of your sin and resting in Christ and rejoicing him and doing Mighty battle. Not feeling like oh I'm more and more sinless all the time. No, making progress. But in that war, The spirit lusts against the Flesh and the flesh against the spirit.

And so long as you have both, if you are a Christian, you will never stop having the spirit. If you are alive in this world, you still have the flesh. And so, the absence of battle is a warning sign. But if you are a worker of lawlessness, then you can be sure that he has not known you.

And so, if you're not in the narrow way, Go to the narrow gate. Why sit there trying to talk yourself into the idea that you have been a Christian all along up until now. And there are just these adjustments to be made. You actually doesn't matter if you're already in the way or not, you can always come to Jesus and lay hold of him as the gate and rest upon him and walk in his way.

The whole Christian Life is one of repenting and believing in Jesus. Why would you decline to enter the gate? When the whole Christian Life is like so many entrances of the gate, not new conversions. But of the same character. As what happened at your conversion. Laying hold of him alone as your righteousness, committing your entire life to him alone, As your identity.

Your purpose, your pleasure. Your power. Now, the path itself is confined and difficult. But remember his yoke is easy, his burden is light. The one who is the gate carries you all along the way. And so the father who is the one who gives us Holiness and righteousness and that's been the primary way that Jesus has been telling us about it from the second half of chapter six flowing into the discussion of the foreign objects in the eyes.

In in chapter seven, he's been talking to us about it as something that our father is pleased to give us. And our father is good, and he gives us everything else we need, but he knows what we need the most. And, and that is that is what he keeps giving us.

So taking these things all together, we find that the father who gives us Holiness and righteousness gives it to us by a shared life with Jesus Christ. So you can only be made right with God, you can only enter the narrow gate by Union with Christ. And you can only walk in the narrow way in the confined Way by communion Fellowship, a shared life with Jesus Christ.

He does he doesn't give himself to you. The father doesn't give him to you at the entrance. And then you thrust you in the right direction and say you're on your own. No, you come in by Union with Christ and you walk by communion with Christ. He is your righteousness and he is he is all of your life when you begin and all of your walking and wrestling and fighting, you know, the Christian life is not passive.

We're not saying that justification and sanctification are the same thing. No justification the narrow way. You, you cannot bring anything, Christ's righteousness alone. Christ's sacrifice alone in sanctification. God gives you lots of commands, pretty vigorous ones. Run. Beat wrestle kill. The sanctification there's work, but it's work. That is done by the life and righteousness of Christ.

And so Faith into Union with Jesus is the gate And you're progressing in Holy character and conduct come by communion with Jesus. Who is also for you, then the way. The whole Christian Life is one of repentance and Faith. By Christ's life in us, the repentance and Faith, bear, the fruit That.

Said to bear in chapter 3. So just as you must give up everything to enter the path. You must walk the path. You must walk the way you must walk this direction. As one who is offering yourself as a Living Sacrifice. Romans 12, verse 1, takes all that he has said about the mercies of God and Jesus Christ.

And he urges Us by those mercies to offer us. To offer ourselves as a Living Sacrifice. Well, one last thing before we leave the directions the two directions Not only shouldn't you desire. The approval of men, he hit that pretty hard, didn't he? In the beginning of chapter six, when you do your Works of Mercy, when you do your good works, don't do it.

To be seen by men when you pray, don't pray to be seen or heard by men. When you fast don't fast in, such a way, as to be seen by men or noticed by men that you are fasting. So we've heard from the Lord Jesus. That we shouldn't desire, the approval of men.

Now, he tells us you shouldn't expect it anyway. Because, Is. Is the gate and Broad is the way that leads to destruction. And there are many who go in by it. Now, many is not a happy word for us in this passage. Because he's going to come to us.

In verse 21 and say not everyone who says to me, Lord Lord shall enter the Kingdom of heaven. You think oh well I guess they're going to be a few people who call Jesus Lord That aren't going to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. And I guess there are going to be a few people.

Who cast out demons. And and do many wonders. And prophesy in his name, who will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but a few is not the beginning of verse 22. Verse 22. He uses that same word that we have in verse 13, many Many will say to me, in that day.

Lord Lord. And so there are few who are in the difficult and confined path. Now, even if you get some recognition of men, Do not take their praise to heart. And do not expect that. It will continue. Because you will get to a part of walking the way that is confined.

That is difficult. That is as the Lord says in his word. Not as men have grown to accept and approve of as wise or Pious or sincere or helpful. Or any other pretense so ever. And when you come, and you have to Depart. From one of the many they will stop approving of you.

Exactly at the points where the way is confining, they will abandon you and they will condemn you. They may even use words like narrow. Or confined. Or intolerant. But don't expect the approval of men and since you can't expect it, doesn't that emergency of your father. If one of the things that you and I have been hearing for for a couple of months is that part of what we still need to be delivered?

From is this fleshly desire to be noticed of and approved of by men? He comes in his Providence and says well you're not gonna have the approval of men anyway. So, give up. Give up seeking the approval of men. Two gates, enter the narrow gate. Um sorry, two doors.

I don't know. I have to alliterate everything. We'll just go Gates. Two gates entered by the narrow way. Our enter by the narrow gate, two ways. Take the confined way to destinations the Broadway, leads to destruction verse 13 says It doesn't lead to Annihilation. It doesn't lead to Soul sleep.

It doesn't lead to some sort of non-existence, where you had your fleshly pleasure for a while and you enjoyed it and now you dissipate into the ether, It leads. To destruction. And here, we're going to. Think about Romans 2 4-11 and second Thessalonians 1 verses 7 through 10. You see the thing about the Broadway is, there are so many people on it, and the Lord is not destroying them yet.

Sure, they feel the misery in themselves at times when the Lord in his common Grace gives enough of the the common operation of the spirit for them to see how bad sinfulness is for them to feel badly about it and badly about its consequences. But for the most part, those in the broad way, do not question.

Where they are going? They have the things that they enjoy, and if you talk to them about what heaven is, it will be like what they enjoy. Now, just like a highly augmented version of it. You know, whether it's something in nature in the creation or whether it's something in their family relations often or whatever it is.

They have pleasures and Comforts in this life still. Even though they're on the way to to destruction, And they firmly believe they are going to quote unquote, heaven. But the heaven is not the glory of the Triune God, and the Heaven is not the brilliant Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And the Heaven is not a Holiness and a righteousness that that is spotless in everyone.

And so for the most part, those who are on the broad path either, ignore their destination altogether. They'll get just enough religion to help them. Keep enjoying themselves in this world. Thank you. They either ignore their destination altogether or they are so ignorant as to lie to themselves about it.

This is why I said, well, we'll think about this a little bit from Romans chapter 2. Because in Romans chapter 2, there are Jews who are on the broad way. And they're assuring themselves

that they're okay, and they're condemning others. For things that their hearts do, but they're not admitting to themselves.

Not probably since I gave you the introduction. Uh, that it's particularly Jews. Let's start a little earlier than verse 4.

He says, therefore you are an excusable o man, whoever you are, who judge who judge for in whatever you judge another. You condemn yourself for you who judge practice the same things. But we know that the Judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things and do you think this o, man?

You who judge those practicing these things and doing the same that you will escape the Judgment of God. Or you do you and this is this is Where we pick up in, in verse 4, the portion that is most pertinent for us now. Or do you despise the riches of his goodness forbearance and longsuffering?

Not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? The way is Broad and you are not yet destroyed, but that doesn't mean that you are not heading to destruction. It means that despite your refusal to acknowledge God as your creator and his glory, as your purpose to desire, him above all other things that he has made taken together despite rejecting all of that.

He still has not destroyed you. He still has not cast you into hell. Don't you see how good and forbearing and longsuffering, he is. But do you despise those riches? Not knowing that the goodness of God, leads you to repentance. 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. You see they're on the Broadway and the wrath of God hasn't fallen upon them yet. And if you are in the Broadway, the wrath of God hasn't fallen upon you yet and you may think that you are okay as a result.

But everyone who is in the broad way, they're storing up wrath against themselves. God has not overlooked. A single wrong. Thought a single wrong desire. A single wrong, pleasure. A single wrong word or attitude. Let alone wrong action. If you are in the broad way, It has not been wiped out for you by Christ, the gate It has been stored up against you for the day of Wrath.

And as the wrath of God falls on the other side of the dam, you must not live this life thinking I must be okay. It hasn't fallen upon me. No, Romans 2 verse 5 says it is being stored up against you. Enter the narrow. Just because there are so many.

With you. And just because the way has been broad and you are not yet, destroyed does not mean that you are safe. It means that God is patient. It means that God is merciful. It means that Christ who welcomes you to himself is worthy of your coming to him.

See, God will render to each one according to his deeds eternal life. To those who by patient continuous and doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality. Now, he doesn't. There's In accordance with the Deeds. He's not rewarding you for the Merit of the Deeds. But all those who enter through the narrow gate, They walk the confined way.

And their destination. Matches the way because of the gate.

But to those who are self-seeking, And do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness. He will render indignation and wrath. Tribulation and anguish. On every soul of man who does evil.

Of the Jew first and also, the Greek. But Glory honor and peace to everyone who works. What is good?

To the Jew first and also to the Greek for there is no partiality with God. Similar thing, then reminder that the destruction is coming. Ii Thessalonians 1. Talks about, Jesus appearing. Again, he's talking to persecuted Christians. Um, assuring them. That God will. Avenge God, will be just. And he talks about Jesus coming to give you who are troubled rest with us.

When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire. Taking Vengeance on those who do not know God. And those who do not obey the gospel of the Lord of our Lord. Jesus Christ. That doesn't mean that if you never heard the gospel, That you don't go to hell.

It means narrow is the gate. The gate is a response to the gospel of believing in Jesus Christ. And anyone who has not entered that gate is on the broad way of Destruction. In flaming 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, They're not going to be banished from God's presence. There's no such thing. Existence exists because of God. He permeates. Everything he is infinite Eternal and unchangeable in his being. So don't listen to those and I know there are many and I know they're popular.

Who say that this is being apart from the presence of God. Now, this is being apart from the grace of God. This is his presence and his glory. In unrestrained expression, forever. Against you and upon you. That's what he describes. Broad is the way and it leads to destruction.

From the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, When he comes in that day and hears the primary, Reason for his coming. It's not for Destruction. It's for those who have entered, the narrow gate who have been in the confined way because it leads to life.

When he comes in that day to be glorified in his Saints and to be admired among all those who believe Because our testimony among you was believed. Because if you have believed into Jesus Christ, you have entered by the narrow gate, you have you have begun on the confined way and it leads to life.

You will see him in all his glory without any of your sin remaining. You will desire him and enjoy him as you ought to desire him and as you ought to enjoy him and you will have him So, whereas the those who are in the Broadway, Because they entered through the wide gate.

They either ignore their destination or ignorantly lie to themselves about it. The ones who are have entered, the narrow gate and are in the confined way. You ought to think much of your destination. Because he, who is the gate by which you entered and he who carries you in the way, which is confined, is the life unto, which you are going.

This is the blessing that he began the sermon. Telling them they would have you remember in chapter 5 and the Beatitudes and the blessings. There was that blessing that was in the present tense. In verse 3, blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.

And there is that blessing in the present tense in verse 10. Blessed are the persecuted for righteous those who are persecuted for righteousness sake. For theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. In verses 4 through 9. We're all in the future tense. This is the life that he's talking about here.

When he says it leads to life, he's talking about the same thing. He was talking about in chapter 5 and verse 20, when he says, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. He is the gate and growth in Holiness, and until your righteousness, does exceed them until your righteousness, is like that of your father.

Who is in heaven, you shall be perfect. As your father in Heaven is imperfect. That's the way and here life is equivalent to the kingdom from verse 20, or all of these wonderful blessings. In verses 4 through 9 of chapter five. Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted?

The the if you have entered by Christ and if you're in the confined way and because you're in the confined way, there are many things that grieve you about yourself. But you will be comforted, all of those things will be gone. There are many griefs that you have from those who are in the broad way.

But you will be comforted, all of them will be gone. Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Inheriting the Earth. Pretty great. What is infinitely greater if you inherit it? As a child of God and a joint Heir with Jesus. You who belong to Christ, will agree.

That anything you do with Jesus? Is infinitely better? Joint errors which Jesus Christ. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be filled. We cannot imagine yet, can we What sort of life it is to be full? Of that righteousness. Nothing lacking at all anymore.

Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain Mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. Now now we get to the nub of it, don't we? God himself as our Lord, as the To which the narrow gate and the confined way lead.

And not only the reward of having and enjoying God himself. But for being displayed and owned as his children. But to The Peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God. And so let no difficulty or opposition. Discourage or deter you. With Christ, as the gate. And Christ is your righteousness.

And the way as holy living, By faith in him by his life in you. So Christ, the gate and Christ the way and Christ the destination Christ is your reward and the Living God in him. Enter. By the narrow gate. Amen, let's pray.

Our gracious. God and our heavenly father. How we thank you that you did not leave us to perish. Like you did every last one of the Angels, who fell? But that an everlasting electing love. You determined not only to send your only begotten son, but To take us in him as your adopted Sons.

And so, we pray. That by your spirit's blessing, the word that we have heard. That there would not be a single one of us who is left out. But that each one would enter by the narrow gate. All give us by the Life of Christ in US, applied by the work of your spirit to walk in the confined way.

Not. Be deterred or discouraged. By how comparatively many do not walk it with us? But rather to Rejoice that we walk it as your children and in Union With your son. Our Lord Jesus. So, give us joy with him and shared life. In him and with him. Until you bring us at last to that.

Glorious. Vision of Seeing. Knowing. Living with delighting in you. That life, which is the destination. We pray for each. Being in different places. Grant that your Holy Spirit would use.

From this portion of your word, especially that which pertains to In their life where we ask it in Christ's name.

Amen.